



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR RESEARCH
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To: UM Research Community
From: Josh Gladden, VCRSP 
Date: April 16, 2020
Subject: Guidance on grants personnel management during the COVID-19 emergency

Background

This memo seeks to provide additional guidance for personnel supported by externally funded grants and contracts during the COVID-19 emergency. As a reminder, most projects should still be progressing with personnel either teleworking or on-campus. If the work requires physical access to facilities, it is imperative that personnel continue to practice physical distancing, clean the work spaces (including the copier and door handles) and wash hands frequently. We understand some projects can not proceed as planned with field work and travel curtailed and the absence of groups of students physically on campus. We further understand that many projects may experience a reduction in the pace of work originally planned in the statement of work. We encourage all PIs to be in contact with their program officers to discuss specifics and a mitigation plan.

Guidance on Personnel Management

All guidance below pertains to FEDERAL grants or contracts. For grants and contracts from private sector sponsors, please contact your program officer or administrative point of contact for the sponsor to seek guidance. *The following guidelines also apply to 9-month faculty with summer work supported by external funds.*

- Consistent with current guidance, every effort should be made to maintain progress on current grants and contracts. Grants and contracts can still be charged as normal.
- For cases in which progress is *significantly* impacted, grants and contracts *can still be charged* until further notice. It is important that you are in contact with your program officer about (a) the nature and level of the difficulties you are facing and (b) that your institution *does allow* for paid administrative leave for personnel eligible for leave. OMB guidance states that federal grants and contracts can be charged for administrative leave if the institution allows it.
- Current stipend graduate assistants (GAs) can still be paid off either internal (Fund 25 or 10 accounts) or external (Fund 30 or 35) funds.
- Hiring of new stipend GAs *will be allowed to proceed*.



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- New hires *paid from external funds* (Fund 30 or 35) will be allowed to proceed. Examples might include postdocs and research staff.
- Hourly students (undergraduate or graduate): Students should continue filling out time sheets for hours that are actually worked.
- Reduced productivity: If new working arrangements result in a loss of productivity on a grant or contract, each supported person should make a good faith estimate of that loss. While your grant can still be charged for 100% of your salary, it is highly recommended that you document any lost productivity on a weekly basis. This record will help inform conversations with sponsors about no-cost or at-cost extensions to the project. A spreadsheet to help document lost productivity can be found here: <https://keepdiscovering.olemiss.edu/covid19productivityloss/>
 - EXAMPLE: Your effort distribution is 50% on Grant A and 50% on Grant B, but you are experiencing a 10 % slow down on Grant A and 20% on Grant B. Do NOT change anything in your e-form, but DO document this reduction in productivity in the spreadsheet.
- If you have retirees supported on a grant or contract, they can continue to be supported if they are able to perform the work duties assigned. They should continue to report their time appropriately on time sheets. Retirees are not eligible for administrative leave.