

## Office of Research Services -- Research Administration News --

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- F&A will hit on Advance Accounts -- See page 2
- New NIH Stipend Rates -- See page 3
- Revised FSR limitations -- See page 5

### *Individual Highlights:*

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## NIH Salary Cap Increases to \$174,500 Effective 1/1/2004

This notice provides updated information regarding the salary limitation for NIH grant and cooperative agreement awards and extramural research and development contract awards. On March 18, 2003, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 information on the salary limitation was published in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts.

For fifteen consecutive years, Congress has legislatively mandated a provision for the limitation of salary. For FY 2004, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, Public Law 108-199, which includes appropriations for the Department of Health and Human Services, restricts the amount of direct salary of an individual under an NIH grant or cooperative agreement (referred to here as a grant) or applicable contract to Executive Level I of the Federal Executive Pay scale. The Executive Level I annual salary rate was \$171,900 for the period January 1 through December 31, 2003. Effective January 1, 2004, the Executive Level I salary level increased to \$174,500.

For the purposes of the salary limitation, the terms "direct salary," "salary," and "institutional base salary" have the same meaning and are exclusive of fringe benefits and facilities and administrative (F&A) expenses, also referred to as indirect costs. An individual's institutional base salary is the annual compensation that the applicant organization pays for an individual's appointment, whether that individual's time is spent on research, teaching, patient care, or other activities. Base salary excludes any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties to the applicant organization.

NIH grant/contract awards for applications/proposals that request direct salaries of individuals in excess of the applicable RATE per year will be adjusted in accordance with the legislative salary limitation and will include a notification such as the following:

According to the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2004, "None of the funds appropriated in this Act for the National Institutes of Health, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration shall be used to pay the salary of an individual, through a grant or other extramural mechanism, at a rate in excess of Executive Level I" of the Federal Executive Pay Scale. This is the fourth year that the limitation has been linked to Executive Level I of the Federal Pay Scale.

Please see the salary cap summary and the time frames associated with existing salary caps at

[http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap\\_summary.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm)

Implementation of new salary limitation:

\*\*No adjustments will be made to modular grant applications/awards or to previously established commitment levels for non-competing grant wards issued with FY 2004 funds.

NIH Salary Cap increases to \$174,500 effective 1/1/2004 *(continued)*

\*\*NIH competing grant awards with categorical budgets reflecting salary levels at or above the new cap(s) issued in FY 2004 will reflect adjustments to the current and all future years so that no funds are awarded or committed for salaries over the limitation.

**\*\*For awards issued with FYs 2003, 2002 and 2001 funds, if adequate funds are available in active awards, and if the salary cap increase is consistent with the institutional base salary, grantees may rebudget to accommodate the current Executive Level I salary level and contractors may charge at the higher level. However, no additional funds will be provided to the prior year grant awards and the total estimated cost of the contract will not be modified.**

\*\*An individual's base salary, per se, is NOT constrained by the legislative provision for a limitation of salary. The rate limitation simply limits the amount that may be awarded and charged to NIH grants and contracts. An institution may pay an individual's salary amount in excess of the salary cap with non-federal funds.

\*\*The salary limitation does NOT apply to payments made to consultants under an NIH grant or contract although, as with all costs, those payments must meet the test of reasonableness and be consistent with institutional policy.

\*\*The salary limitation provision DOES apply to subawards/subcontracts for substantive work under an NIH grant or contract.

\*\*COMPETING grant applications and contract proposals that include a categorical breakdown in the budget figures/business proposal should continue to reflect the actual institutional base salary of all individuals for whom reimbursement is requested. In lieu of actual base salary, however, applicants/offerors may elect to provide an explanation indicating that actual institutional base salary exceeds the current salary limitation. When this information is provided, NIH staff will make necessary adjustments to requested salaries prior to award.

For more information on NIH Salary Caps, please visit the following links:

<http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/nihcaps.html>

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-04-025.html>

For assistance in calculation the effect of the salary cap on payroll distributions, please see the [Salary Cap Calculator](#).

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## **Business Process Change: Advance Accounts and F&A**

In the past, Facilities and Administrative Charges (F&A/Indirect Charges) were not charged on Advance Accounts. This resulted in a couple of issues for departments administering their awards, as well as, ORS staff. The first is that we did not have a complete accounting of all expenses which have been incurred on the project. In addition, when an advance fund was in advance status during more than one fiscal year, when removed from advance status, *the fund was charged F&A for the most recent fiscal year only.*

Effective immediately, all advance funds are incurring F&A costs throughout the advance status period. While in most cases the eventual F&A rate can be determined when the advance fund is set up, it may not be possible in all cases. Where the rate is not known, the fund will be set up with what appears the most likely rate and an adjustment will be made when the award comes out of advance status.

Questions regarding this issue can be directed to Kerry Peluso, Director, Post Award Financial Administration at 3x6705 or [pelusok@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:pelusok@pobox.upenn.edu).

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## Did you know that.....?



.....Requests to submit revised final financial reports require the approval of the PI and senior business officer of the school ([see Sponsored Projects Policy No. 2137](#)).

.....Effort above and beyond the required effort devoted to a project is considered to be voluntary uncommitted cost sharing ([see Sponsored Projects Policy No. 2119](#)).

.....Cost transfers must be prepared and submitted within 90 days of month end NOT 120 days ([see Sponsored Projects Policy No. 2113](#)).

.....All requests from an external sponsor to conduct a financial or programmatic audit, review, investigation, or inquiry must be immediately directed to ORS ([see Sponsored Projects Policy No. 2130](#)).

### **RUTH L. KIRSCHSTEIN NATIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE AWARD (NRSA) STIPEND INCREASE AND OTHER BUDGETARY CHANGES EFFECTIVE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004**

The budgetary changes described below for Fiscal Year 2004 Kirschstein-NRSA awards affect the stipend levels for undergraduate, predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees and fellows. In addition, for informational purposes only, the Training Related Expenses for trainees and the Institutional Allowance for individual fellows are shown. These budget categories are not being increased. Only undergraduate, predoctoral and postdoctoral stipends are increased this fiscal year.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE DESCRIBED BUDGETARY CHANGES ARE EFFECTIVE ONLY FOR KIRSCHSTEIN-NRSA AWARDS MADE WITH FY 2004 FUNDS. Retroactive adjustments or supplementation of stipends or other budgetary categories with Kirschstein-NRSA funds for an award made prior to October 1, 2003 is not permitted. Budgetary adjustments for training grant and fellowship awards, therefore, will be made only at the time of the FY 2004 award. Adjustments of stipends and other benefits for trainees will be made only at the time of appointment or reappointment to training grants made with FY 2004 funds.

STIPENDS: Effective with all Kirschstein-NRSA awards made on or after October 1, 2003, the following annual stipend levels apply to all individuals receiving support through institutional research training grants or individual fellowships, including the Minority Access to Research Career (MARC) and Career Opportunities in Research (COR) programs. These awards are made under the authority of Section 487 of the Public Health Service Act (as amended).

The stipend levels are as follows:

Career Level	Stipend for FY 2004
Undergraduates in the MARC and COR Programs	
Freshmen/Sophomores	\$ 7,812
Juniors/Seniors	\$ 10,956
Predoctoral	\$ 20,772

## Postdoctoral

## Years of Experience

0	\$ 35,568
1	\$ 37,476
2	\$ 41,796
3	\$ 43,428
4	\$ 45,048
5	\$ 46,992
6	\$ 48,852
7 or more	\$ 51,036

Competing and non-competing awards issued on or after October 1, 2003, which used the FY2003 stipend schedule, will be revised by the NIH awarding component to reflect the new stipend levels. The new stipend levels are to be used in the preparation of future competing and non-competing NRSA institutional training grant and individual fellowship applications. They will be administratively applied to all applications now in the review process.

The NIH remains committed to gradual stipend increases for predocs and postdocs as articulated in the NIH Statement in Response to the National Academy of Sciences Report: Addressing the Nation's Changing Needs for Biomedical and Behavioral Scientists, (available at [http://grants.nih.gov/training/nas\\_report/NIHResponse.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/training/nas_report/NIHResponse.htm)). In keeping with that statement, the NIH encourages institutions to limit the duration of graduate and postdoctoral training to the extent possible. In most cases, graduate and postdoctoral research training from any source should not exceed 6 years and 5 years, respectively. The NIH retains eight levels of postdoctoral stipends to accommodate individuals who complete other forms of health-related training prior to accepting a Kirschstein-NRSA supported position. The presence of eight discrete levels of experience should not be construed as an endorsement of extended periods of postdoctoral research training.

It should be noted that the increase in the zero level postdoctoral stipend will increase the maximum amount that NIH will award to support the compensation package for a graduate student research assistant as described at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-02-017.html>.

#### INSTITUTIONAL ALLOWANCE AND TRAINING RELATED EXPENSES FOR KIRSCHSTEIN-NRSA RECIPIENTS:

The Training Related Expenses for each predoctoral and postdoctoral trainee as well as the Institutional Allowance for all predoctoral and postdoctoral fellows remains at the amounts shown below for all awards made with FY 2004 funds:

##### Training Related Expenses on Institutional Training Grants

Predocotrinal Trainees:	\$2,200
Postdoctoral Trainees:	\$3,850

##### Institutional Allowance on Individual Fellows Sponsored by non-Federal Public & Private Institutions (Domestic & Foreign)

Predocotrinal Fellows:	\$2,750
Postdoctoral Fellows:	\$5,500

##### Institutional Allowance for Individual Fellows Sponsored by Federal and For-Profit Institutions

Predocotrinal Fellows:	\$1,650
Postdoctoral Fellows:	\$4,400

Expenses allowed within these cost categories are described in the appropriate program announcements, which can be found at <http://grants.nih.gov/training/nrsa.htm>. These amounts will be applied to all competing and non-competing NRSA awards made with FY 2004 funds. These levels are to be used in the preparation of future competing and non-competing Kirschstein-NRSA institutional training grant and individual fellowship applications. They will be administratively applied to all applications now in the review process.

Reminder: Object Code 5043/5045 may not be used to charge postdoctoral salaries to NIH Research Grants.

## Frequently Asked Questions ...

### What should be done if expenses hit after the final FSR is submitted?



***Revised FSR's should be done in rare cases only and must be done within time limits set by sponsor.***

When the ORS Accountant prepares the closeout of an award, the department is contacted to verify the final expenditures. It is important that time and care are taken to ensure that all final expenses are included, as well as, that all expenditures are allowable per the sponsor's guidelines, terms and conditions of the award, University policies and, if applicable, the OMB circulars. That being said, in rare cases, an additional appropriate expenditure(s) may come to your attention after the final FSR has been submitted. Submit an unfreeze request to ORS in order to allow the expenditures to hit the fund. Following the transfers, a revised FSR will be completed by ORS. Please see these sections for more information on revised FSRs:

<http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/faq.html#revision>

<http://www.finance.upenn.edu/vpfinance/fpm/2100/2137.shtml>

Please note that most sponsors will only allow a revised FSR up to a certain point in time. Upon review of an Unfreeze Request, ORS staff will consider these restrictions in determining whether the request can be approved.

For NIH, revised FSR's which increase the total cost of the project are allowable for only 15 months after the end date of the award. Beyond this point, NIH will not provide funding for additional costs. Any costs that hit a fund after the award has been closed are considered overdrafts and will be charged to the department unless ORS is informed of other circumstances. It is important that research funds are monitored closely by the departments responsible for their administration. If it is discovered that expenses have hit after close, ORS should be contacted to discuss resolution of these charges.

If you have questions regarding this process or an individual fund, please contact your ORS Accountant for assistance or Kerry Peluso, Post Award Director at 3x6705 or [pelusok@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:pelusok@pobox.upenn.edu).

## Training Opportunities:

### ORS Quizzes and FAQ's:

Take a moment to look at our quizzes or FAQ section for more guidance on administering 5-funds here at Penn. Both can be accessed by clicking Training on our home page (<http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/>).

### Outside Upcoming Training:

**National Council for University Research Administrators (NCURA)  
Financial Research Administration Conference, FRA V**

San Diego, February 29 – March 2.

For further information or to register, please go to

<http://www.ncura.edu/conferences/frav/>.

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## Have Questions regarding Post PennERA Sponsored Project Queries?

Send email to [pennerahelp@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:pennerahelp@pobox.upenn.edu).

Please send details and, if available, attach old and new queries  
for assistance in resolving these issues.

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### January's Contributing Authors, ORS Newsletter:

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## Pre-Award Administration Staff

The Pre-award staff is responsible for processing proposals, reviewing, negotiating, and accepting awards (except for corporate contracts), as well as, providing post-award non-financial administration for these accounts. Questions concerning issues such as no-cost extensions, carryover requests and other administrative matters should be directed to the appropriate pre-award contact.

Questions concerning **industrial clinical trial agreements and sponsored research agreements** should be addressed to the Corporate Contracts Group. Greg Curley is responsible for Account Information Sheets (AIS's) for all industrial clinical trials and sponsored research agreements.

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- Institute for Environmental Medicine – SOM
- Institute for Human Gene Therapy – SOM
- Institute for Neurological Sciences – SOM
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- Clinical Research Center – SOM
- Diabetes – SOM
- Endocrinology –SOM
- Gastrointestinal – SOM
- General Intestinal Medicine – SOM
- Infectious Disease – SOM
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- Law School
- Morris Arboretum
- Provost Interdisciplinary Program
- School of Art and Sciences
- School of Social Work
- Student Services
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- Genetics – SOM
- Hematology/Oncology
- Neurosurgery - SOM
- Orthopedic Surgery – SOM
- Pediatrics – SOM
- Physiology – SOM
- School of Medicine, Institute for Medicine & Engineering – SOM
- Radiation Oncology
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- Annenberg School for Communication
- Cell & Developmental Biology – SOM
- Center for Bioethics – SOM
- Dermatology
- Geriatrics – SOM
- Microbiology – SOM
- Ophthalmology – SOM
- Otorhinolaryngology – SOM
- School of Nursing
- School of Veterinary Medicine

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## Post Award Administration Staff

The main functions handled by these ORS staff members are the preparation of financial invoices and reports, coordination of audits, collection of receivables, cash management functions, and close outs of funds. The Federal Compliance Group handles facilities and administrative costs, employee benefit rates, effort reporting, and compliance issues. Contact Information for all areas is provided below.

### FEDERAL COMPLIANCE GROUP:

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Institute for Environmental Medicine	Neurology
Institute of Neurological Sciences	Neuroscience
Medical School	Ophthalmology
Orthopedic Surgery	Pharmacology
Pediatrics Admin	Pediatrics -Neonatology
Otorhinolaryngology: Head and Neck Surgery	

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Neurosurgery	Physiology
Obstetrics and Gynecology	Radiation Oncology
Center for Research on Reproduction and Women's Health	

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Center for Experimental Therapeutics	Institute for Aging
Institute for Human Gene Therapy	Family Practice
Molecular & Cellular Engineering	
Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics	

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Materials Science & Engineering	Mechanical Engineering
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- School of Medicine Departments: Emergency Service

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- University Museum
- School of Arts and Sciences:
 

Chemistry	Linguistics
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- School of Medicine Departments:
 

Center for Bioinformatics	Institute for Medicine & Engineering
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- The College
- General University
- School of Social Work
- Van Pelt Library
- Wharton School
- School of Arts & Sciences:
  - All except Chemistry, Linguistics, Economics and Physics
- School of Medicine Departments:
 

Cancer Biology	Diabetes
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- Law School
- School of Engineering and Applied Science:
 

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Institute for Research in the Cognitive Sciences	
Systems Engineering	
- School of Arts and Sciences:
 

Economics	Physics
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- School of Medicine Departments:
 

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### *About Our Organization...*

#### *Our Mission*

The Office of Research Services (ORS) oversees the administrative support of the University's externally funded research and is responsible for implementation of University policies established for this purpose. An important part of the ORS mission is service to the research faculty, through the provision of information and advice for the development of applications, and assistance in the administration of awarded grants and contracts.

In this role, ORS

- Supports the schools and centers in the development of proposals for grants and contracts;
- Reviews and approves all proposals before submission to the potential sponsor
- Coordinates negotiations of awards;
- Accepts awards for the University, including the signing of contracts;
- Provides oversight and guidance to faculty and staff concerning the proper management of sponsored projects;
- Prepares all financial reports to sponsors.

In addition to these functions, ORS is responsible for billing of contracts management of letters of credit for payment of grants, preparation of the facilities & administrative and employee benefit rate proposals and rate negotiations, management of the effort reporting system, and oversight of service center rate development. ORS reports jointly to the Senior Vice President for Finance & Treasurer and Vice Provost for Research.

## Office of Research Services Quick Contact List:

**ORS General Phone Numbers:** 215-898-7293 (General Information, Proposals, Awards)  
215-898-7269 (Financial Reports & Invoices, Accounting)

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