PennERS: 
Implementation of the New Effort Reporting System to be Completed

Phase 5 of ERS, the web based effort reporting system, will be initiated on January 27, 2006. This Phase will complete the implementation of the new effort reporting system. Phase 5 will include the Fall Semester FY05 monthly employee effort reports as well as the 2nd quarter weekly paid employee effort reports. We expect approximately 8,000 effort report forms to be generated in Phase 5.

The last date to process a payroll reallocation for any employee who will have an effort report in Phase 5 was January 17, 2006. From this point forward, all payroll reallocations must be processed in ERS. The due date for these effort reports is March 31, 2006.

Please also note two significant changes to our Effort Reporting process. We have eliminated clinical faculty variable pay (CVP) from the effort reports, and also have eliminated weekly paid temporary employees from ERS. The weekly time report form that requires the signature of the employee and a certification by their supervisor is now the official document supporting charges to sponsored projects.

Training dates for new participants in ERS are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 30</td>
<td>VPUL Training Room, 212 Franklin Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>VPUL Training Room, 212 Franklin Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>VPUL Training Room, 212 Franklin Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 14</td>
<td>SOM Training Room, 202 Anatomy/Chemistry Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>SOM Training Room, 202 Anatomy/Chemistry Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 21</td>
<td>SOM Training Room, 202 Anatomy/Chemistry Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 22</td>
<td>SOM Training Room, 202 Anatomy/Chemistry Building</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All Classes are from 9AM to 12 Noon

To register for training go to: http://knowledgelink.upenn.edu click on Optional on the left radio button, and scroll down to Office of Research Services, ERS and choose you class to attend.

continued -
Phase 5 will include the Museum, Annenberg School, Library, Morris Arboretum, Clinical Departments in the School of Medicine, and other Orgs not previously in ERS, a total of 109 new Orgs.

Statistics on current open Phases:

Phase 2 Spring Semester 05: 3,860 out of 3,869 forms completed, 99%. 87% were completed on time.

Phase 3 Summer Semester 05: 295 out of 313 forms completed, 94%. 73% were completed on time.

Phase 4 1st Quarter 05: 730 out of 1,167 forms completed, 62%. 61% were completed on time.

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PennERA Help: Local and Central Support System in Place

To best serve users of PennERA, a system for local and central support research system support has been put in place, based on the preference of each School or Center. The PennERA support network consists of three tiers: Tier 1 support providers serve as the initial point of contact for all end users, Tier 2 personnel are subject matter specialists, and Tier 3 support all as technical experts. Each designated support specialist has the responsibility of reviewing and moving an issue, through the appropriate channels, to the next tier of support as the need arises.

Each School/Center has had the option of choosing either Local (by designating appropriate personnel within their own School/Center), or Central (through contract with Central Administration) Tier 1 Support. Local 1st tier support staff provide School/Center-specific support as well as enhance the overall support environment for research faculty and staff. Central tier 1 support staff are external to the School/Center, but provide initial support for Schools/Center where local support is unavailable or central support is more desirable. End Users in need of assistance should always contact their designated Tier 1 support specialist. Below are the Schools and Centers and the type of Tier 1 support they chose.

Schools/Centers opting for local support

The following Schools/Centers have opted to provide PennERA support at the local level:

- Annenberg Center
- Annenberg School
A list of local Tier 1 research systems support providers for each School or Center, including their e-mail address and phone contact information, is on the web at http://project.pennera.upenn.edu/help.asp.

**Schools/Centers opting for central support**

The following Schools/Centers have opted for central support:

- Dental
- Library
- President’s Center
- Provost’s Center
- Provost Interdisciplinary
- Vet
- Wharton

Users in Schools/Centers that opted for central support can use any of the following methods for help with PennERA:

- Help Line - Dial 6-2900 (on campus) or 215-746-2900 (off campus); hours are 9AM-5PM, Monday-Friday. This single help-desk number can be used for all operational and technical questions. Calls are routed to subject matter experts based on the product with which the user needs help. If a call involves a technical problem, it is re-routed to a technical expert. Calls are logged into a shared database where they can be tracked and easily retrieved, ensuring consistent and accurate responses.

- E-mail - Questions can be e-mailed to pennerahelp@pobox.upenn.edu. (Users who need help with Account Information Sheets (AIS’s) are asked to continue to use AIS-prob@pobox.upenn.edu.)

- Web - A web form is available from the PennERA Help page at http://project.pennera.upenn.edu/help.asp for users to enter information that will automatically be directed to subject matter and technical experts in the same manner as the Help Line.

**Help for all users**

Online reference materials are available to all users accessible from the PennERA Help page at http://project.pennera.upenn.edu/help.asp. Reference materials are available for the SPIN, GENIUS/SMARTS, Lab Animals Tracking, Human Subjects Tracking, and Proposal Tracking modules. (PennKey and PennKey password required to access the documents.)

**More information about PennERA**

Additional updates about PennERA will be provided throughout the project. For the most current information, please visit the PennERA web site at https://www.pennera.upenn.edu and click on the “PennERA Project” tab at the top of the page. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please send an e-mail to pennera@pobox.upenn.edu.

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Robin H. Beck  
Vice President of Information Systems and Computing  
Andrew B. Rudczynski, Ph. D.  
Executive Director of Research Services and Associate  
Joseph R. Sherwin, Ph.D.  
Director of the Office of Regulatory Affairs
ORS and OHR Address
Registration of Industry-Sponsored Clinical Trials

The importance of posting industry-sponsored clinical trials on a publicly accessible, Web-based registry has grown from a little-noticed, little-followed law and FDA regulation to a significant determinant in whether researchers are able to publish their clinical research findings in many peer-reviewed journals. In response to the new significance of posting clinical trials on publicly accessible registries, senior management in the School of Medicine asked the Office of Human Research (OHR) to develop a Web-based registry to post all clinical trials conducted at Penn Medicine. OHR established ClinicalTrials@Penn at http://www.clinicaltrials.med.upenn.edu, modeling it on the federal government’s Web-based registry, ClinicalTrials.gov, found at http://clinicaltrials.gov. ORS has supported OHR’s posting of industry-sponsored clinical trials by introducing provisions into clinical trial research agreements to allow OHR to post such trials.

The initial impetus for a Web-based clinical trials registry was the Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act of 1997 (Modernization Act). Section 113 of the Modernization Act required the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a data bank of information on clinical trials conducted at Penn Medicine. The NIH, through its National Library of Medicine, launched the data bank in 2000; the data bank is the above-mentioned ClinicalTrials.gov. Industry sponsors of covered clinical trials and sponsors of covered federally-funded clinical trials were required to post descriptive data about the clinical trials, sufficient to help members of the general public to determine whether they wanted to enroll in a clinical trial. The registration process had to be undertaken by the sponsor of the clinical trial, not by an investigator participating in the trial. From the standpoint of the Modernization Act, whether a trial was posted or not had little significance to a university investigator’s ability to publish trial results in a peer-review journal. The ability of an investigator to publish the results of industry-sponsored clinical research is protected by provisions in the clinical trial research agreement. The nature of the relationship between the registration of clinical trials and the ability to publish the results of those trials changed with an editorial from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE).

In the September 21, 2004, issue of “Annals of Internal Medicine”, ICMJE announced a policy which conditioned the consideration of manuscripts reporting the results of a trial on the posting of that trial on a public trials registry. While not ruling out the sufficiency of other trial registries available at the time, ICMJE noted that ClinicalTrials.gov met its criteria. Further, ICMJE broadened the kinds of trials which must be posted on a registry, from what the Modernization Act required. Quoting from the editorial, “For this purpose, the ICMJE defines a clinical trial as any research project that prospectively assigns human subjects to intervention or comparison groups to study the cause-and-effect relationship between a medical intervention and a health outcome.” Studies designed for other purposes would be exempt, including most Phase I trials (single-ascending dose, multiple-ascending dose, tolerance, etc.) It is required that trials be registered at or before the enrollment of patients. ICMJE gave industry and academia some lead time to comply with its registration requirement; the requirement applies to studies commencing enrollment after July 1, 2005. For trials commencing enrollment before July 1, 2005, registration had to be made before September 13, 2005. While ICMJE does not represent every medical journal, several other journals have embraced the ICMJE policy, so a researcher is more likely than not to encounter this policy at most major scientific journals.
The net result of the ICMJE policy is that an industry sponsor could stop effective publication of study results by an investigator by not registering the study on ClinicalTrials.gov since any proposed publication of the results of a study by an investigator will not be accepted. Add to that the restriction that only sponsors can register studies on ClinicalTrials.gov, and the resulting situation is that the industry sponsor can control an investigator’s publication of the results of research, regardless of what the clinical trial research agreement provided in terms of publication rights.

There were two solutions to this situation which would wrest away control of publication from industry sponsors. One was to ensure that the sponsor registered the study. The other was to provide a means by which the investigator could register the study in a manner acceptable to the ICMJE. This latter solution led the senior management in the School of Medicine to direct OHR to establish ClinicalTrials@Penn.

In a memorandum to the School of Medicine faculty, dated August 31, 2005, Glen Gaulton, Ph.D., Vice Dean, Research and Research Training and Susan Ellenberg, Ph.D., Associate Dean, Clinical Research, described the background of the ICMJE policy and announced the launch of ClinicalTrials@Penn, at http://www.clinicaltrials.med.upenn.edu. According to the memorandum, the “goal is to have all clinical trials conducted at Penn Medicine posted publicly in a timely manner regardless of, phase, sponsor or IRB review categorization.” ClinicalTrials@Penn was established by OHR and incorporates the posting requirements of ClinicalTrials.gov, however ClinicalTrials@Penn encompasses essentially all clinical trials at Penn, rather than the more-limited categories of clinical trials required by the Modernization Act or the ICMJE.

The School of Medicine has a two-fold purpose behind ClinicalTrials@Penn. One is to ensure the ability to effectively publish by demonstrating to the ICMJE a good-faith effort to have studies accessible to the public in the manner required by the ICMJE policy. The second purpose, in line with the concerns of both the Modernization Act and ICMJE, is to help the broader community access clinical trials.

ORS believes that these goals are consistent with Penn’s overall research mission of education, research and dissemination of information. ORS is working to attain these goals by seeking language in industry-sponsored clinical trial research agreements that allow OHR to post the respective study on ClinicalTrials@Penn, or at least ensure that the clinical trial is posted on ClinicalTrials.gov. Most industry sponsors accept the contract language which allows Penn to post information about the study on ClinicalTrials@Penn. When an industry sponsor is resistant to such language, ORS checks ClinicalTrial.gov to determine whether the clinical trial has already been posted. This information is important for the negotiation going forward. ORS has been fairly successful introducing the language into agreements, and where it has met resistance found some fallback positions which depend on whether the clinical trial is already posted on ClinicalTrials.gov.

ClinicalTrials@Penn is a fairly new program and is subject to evolution as the ICMJE policy matures and is elucidated through implementation. Already, late in 2005, the ICMJE added further clarifications on its posting requirements calling into question its acceptance of web-postings of clinical trials on sites other than ClinicalTrials.gov. Penn will continue to post its clinical trials on ClinicalTrials@Penn, as the debate over posting requirements continues. In addition to supporting ClinicalTrials@Penn, OHR will also continue to support and facilitate the posting of Investigator-sponsored trials on ClinicalTrials.gov. Further, as ORS and OHR collect feedback from industry sponsors, that information will inform changes to the processes followed by OHR and ORS. Any questions should be directed to Adam Rifkind, Associate Director, Corporate Contracts at rifkind@pobox.upenn.edu.

5
Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Stipend and Other Budgetary Levels Effective for Fiscal Year 2006

Notice Number: NOT-OD-06-026

Key Dates: Release Date: January 9, 2006

Issued by
National Institutes of Health (NIH), (http://www.nih.gov/)
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), (http://www.ahrq.gov/)
Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), (http://www.hrsa.gov/)

The stipend levels for Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 Kirschstein-NRSA awards for undergraduate, predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees and fellows are shown below. The Training Related Expenses for trainees and the Institutional Allowance for individual fellows for FY 2006 are also shown below.

The Budgetary Categories Described in this Notice Are Effective Only for Kirschstein-NRSA Awards Made with FY 2006 Funds.

Retroactive adjustments or supplementation of stipends or other budgetary categories with Kirschstein-NRSA funds for an award made prior to October 1, 2005 is not permitted. Budgetary adjustments for training grant and fellowship awards, therefore, will be made only at the time of the FY 2006 award.

STIPENDS: Effective with all Kirschstein-NRSA awards made on or after October 1, 2005, 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Level</th>
<th>Stipend for FY 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates in the MARC and COR Programs:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen/Sophomores</td>
<td>$7,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors/Seniors</td>
<td>$10,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predoctoral</td>
<td>$20,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoctoral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Experience:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>$36,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$38,976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$41,796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$43,428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$45,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$46,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$48,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 or more</td>
<td>$51,036</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These 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 currently in the review process. 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 maximum amount that NIH will award to support the compensation package for a graduate student research assistant remains at the zero level postdoctoral stipend as described at [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-02-017.html](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 will be paid at the amounts shown below for all awards made with FY 2006 funds:

**Training Related Expenses on Institutional Training Grants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainee Type</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predoctoral Trainees</td>
<td>$2,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoctoral Trainees</td>
<td>$3,850</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainee Type</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predoctoral Fellows</td>
<td>$2,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoctoral Fellows</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainee Type</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predoctoral Fellows</td>
<td>$1,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoctoral Fellows</td>
<td>$5,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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](http://grants.nih.gov/training/nrsa.htm). These amounts will be applied to all competing and non-competing NRSA awards made with FY 2006 funds. Any FY 2006 awards issued using previously-approved levels will be revised. 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 currently in the review process. Please note that information concerning the NIH policy for offsetting NRSA expenses for tuition, fees, and health insurance for FY 2006 competing applications was published on August 2, 2005 and can be found at: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-05-059.html](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-05-059.html).

The NIH policy for offsetting NRSA expenses for tuition, fees, and health insurance is currently being re-examined. Information regarding this issue and a recently held NIH Town Hall Meeting to discuss this topic can be found at: [http://pub.nigms.nih.gov/generic_meeting/index.cfm?id=10](http://pub.nigms.nih.gov/generic_meeting/index.cfm?id=10). A final decision regarding the policy for FY 2007 is expected to be announced in the spring of 2006.

**Inquiries**

Questions concerning this notice or other policies relating to training grants or fellowships should be directed to the grants management office in the appropriate NIH Institute or Center.

Walter L. Goldschmidts, Ph.D.
Acting Research Training Officer
National Institutes of Health
6705 Rockledge Drive, Room 3516
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-7963
Phone: (301) 451-4225
FAX: (301) 480-0146
Email: goldschw@mail.nih.gov
Office of Research Services

NIH Financial Policy for Grant Awards – FY 2006

**Notice Number:** NOT-OD-06-025  
**Key Dates**  
Release Date: January 9, 2006

**Issued by**  
National Institutes of Health (NIH), ([http://www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov))

The NIH appropriation for FY 2006 includes an across-the-board reduction to non-emergency, discretionary programs, which has a direct impact on NIH's budget. The NIH share of this adjustment is approximately $286 million. NIH has established the following financial policies consistent with this appropriation.

**Research Project Grants (RPG)** ([http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/funding_program.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/funding_program.htm))  
Non-competing awards for every RPG will be awarded at a level of 97.65% of the amount indicated for the FY2006 budget period in the Notice of Grant Award for the previous budget year. The amounts indicated for future budget periods will also be adjusted by the same factor.

Non-competing awards previously issued in FY 2006 at reduced levels up to 80% of the amount previously indicated ([See: NOT-OD-06-014 http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-06-014.html](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-06-014.html)) will be revised to provide a restoration of funds to the 97.65% level. Amounts indicated for future budget periods will be adjusted as well.

The amounts provided for competing RPGs will be managed to an average award amount equal to FY 2005 levels. FY 2006 policy includes the provision of a 3% escalation factor in the amounts indicated for future years on competing RPG awards which are not based on modular applications.

**National Research Service Awards** (Fellowships and Training Grants)  
This policy is published in a separate notice. ([See NOT-OD-06-026](http://www.nih.gov))

**Other Grant Programs**  
Other grant programs will be managed in accordance with the policies to be established by each Institute and Center.

Questions regarding adjustments applied on individual grant awards may be directed to the Grants Management Specialist identified on the Notice of Award.  
Subsequent Notices in the NIH Guide will address Legislative Mandates and Salary Limitations for the FY 2006 Appropriation.

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**Salary Limitation on Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts**

**Notice Number:** NOT-OD-06-031  
**Key Dates**  
Release Date: January 12, 2006

**Issued by**  
National Institutes of Health (NIH), ([http://www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov))

This notice provides updated information regarding the salary limitation for NIH grant and cooperative agreement awards and extramural research and development contract awards. On January 7, 2005 the Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 information on the salary limitation was published in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts.

For seventeen consecutive years, Congress has legislatively mandated a provision for the limitation of salary. For FY 2006, the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, Public Law 109-149, 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 $180,100 for the period January 1 through December 31, 2005 (see NOT-OD-05-024, January 7, 2005). Effective January 1, 2006, the Executive Level I salary level increased to $183,500.

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 Act for FY 2006, “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 sixth 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.

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 awards issued with FY 2006 funds.
- NIH competing grant awards with categorical budgets reflecting salary levels at or above the new cap(s) issued in FY 2006 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 in those years restricted to Executive Level I (see Salary Cap Summary, [FY 1990 – FY 2006]), 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.

Questions & Answers

1. If a grant award (competing or non-competing) has already been issued in FY 2006, will an adjustment be made? No adjustments will be made. However, rebudgeting is allowable.
2. Can I rebudget grant funds or charge contracts issued in those years restricted to Executive Level I (see Salary Cap Summary (FY 1990 – FY 2006) funds to allow for the 2006 salary cap increase? Yes, provided funds are available and the increase is warranted. Prorated figures should be used for the applicable months, i.e., the $183,500 level is effective beginning January 1, 2006.
3. If an application/proposal fails to provide needed salary information, will an adjustment be made based on the new rates? No adjustment will be made if an application fails to provide adequate information regarding the individual’s actual salary level.


5. As the cap is linked to Federal Executive Levels, can grantees/contractors with ongoing awards rebudget/charge up to the various salary caps, based on the fiscal year of the award and the time of the salary expense is incurred? Yes, salary may be charged in accordance with the FY cap(s), as long as the levels are consistent with the individual’s institutional base pay. Please refer to the salary cap summary with time frames for existing salary caps, at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm.

6. Will grantees be permitted to submit revised categorical budgets reflecting higher base salaries? Not as a general rule. NIH policy for categorical budgets states that grantees should always reflect actual base salaries in the requested budgets or provide an explanation indicating that actual institutional base salary exceeds the current salary limitation. As a general rule, NIH will use the information available in the existing application and make adjustments for the salary cap based on information available at the time of award.


Historical data on NIH Salary Caps is available at http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/nihcaps.html. Please contact your ORS Accountant or Contract Administrator regarding questions regarding the NIH Salary Cap.

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**Changes to HRSA’s Grant Application Process**

Major changes are coming to HRSA’s Grant Application Process. HRSA will no longer accept applications for grant opportunities in paper form for grant opportunities posted after January 1, 2006. (Please refer to grant announcement posted on Grants.gov for specific instructions).

Applicants submitting New and Competing continuations and a selected number of non-competing continuation applications will be **required** to submit **electronically** through Grants.gov for all opportunities posted after the January 1, 2006 date. All applicants **must** submit in this manner unless the applicant is granted a written exemption from this requirement in advance by the Director of HRSA’s Division of Grants Policy. Grantees must request an exemption in writing from DGPClearances@hrsa.gov, and provide details as to why they are not able to submit electronically though the Grants.gov portal. As indicated in the program guidances, for applications that mandate electronic submission through Grants.gov, paper applications will not be accepted without prior written approval.

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**NIH Extramural Nexus**

This month, the first issue of **NIH Extramural Nexus** was introduced. This bimonthly newsletter is issued by the OER (NIH Office of Extramural Research). Through the Nexus, the OER will provide the external scientific community with updates on NIH policies and activities as well as an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the operation of extramural programs.

Issues are sent to subscribers via email. To subscribe to the NIH Extramural Nexus, send a plain text email to Listserv@list.nih.gov including only the words Subscribe EXTRAMURALNEXUS in the body of the message.
Grants.gov Update

Grants.gov has been established to provide a simple, unified electronic storefront for interactions between grant applicants and the Federal agencies that manage grant funds. There are 26 Federal grant-making agencies and over 900 individual grant programs that award over $400 billion in grants each year. The grant community, including state, local and tribal governments, academia and research institutions, and not-for-profits, need only visit one website, Grants.gov, to access the annual grant funds available across the Federal government. Grants.gov provides:

- A single source for finding grant opportunities.
- A standardized manner of locating and learning more about funding opportunities.
- A single, secure and reliable source for applying for Federal grants online.
- A simplified grant application process with reduction of paperwork.
- A unified interface for all agencies to announce their grant opportunities, and for all grant applicants to find and apply for those opportunities.

In September, 2005, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced initial plans to: 1) transition from the PHS398 application to the SF424 Research and Related (R&R) application; and, 2) simultaneously transition to electronic submission via Grants.gov by the end of 2007.

In response to this announcement and the increasing use of electronic proposal submission systems, ORS is committed to providing the most up to date information possible to the research community. We have created areas of the ORS website that are dedicated to the electronic proposal submission process and will continue to add information as it becomes available. We will continue publish articles in the ORS newsletter giving guidance on how to prepare for transition to grants.gov and the new forms, as well as a discussion of “lessons learned”.

While ORS has been using Grants.gov for application submissions since August 2004, two applications prepared by our faculty on the new NIH forms were submitted through Grants.gov in December, 2006. ORS is planning training on the SF424 (R&R), as well as the features of the NIH Commons, which will include lessons learned from the December submissions. The sessions will be schedule for dates in February and March and will be announced through the ORS listserv, as well as the newsletter.

ORS staff is also available, upon request, to address departments on the current status of NIH and Grants.gov and we will be planning a brown bag discussion during the spring semester.

Questions regarding electronic submissions can be directed to Pam Caudill, Director, pre-award at caudill@pobox.upenn.edu.

For More Information on Grants.gov and Electronic Submissions. Click Here
Early Review of Industrial Clinical Trial Agreements:

REMINDER ON HOW CLINICAL TRIAL AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS CAN BEGIN PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL TRANSMITTAL FORM

ORS has for several years provided investigators with a mechanism to request an early review of clinical trial agreements. This would allow negotiations on contract terms and conditions to commence prior to submission of the research proposal transmittal form to ORS. The required submission form for early review of contracts is available at http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/ under Clinical Trials Early Review.

Please note the following concerns with these submissions:

1. In some cases, sponsors or departments are sending contracts to ORS without any accompanying paperwork. These cannot be accepted for negotiation because there is insufficient information. For example, there may be no indication if the faculty researcher actually intends to participate in the study, if the budget is being negotiated or if any IRB submissions are being prepared. A copy of the consent form or protocol summary is needed to allow contract negotiators to have information on the nature of the clinical study in order to request appropriate terms and conditions. For example, indemnification terms for an investigator-initiated data registry study would be very different for those involving a device study sponsored by a pharmaceutical company.

2. When submitting the Request for Early Review, please ensure that the sponsor, PI and title of the Protocol match that information contained in the research proposal transmittal form. This is particularly true for studies involving PI’s with numerous studies involving the same sponsor.

3. IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, PLEASE SUBMIT THE REQUEST FOR EARLY REVIEW FORM, CONTRACT AND ACCOMPANYING FORMS ELECTRONICALLY. IF AN E-COPY OF THE AGREEMENT IS OBTAINED, NEGOTIATIONS CAN BEGIN MORE QUICKLY.

It should be noted that the early review process does not replace the need to prepare and submit a Proposal Transmittal and Approval Form and all required documentation. The required documentation includes the contracts, study budget, IRB documentation, patient consent form, protocol, and any needed conflict of interest documentation. Please contact Donald Deyo, Director, Corporate Contracts at deyo@pobox.upenn.edu if you have any questions.
Job Openings in Research Services

ACCOUNTANT B
Grade 25
Duties: Performs general ledger review and reconciliations; prepares financial statements and billings; provides University Business Administrators with grant accounting advice; prepare journal entries and trial balances. Initiates and coordinates the account close-out process in coordination with the responsible department administrator. Tests for accuracy, completeness and compliance with federal guidelines and/or other contractual agreements. Performs other related duties as required.
Qualifications: Bachelor’s Degree in accounting or business required and 0 to 2 years of experience. Ability to prioritize tasks, demonstrated strong communication and organizational skills; demonstrated proficiency with PC software (MS Word & Excel); knowledge of Ben Financials a plus.

POST AWARD ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Grade 28
Duties: Performs, oversees and receives general ledger review and reconciliations; reviews financial statements and billings. Ensures timely billing and reporting. Provides post award staff and University staff with sponsored projects advice and (varying levels of) training. Oversees and manages special projects. Provides general supervision of 4-5 accountants. Tests for accuracy, completeness and compliance with federal guidelines and/or other contractual agreements. Responsible for financial administration of 30 - 50% of Penn’s sponsored projects. Other duties as assigned.
Qualifications: Bachelor’s Degree in accounting or business required and 5 to 7 years of experience. working with grants or research administration. Minimum of three years supervisory experience required. Experience working at the University of Pennsylvania strongly preferred. Ability to prioritize tasks, demonstrated strong communication and organizational skills; demonstrated proficiency with PC software (MS Word & Excel); knowledge of Ben Financials a plus.

PENNERA ASSOCIATE PROJECT LEADER
Grade 28
Duties: As a member of the PennERA (Electronic Research Administration) Core Team, to evaluate research business practices campus-wide as well as within Research Services and to recommend alternatives for improved practices and procedures. Provide functional leadership for specific initiatives or subprojects with PennERA and to serve as an interface between the project team and University organizations. Provide oversight of implementations and transitions of both electronic and business practice initiatives. Facilitate the design and delivery of research administration training.
Qualifications: A Bachelor’s Degree is required and 3 years to 5 years of experience or equivalent combination of education and experience. The position requires a strong and broad-based background in research administration in a university environment. Good personal communication and organizational skills are essential to success in position. Some knowledge and comfort working with software systems is desirable. Facilitate the design and delivery of research administration training. Special Requirements Background Check Required

For additional information or to submit an application, please visit Jobs@penn (https://jobs.hr.upenn.edu/applicants/jsp/shared/frameset/Frameset.jsp?time=1129302184971).
Did You Know.......??

...The NIH salary cap was increased to $183,500 effective January 1, 2006. It is the responsibility of the department to see that faculty salaries exceeding this cap are adjusted upward for NIH, SAMSHA, and AHRQ awards.

...Journals are not an allowable cost to a federal sponsored project if that journal is available in the University’s Library. The rational is that an allocable portion of the Library’s acquisition costs are included in the University’s F&A rate. To purchase the same journal on a federal award and apply the F&A rate to that expense would be considered to auditors as double charging the federal government.

...A parking fine received while on University business is not an allowable charge to a sponsored project.

...Faculty members on sabbatical who plan to continue to work and devote their committed effort to a sponsored project may charge salary to that sponsored project.

...The effort reporting period ending December 31, 2005 marks a major milestone for Penn. That is, all individuals required to complete an effort report will do so via the web. Congratulations to all involved in reaching this goal.

Training Opportunities:

**Sponsored Programs at Penn:**
This is a two day workshop which covers the fundamentals of Sponsored Projects Administration at Penn. Topics include Proposal Preparation & Processing, Contract Negotiation, Award Acceptance and Account Set-up, Financial Compliance & Allowability, Post Award Management, Reporting Tools and Data Sources, Closeouts, and Audits. Please visit http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/training.html for more information.

**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/).

**Research Compliance Tutorials and Other Education:**
For further guidance on administering 5-funds here at Penn, please visit the Research Compliance Training and Education page at http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rc/pages/training.htm.
ORS Monthly Quick Quiz

1) Who is responsible for clearing Overdrafts?
   a) The Business Administrator in consultation with their respective PI.
   b) The ORS Accountant.
   c) The ORS Contract Administrator.

   For answer, visit http://www.finance.upenn.edu/vpfinance/fpm/2100/2129.shtml.

2) Overdrafts should be addressed by which point in time:
   a) Within 90 days following the submission of the final FSR.
   b) Prior to the submission of the final FSR.
   c) As time is available.

   For answer, visit http://www.finance.upenn.edu/vpfinance/fpm/2100/2129.shtml.

Research Compliance Tutorials Available

Available on the ORS Web Site are tutorials on the subjects of Allowability, Cost Transfers & Documentation; Export Controls, and Effort Reporting. Please take a few moments to view these tutorials. The tutorials and other compliance related information can be found at http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rc/pages/training.htm.
Getting to Know......

Bob Speakman
Financial/Data Analyst

Years at Penn: 11.5

Years in Research Services: 5

ORS Responsibilities: Preparing financial reports and analyzing data.

Hobbies/Interests: Golf, watching sports and movies, hanging out with my wife and friends

Favorite Restaurant: New Deck Tavern

Favorite ways to spend a vacation: Being active and having a good time away from familiar surroundings.

What Co-workers say:
...Bob is a great to work with.... He is a great team player, always willing to help and a fantastic business object’s report creator!
...Over the past several years Bob has been steadily developing his skills related to creating business objects reports and Access databases. His efforts have been a tremendous benefit to the Office of Research Services. (Unfortunately, he knows very little about football so his fantasy teams stink every year.)

January’s Contributing Authors, ORS Newsletter:

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Teresa Leo, PennERA/PennERS Communications Specialist, Information Systems and Computing
Kerry Peluso, Director of Post Award Financial Administration, Office of Research Services
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Andrew B. Rudczynski, Associate Vice President for Finance and Executive Director, Office of Research Services
Todd Swavely, Associate Director –Penn ERA, Project Manager, Office of Research Services
Alice Tangredi-Hannon, Institutional Compliance Officer, Office of Audit and Compliance
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.

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- Geriatrics – SOM
- Microbiology – SOM
- Ophthalmology – SOM
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**BOB SPEAKMAN**
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 Vice President for Finance & Treasurer and Vice Provost for Research.

Office of Research Services
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