

Time and Effort for ESSER funds

It's important to understand that the list of allowable uses for ESSER is just the starting point. If a particular activity is allowed under a given grant (in this case ESSER), the district must then follow all the other laws that go along with using federal funds to procure, purchase, and oversee the activity.

In the case of retention incentives, hazard pay, or other incentive pay that is now frequently referred to as "premium pay", the accompanying federal law that addresses the requirements is 2 *CFR* 200.430(f) – *Incentive Compensation*. This is one component of the broader section, 2 *CFR* 200.430 *Compensation – Personal Services*, which lays out most of the rules that must be followed in order to pay any portion of compensation to a staff member out federal funds.

If a district wishes to provide retention pay, or any other compensation out of federal funds, the district must then also comply with all the other accompanying rules in 200.430, which includes 2 *CFR* 200.430(i) – *Standards for Documentation of Personnel Expenses*. In short, this rule requires that "charges to Federal awards for salaries and wages must be based on records that accurately reflect the work performed", and then goes on to discuss the standard in more detail.

What this means is that for all staff paid any amount of compensation out of federal funds, a record must be kept of all of their work performed. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT EVERY STAFF MEMBER NEEDS TO KEEP A PERSONNEL ACTIVITY REPORT (PAR) LOG. Some staff, that are paid out of multiple funding sources, each of which is earmarked for a particular subset of the staff members work, but not allowable for other aspects of their work, do need to keep a PAR or equivalent breakout of their actual work performed. An example would be a special education teacher, that is paid primarily out of IDEA special education funds for all special education services, but that is also paid out of general funds for the hour a day that the teacher performs lunchroom duty for all students. Alternatively, a special education teacher that is paid out of a combination of special education and general funds that only provides special education services, does not need to keep a log because 100% of the work can be paid for out of any of the funding streams that support her work. In this case, all that is required is a semi-annual certification that 100% of the work actually performed was special education. If this same teacher did keep a log, similar to the teacher in the first example, that would also be acceptable, but not required.

That brings us to incentive compensation paid with ESSER aid as part of allowable activity 16. Because ESSER aid, in this context of incentivizing retention, is being used to incentivize staff to either return, or be hired on to perform the work they were already doing, there is no need to create a separate category (sometimes call cost objective) to track. This means that for staff that could already be covered under semi-annual certification, this is still sufficient. For staff that already needed to complete a PAR, that is also still sufficient. The only potential change would be for staff that do not currently document (substantiate) their work. This scenario is possible, but in our experience unlikely, because even for staff that aren't already paid out of federal aid, most likely already complete some sort of timesheet, clock-in and out, or complete some other requirement that effectively documents their time worked for the purpose of the district payroll system. If there are any staff that fall into that final, unsubstantiated category, this would need to be resolved.

For reference, please see the complete text of 2 *CFR* 200.430, attached. Please address questions to esser@ksde.gov.

2 CFR 200.430 Compensation - personal services.

(a) *General.* Compensation for personal services includes all remuneration, paid currently or accrued, for services of employees rendered during the period of performance under the Federal award, including but not necessarily limited to wages and salaries. Compensation for personal services may also include fringe benefits which are addressed in § 200.431. Costs of compensation are allowable to the extent that they satisfy the specific requirements of this part, and that the total compensation for individual employees:

- (1) Is reasonable for the services rendered and conforms to the established written policy of the non-Federal entity consistently applied to both Federal and non-Federal activities;
- (2) Follows an appointment made in accordance with a non-Federal entity's laws and/or rules or written policies and meets the requirements of Federal statute, where applicable; and
- (3) Is determined and supported as provided in paragraph (i) of this section, when applicable.

(b) *Reasonableness.* Compensation for employees engaged in work on Federal awards will be considered reasonable to the extent that it is consistent with that paid for similar work in other activities of the non-Federal entity. In cases where the kinds of employees required for Federal awards are not found in the other activities of the non-Federal entity, compensation will be considered reasonable to the extent that it is comparable to that paid for similar work in the labor market in which the non-Federal entity competes for the kind of employees involved.

(c) *Professional activities outside the non-Federal entity.* Unless an arrangement is specifically authorized by a federal awarding agency, a non-Federal entity must follow its written non-Federal entity-wide policies and practices concerning the permissible extent of professional services that can be provided outside the non-Federal entity for non-organizational compensation. Where such non-Federal entity-wide written policies do not exist or do not adequately define the permissible extent of consulting or other non-organizational activities undertaken for extra outside pay, the Federal Government may require that the effort of professional staff working on Federal awards be allocated between:

- (1) Non-Federal entity activities, and
- (2) Non-organizational professional activities. If the Federal awarding agency considers the extent of non-organizational professional effort excessive or inconsistent with the conflicts-of-interest terms and conditions of the Federal award, appropriate arrangements governing compensation will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

(d) *Unallowable costs.*

- (1) Costs which are unallowable under other sections of these principles must not be allowable under this section solely on the basis that they constitute personnel compensation.
- (2) The allowable compensation for certain employees is subject to a ceiling in accordance with statute. For the amount of the ceiling for cost-reimbursement contracts, the covered

compensation subject to the ceiling, the covered employees, and other relevant provisions, see [10 U.S.C. 2324\(e\)\(1\)\(P\)](#), and [41 U.S.C. 1127](#) and [4304\(a\)\(16\)](#). For other types of Federal awards, other statutory ceilings may apply.

(e) *Special considerations.* Special considerations in determining allowability of compensation will be given to any change in a non-Federal entity's compensation policy resulting in a substantial increase in its employees' level of compensation (particularly when the change was concurrent with an increase in the ratio of Federal awards to other activities) or any change in the treatment of allowability of specific types of compensation due to changes in Federal policy.

(f) *Incentive compensation.* Incentive compensation to employees based on cost reduction, or efficient performance, suggestion awards, safety awards, etc., is allowable to the extent that the overall compensation is determined to be reasonable and such costs are paid or accrued pursuant to an agreement entered into in good faith between the non-Federal entity and the employees before the services were rendered, or pursuant to an established plan followed by the non-Federal entity so consistently as to imply, in effect, an agreement to make such payment.

(g) *Nonprofit organizations.* For compensation to members of nonprofit organizations, trustees, directors, associates, officers, or the immediate families thereof, determination must be made that such compensation is reasonable for the actual personal services rendered rather than a distribution of earnings in excess of costs. This may include directors and executive committee member's fees, incentive awards, allowances for off-site pay, incentive pay, location allowances, hardship pay, and cost-of-living differentials.

(h) *Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs).*

(1) Certain conditions require special consideration and possible limitations in determining allowable personnel compensation costs under Federal awards. Among such conditions are the following:

(i) Allowable activities. Charges to Federal awards may include reasonable amounts for activities contributing and directly related to work under an agreement, such as delivering special lectures about specific aspects of the ongoing activity, writing reports and articles, developing and maintaining protocols (human, animals, etc.), managing substances/chemicals, managing and securing project-specific data, coordinating research subjects, participating in appropriate seminars, consulting with colleagues and graduate students, and attending meetings and conferences.

(ii) Incidental activities. Incidental activities for which supplemental compensation is allowable under written institutional policy (at a rate not to exceed institutional base salary) need not be included in the records described in paragraph (i) of this section to directly charge payments of incidental activities, such activities must either be specifically provided for in the Federal award budget or receive prior written approval by the Federal awarding agency.

(2) *Salary basis.* Charges for work performed on Federal awards by faculty members during the academic year are allowable at the IBS rate. Except as noted in paragraph (h)(1)(ii) of this section, in no event will charges to Federal awards, irrespective of the basis of computation,

exceed the proportionate share of the IBS for that period. This principle applies to all members of faculty at an institution. IBS is defined as the annual compensation paid by an IHE for an individual's appointment, whether that individual's time is spent on research, instruction, administration, or other activities. IBS excludes any income that an individual earns outside of duties performed for the IHE. Unless there is prior approval by the Federal awarding agency, charges of a faculty member's salary to a Federal award must not exceed the proportionate share of the IBS for the period during which the faculty member worked on the award.

(3) *Intra-Institution of Higher Education (IHE) consulting.* Intra-IHE consulting by faculty should be undertaken as an IHE responsibility requiring no compensation in addition to IBS. However, in unusual cases where consultation is across departmental lines or involves a separate or remote operation, and the work performed by the faculty member is in addition to his or her regular responsibilities, any charges for such work representing additional compensation above IBS are allowable provided that such consulting arrangements are specifically provided for in the Federal award or approved in writing by the Federal awarding agency.

(4) Extra Service Pay normally represents overload compensation, subject to institutional compensation policies for services above and beyond IBS. Where extra service pay is a result of Intra-IHE consulting, it is subject to the same requirements of paragraph (b) above. It is allowable if all of the following conditions are met:

- (i) The non-Federal entity establishes consistent written policies which apply uniformly to all faculty members, not just those working on Federal awards.
- (ii) The non-Federal entity establishes a consistent written definition of work covered by IBS which is specific enough to determine conclusively when work beyond that level has occurred. This may be described in appointment letters or other documentations.
- (iii) The supplementation amount paid is commensurate with the IBS rate of pay and the amount of additional work performed. See paragraph (h)(2) of this section.
- (iv) The salaries, as supplemented, fall within the salary structure and pay ranges established by and documented in writing or otherwise applicable to the non-Federal entity.
- (v) The total salaries charged to Federal awards including extra service pay are subject to the Standards of Documentation as described in paragraph (i) of this section.

(5) *Periods outside the academic year.*

- (i) Except as specified for teaching activity in paragraph (h)(5)(ii) of this section, charges for work performed by faculty members on Federal awards during periods not included in the base salary period will be at a rate not in excess of the IBS.
- (ii) Charges for teaching activities performed by faculty members on Federal awards during periods not included in IBS period will be based on the normal written policy of the IHE governing compensation to faculty members for teaching assignments during such periods.

(6) *Part-time faculty.* Charges for work performed on Federal awards by faculty members

having only part-time appointments will be determined at a rate not in excess of that regularly paid for part-time assignments.

(7) *Sabbatical leave costs.* Rules for sabbatical leave are as follow:

(i) Costs of leaves of absence by employees for performance of graduate work or sabbatical study, travel, or research are allowable provided the IHE has a uniform written policy on sabbatical leave for persons engaged in instruction and persons engaged in research. Such costs will be allocated on an equitable basis among all related activities of the IHE.

(ii) Where sabbatical leave is included in fringe benefits for which a cost is determined for assessment as a direct charge, the aggregate amount of such assessments applicable to all work of the institution during the base period must be reasonable in relation to the IHE's actual experience under its sabbatical leave policy.

(8) *Salary rates for non-faculty members.* Non-faculty full-time professional personnel may also earn "extra service pay" in accordance with the non-Federal entity's written policy and consistent with paragraph (h)(1)(i) of this section.

(i) *Standards for Documentation of Personnel Expenses*

(1) Charges to Federal awards for salaries and wages must be based on records that accurately reflect the work performed. These records must:

(i) Be supported by a system of internal control which provides reasonable assurance that the charges are accurate, allowable, and properly allocated;

(ii) Be incorporated into the official records of the non-Federal entity;

(iii) Reasonably reflect the total activity for which the employee is compensated by the non-Federal entity, not exceeding 100% of compensated activities (for IHE, this per the IHE's definition of IBS);

(iv) Encompass federally-assisted and all other activities compensated by the non-Federal entity on an integrated basis, but may include the use of subsidiary records as defined in the non-Federal entity's written policy;

(v) Comply with the established accounting policies and practices of the non-Federal entity (See paragraph (h)(1)(ii) above for treatment of incidental work for IHEs.); and

(vi) [Reserved]

(vii) Support the distribution of the employee's salary or wages among specific activities or cost objectives if the employee works on more than one Federal award; a Federal award and non-Federal award; an indirect cost activity and a direct cost activity; two or more indirect activities which are allocated using different allocation bases; or an unallowable activity and a direct or indirect cost activity.

(viii) Budget estimates (i.e., estimates determined before the services are performed) alone do not qualify as support for charges to Federal awards, but may be used for interim accounting purposes, provided that:

(A) The system for establishing the estimates produces reasonable approximations of the activity actually performed;

(B) Significant changes in the corresponding work activity (as defined by the non-Federal entity's written policies) are identified and entered into the records in a timely manner. Short term (such as one or two months) fluctuation between workload categories need not be considered as long as the distribution of salaries and wages is reasonable over the longer term; and

(C) The non-Federal entity's system of internal controls includes processes to review after-the-fact interim charges made to a Federal award based on budget estimates. All necessary adjustment must be made such that the final amount charged to the Federal award is accurate, allowable, and properly allocated.

(ix) Because practices vary as to the activity constituting a full workload (for IHEs, IBS), records may reflect categories of activities expressed as a percentage distribution of total activities.

(x) It is recognized that teaching, research, service, and administration are often inextricably intermingled in an academic setting. When recording salaries and wages charged to Federal awards for IHEs, a precise assessment of factors that contribute to costs is therefore not always feasible, nor is it expected.

(2) For records which meet the standards required in paragraph (i)(1) of this section, the non-Federal entity will not be required to provide additional support or documentation for the work performed, other than that referenced in paragraph (i)(3) of this section.

(3) In accordance with Department of Labor regulations implementing the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) (29 CFR part 516), charges for the salaries and wages of nonexempt employees, in addition to the supporting documentation described in this section, must also be supported by records indicating the total number of hours worked each day.

(4) Salaries and wages of employees used in meeting cost sharing or matching requirements on Federal awards must be supported in the same manner as salaries and wages claimed for reimbursement from Federal awards.

(5) For states, local governments and Indian tribes, substitute processes or systems for allocating salaries and wages to Federal awards may be used in place of or in addition to the records described in paragraph (1) if approved by the cognizant agency for indirect cost. Such systems may include, but are not limited to, random moment sampling, "rolling" time studies, case counts, or other quantifiable measures of work performed.

(i) Substitute systems which use sampling methods (primarily for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, and other public assistance programs) must meet acceptable statistical sampling standards including:

(A) The sampling universe must include all of the employees whose salaries and wages are to be allocated based on sample results except as provided in paragraph (i)(5)(iii) of this section;

(B) The entire time period involved must be covered by the sample; and

(C) The results must be statistically valid and applied to the period being sampled.

(ii) Allocating charges for the sampled employees' supervisors, clerical and support staffs, based on the results of the sampled employees, will be acceptable.

(iii) Less than full compliance with the statistical sampling standards noted in subsection (5)(i) may be accepted by the cognizant agency for indirect costs if it concludes that the amounts to be allocated to Federal awards will be minimal, or if it concludes that the system proposed by the non-Federal entity will result in lower costs to Federal awards than a system which complies with the standards.

(6) Cognizant agencies for indirect costs are encouraged to approve alternative proposals based on outcomes and milestones for program performance where these are clearly documented. Where approved by the Federal cognizant agency for indirect costs, these plans are acceptable as an alternative to the requirements of paragraph (i)(1) of this section.

(7) For Federal awards of similar purpose activity or instances of approved blended funding, a non-Federal entity may submit performance plans that incorporate funds from multiple Federal awards and account for their combined use based on performance-oriented metrics, provided that such plans are approved in advance by all involved Federal awarding agencies. In these instances, the non-Federal entity must submit a request for waiver of the requirements based on documentation that describes the method of charging costs, relates the charging of costs to the specific activity that is applicable to all fund sources, and is based on quantifiable measures of the activity in relation to time charged.

(8) For a non-Federal entity where the records do not meet the standards described in this section, the Federal Government may require personnel activity reports, including prescribed certifications, or equivalent documentation that support the records as required in this section.

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