

## **SC Cares Grant Management – Responses to Questions posed at 08/05/2020 Office Hours**

The Office Hours PowerPoint is available on the accelerateSC Website under the “Trainings” section:

**<https://accelerate.sc.gov/sc-cares-grant-management-program>**

### **PLATFORM**

#### **How can I add an accountant/employee to the SC Cares platform?**

- The platform is set up for only one user per Subrecipient. However, that user can be changed by request at [sccares@admin.sc.gov](mailto:sccares@admin.sc.gov)

#### **Must supporting documentation files be uploaded individually?**

- Supporting documents can be uploaded together with each corresponding financial activity and should align with the dollar value requested for that activity.

#### **Can more than one document be uploaded at a time?**

- Yes, you can upload multiple documents under each financial activity and under each financial activity budget category. Supporting documents should be uploaded for each corresponding financial activity.

#### **Can compressed (zip) files be uploaded that contain several pdfs/subfolders?**

- No, the system will reject any zip files.

#### **Is there a file limit size on the platform?**

- Yes, but it is quite high. You should be able to upload all supporting documentation in your application. You can reach out to the helpdesk (803-670-5170 or email [sccares@admin.sc.gov](mailto:sccares@admin.sc.gov)) if you encounter platform issues.

#### **How do you remove a file if needed?**

- Open the file that has been uploaded, there is a button at the top right with a down arrow. When you click on that arrow, there is a delete option to remove the file.

#### **Where can I enter Entity Budget/General Information in the platform?**

- Files can be uploaded on the onto the main page of the Financial Activity. Budgets should be uploaded once per recipient along with the first Financial Activity submitted.

#### **Once agreement is signed, how long does it take to receive the link to the portal? When can I expect to receive my username/password to log into the portal?**

- Your organization should receive their link and login information within a few hours of submitting your agreement. If you have not received your information within that timeframe, please contact the helpdesk at (803-670-5170 or email [sccares@admin.sc.gov](mailto:sccares@admin.sc.gov)).

#### **Will the platform be open to accepting new/backup information after August 15? Can I add more activities at a later date if I have already submitted my application?**

- Applicants will be able to upload multiple financial activities and supporting documentation to the platform at any time before the August 15 deadline. After that deadline, applicants can continue to upload supporting documentation to existing activities but will be unable to upload new financial activities.

## **APPLICATION/DOCUMENTATION PROCESS**

### **Do I need to upload FEMA PA documentation with my CRF application?**

- No, FEMA PA documents will be processed by SCEMD. However, if your entity had requested FEMA PA funds in addition to CRF funds for eligible expenses, you will need to fill out a Duplication of Benefits form on your application.

### **What is the deadline for FY 2020 expenses under CRF?**

- Eligible expenses must have been incurred between March 1 and June 30 to be eligible for reimbursement. A separate phase of funding for expenses incurred after June 30 may be set at a later date by the SC General Assembly.

### **Will claims be denied if I select the wrong activity? If so, will we have an opportunity to resubmit?**

- The technical advisor that reviews your application will reach out to you to clarify if they see an incorrect activity or submission category. That advisor will work with you to adjust the activity as needed and resubmit that section of your application.

### **How will funds be distributed to agencies/applicants after approval from the state? Will I receive additional guidance for fund reimbursement from the Budget Office or the Comptroller General?**

- Yes, the Comptroller General's office will contact your agency once your reimbursement request has been approved and will aid in distributing the approved amount.

### **Are there any penalties, financial or otherwise, to funds paid for expenses that are deemed ineligible or that may have been paid/reimbursed by other sources?**

- There are no financial penalties; you will simply not receive funding from CRF for any expenses that are ineligible in this program or have been reimbursed by other sources. If an expense is later determined to be ineligible or if it is determined that an expense has been reimbursed by a source other than the CRF, the entity will be required to return the CRF reimbursement to the state.

### **For Universities, should I upload a University Approved Budget for the year or just a budget for COVID-related Expenses?**

- The included budget for all entities should be the entity's approved budget for the entire year, not just for COVID-related expenses

### **What type of supporting documentation are you looking for to meet the budget requirement? For SC State agencies — will the general appropriation act be sufficient?**

- All entities must submit an approved, itemized FY2020 budget to be reimbursed for expenses under CRF. Supporting documentation for financial activities must include expense reports, invoices, receipts, HR-approved payroll, and other summary/narrative information about eligible expenses. For state agencies, your FY2020 budget as included in the Appropriations Act will suffice.

### **Do we have to submit our budget if it's not part of the South Carolina state budget?**

- Yes, a budget for each entity must be submitted in order to be eligible for CRF reimbursements.

**For expenditure requests that are eligible under CRF, should I upload a spreadsheet that summarizes everything (description, amount, vendor, etc.) or should I also upload invoices (back-up documentation)?**

- Expense reports, invoices and receipts with proof of purchase are all required to be uploaded for CRF eligible financial activities.

**Under the "Duplication of Benefits" tab on the portal, should I include ANY funding received from FEMA Public Assistance (i.e. Hurricane Dorian), or just funds received from FEMA for COVID-related expenses?**

- Only funds received or applied for regarding COVID-related expenses must be claimed as a potential Duplication of Benefits when submitting reimbursements to CRF. Funds that have been rejected under FEMA PA, but are still eligible under CRF, must be submitted with proof of rejection (email, notice, etc.).

**Is there a standard template for uploading general documentation and expense reports into the platform?**

- Yes, there will be a spreadsheet template shared with subrecipients to submit with their expenses. It will be uploaded to the accelerateSC website.

**Is there the possibility of a joint education session with FEMA and Guidehouse, so that any questions can be answered?**

- We will keep subrecipients informed about future office hours. For Phase 1 of the reimbursement process, please continue to submit all your questions to Guidehouse or the Department of Administration.

## **TIMELINE**

**When would you anticipate approval on July 31 submissions for CRF reimbursement?**

- Our goal is to process reimbursements within 14 days of receiving the request.

**If an expense is incurred prior to June 30, and I have outstanding invoices/purchase orders not yet fulfilled and are therefore not comfortable with the total cost, can we hold that and submit in the next round to be sure we are comfortable with all documentation?**

- The State has not determined if there will be another round of reimbursements at this time. If you are not comfortable with the total cost and expect some adjustment, we would recommend that you do not submit for reimbursement.

**I was told by a reviewer that an expense incurred on 3/26/2020 was outside of the reimbursement period. However, our subrecipient agreement states expenses incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020. Which is correct?**

- The subrecipient agreement is correct. As long as your expenses are in an eligible category and were incurred by March 1, they are eligible for reimbursement.

**Are the submission dates for the CARES Act also from March 1 to June 30?**

- Yes, because the CRF is distributed under the CARES Act. For Phase 1 of reimbursements, the timeline for incurred expenses is March 1 – June 30.

**When can we anticipate approval of reimbursement of expenses incurred after June 30?**

- A separate phase of funding for expenses incurred after June 30 may be set at a later date by the SC General Assembly. Any updates to future reimbursements will be provided to subrecipients as soon as possible.

**Can the due date be changed from August 15 to August 31 or a later deadline?**

- We will be operating with August 15 as the deadline for submissions under Phase I. Any questions or assistance you require with your application to submit within this timeframe can be addressed by the call center, Admin and at Office Hours sessions.

**Do we need to supply cost projections for July through December and/or PPE inventory as of June 30, 2020? Where do we provide the information?**

- Information regarding expenditures for July through December will be collected via a Department of Administration survey that will be sent out in the next few weeks.

**EXPENSE ELIGIBILITY**

**What kinds of payroll expenses are eligible under CRF and FEMA PA? What supporting documentation needs to be uploaded for payroll in the reimbursement application? Is there a template format?**

- Payroll expenses are eligible under CRF. Overtime payroll not covered by FEMA PA will be prioritized, then normal pay, and hazard/special pay, which may be paid back at a later date.
- A listing of every employee which you are looking to claim eligibility for, along with HR certified payroll records, number of hours worked per day, pay rate, and a summary of job description is required for reimbursement. A template will be provided to subrecipients at a later date to help organize this documentation.

**When submitting payroll expenses, can Subrecipients add benefits costs to their salary expenses?**

- Yes, these may be added.

**Will CRF cover the 25% of FEMA expenses not covered under FEMA PA? Should I submit those expenses to CRF?**

- Yes, that portion of non-federal expenses will be covered but will be paid through EMD. That amount will be based on the 25% estimate taken by SCEMD from your FEMA PA application.

**Where can I find a list of expenses for FEMA-eligible funding?**

- Expenses that should be submitted to FEMA instead of CRF can be found on the AccelerateSC website, under the "SC Cares Grant Management" page in the Office Hours PowerPoint.

**If something is found to not be eligible under FEMA after an SR has already submitted the DOB to us, can they resubmit the expense to be covered under CRF if it's eligible?**

- Yes, you may.

**Are we to include the 75% from FEMA Public Assistance, Grants Portal as a duplicate benefit in CRF?**

- Yes, please report the total funds you anticipate to receive from FEMA PA in the Duplications of Benefits form.
- SCEMD will be administering FEMA PA funds, as well as determining the 25% not covered under FEMA PA that will be covered through CRF.

**If we are utilizing Temp Help in lieu of overtime, will those charges be prioritized at the same time as overtime?**

- No, Temporary and Contract Hires will not be prioritized in the same category as overtime. They should be listed under "Purchased goods/services", not payroll expenses.

**Are temporary workers/contract workers eligible for pay reimbursement?**

- Workers reassigned to a different department who were previously staffed are eligible for payroll reimbursement. Contract workers are eligible as well but should be listed under "Purchased goods/services", not payroll expenses.

**Are Small Business Support Grants eligible for reimbursement?**

- No, grant programs are not eligible for reimbursement. However, expenses for supporting small businesses outside of a grant award are eligible.

**Are grants to non-profits, that provided services like meals to senior and purchases of PPE, eligible for reimbursement?**

- No, grant programs are not eligible for reimbursement.

**Is the CRF able to be used as a source of revenue replacement?**

- No, shortages of revenue or the funds associated are not CRF eligible expenses.

**Are restricted funds such as Victim Advocate Funding expenses eligible for reimbursement due to the revenue shortage of the restricted funding not coming into County?**

- No, shortages of revenue/associated funds are not eligible for reimbursement under the CRF.

**Is PPE an eligible expense?**

- Yes, PPE for distribution among the general public or in an occupation that is not directly related to COVID response are eligible for reimbursement under "Purchased goods/services".
- Occupations that are directly related to emergency medical response, such as PPE for hospitals and medical workers, are eligible under FEMA PA, not CRF.

**Are Contact Tracing and COVID Testing eligible under FEMA or the CRF?**

- Testing related to COVID response is only eligible under FEMA PA, while contact tracing expenses are only eligible under CRF.

**Are deep-cleanings for agency buildings eligible for reimbursement under CRF?**

- Cleanings due to the immediate closure of agency buildings are eligible for reimbursement under FEMA.
- Purchases of cleaning supplies or services after the initial closure period are eligible under CRF in the "Purchased goods/services" category.

**Are cleaning supplies such as masks, hand sanitizer for the public, thermometers, and cleaning products eligible under CRF or under FEMA?**

- All non-emergency response PPE, as well as cleaning supplies/services incurred after the initial period of lockdown are eligible for reimbursement under the CRF.

**Our town sends out text notifications in emergency situations throughout the year. We had to purchase additional SMS to send out updates related to COVID. Are early messages eligible under (i.e. March, April, etc.) FEMA communications and later messaging (i.e. May, June) eligible under CRF? What documentation would be required?**

- These expenses are likely all FEMA PA-eligible. The required documentation would be the invoices/receipts for purchases and a short description of the need as it relates to COVID-19.

**Is the time required to develop COVID-19 communications externally to the public via the city website, or internally to employees via the City's intranet sit, be covered under Payroll expenses?**

- Yes, developing communication channels in relation to COVID is a form of payroll expense.

**Would additional rental cost of vents be an allowable expense?**

- Yes, if the expenses were incurred in relation to COVID and used for a CRF based-activity.

**If we ordered masks for staff and the community, do we need to exclude the cost associated with printing names/logos?**

- Not required, full costs of masks and other PPE are covered. However, CRF funds are subject to availability and expense costs should be kept in mind when making purchases.

**Is there a phone number we can call if we don't get the answers we need today?**

- Yes, the Call Center can be reached at (803) 670-5170 for any further questions regarding the application and reimbursement process, submission of financial activities, or expense eligibility under CRF.

**How do I get in touch with the team that is reviewing my application?**

- The Technical Specialist Lead assigned to your application should reach out to you to discuss your application, if necessary. This person will be your Point-of-Contact for the review team.

**For large agencies, who will be our point of contact to discuss financial activity and cost eligibility?**

- Each entity will have a Technical Specialist Lead they will be able to reach out to in order to discuss cost eligibility and questions about their application. Any further questions can be sent to [sccares@admin.sc.gov](mailto:sccares@admin.sc.gov)