

---

## Grants Management Helpful Hints

### Change in Scope

As projects are underway, it may be necessary to modify or deviate from the planned and approved project activities, goals, or scope. While we always want your project to be successful, a grant is a written agreement between the recipient and federal government, and does require approval in writing from the Grants Management Division to be modified. All approved changes need be discussed in your semi-annual and final progress reports. Requests are not automatically approved.

#### What will trigger a “change of scope”?

Modifying, removing, or adding a key activity, milestone, or goal of the project will often trigger a change in scope. Ask yourself, “Will this change modify the overall goals of the project?”. If the answer is YES, it requires a change in scope. Even if the answer is no, you should discuss the change with your Federal Program Officer to be on the safe side.

**EXAMPLE 1:** Minor modifications to the activity timeline, generally, will NOT trigger a change in scope. The original timeline had the date of the workshop in April the following year. Due to scheduling challenges and a late winter storm, the workshop was changed to June. This change will not impact the other grant activities. This is NOT a change in scope, but the change SHOULD be documented in the progress report.

**EXAMPLE 2:** However, changing the content of that workshop from how to protect certain marine mammals to teaching children how to catch, clean, and cook fish in their backyard would be a major change in the activities and require a *change in scope* and written approval.

*Note: If your award requires only a small change to the budget, submitting a budget reprogram request may be the best course of action. Please talk to your Federal Program Officer if you have any doubts and discuss the options.*

#### Since the change will make the project better, is it OK to just make the change?

While we love the idea of making a project even better (reaching more people, or geographies for example), it will still require a written request for a change in scope. If your modification is not approved, you will be responsible for repaying grant funds used on this modification.

#### What needs to be included in my request?

The request needs to include a justification for the change, any other supporting documents, including a revised project and budget narrative. Keep in mind that the initial application went through an extensive review and approval period, therefore many requests for a change of scope will be reviewed thoroughly and approval is not guaranteed.

#### How do I submit the request?

The budget reprogramming request needs to be completed in Grants Online as an “*Award Action Request*”. A request can be entered by either the *Authorized Representative* or the *Principle Investigator*, but will need to be approved in Grants Online by the *Authorized Representative* prior to being reviewed by NOAA.

1. Click the “*Award*” tab.
2. Click the “*Search*” or the “*Search Award*” link. The “*Search Award*” page is displayed.
3. Click the “*Search*” button on the “*Search Award*” page. When your search results populate, click the award number for which you are submitting the change of budget.

- 
4. On the "*Grants File*" launch page, select the "*Create Award Action Request*" action from the action drop down menu then click the "*Submit*" button.
  5. The "*Award Action Request Index*" page is displayed with the available *Award Action Requests*. Click the link for "*Change in Scope*". The requested page will be displayed for you to complete. Enter a short justification, and click the "*Save*" button.
  6. The "*Award Action Request*" page is re-displayed with the attachment link and other fields. You can upload supporting documents at this time (revised project and budget narratives and supporting documents). After completing the required information, click the "*Save and Return to Main*" button. Another message will display where you can confirm your request and start workflow, click the "*Yes*" button.
  7. A review task is sent to your "*Task*" inbox for this request. The review task will go first to the creator of the document and then to the Recipient Authorized Representative(s) in the organization. If you have the role of "*Recipient Authorized Representative*" you will have to submit the request to the appropriate Federal Agency, thus you will have processed two tasks.

#### [More information on submitting a Change in Scope](#)

**Grants Online Help Page:**  
[Change in Scope Guidance](#)

**2 CFR, Chapter 2, PART 200-Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards**  
[Section §200.308 Revision of Budget and Program Plans](#)