

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers

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Fiscal Education of Grant Managers

- ▶ Don't assume anything.
- ▶ Identify what information is needed.
- ▶ If possible, create written guidelines.
- ▶ Explain the District's policies and how they integrate with federal and state requirements.
- ▶ Keep it concise.
- ▶ Update written guidance when needed.
- ▶ Follow up with trainings.

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers

- ▶ Don't assume anything.
 - Don't take for granted your grant managers know all the rules governing grant awards.
 - You may have assistant superintendents, curriculum directors, principals, retired teachers, etc. who have no grants background.
 - And they may not have experience using your financial accounting system.

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers

- ▶ Identify what information is needed.
 - Look at the lifecycle of a grant – from beginning to the end – to determine what to include in your education plan.
 - Ask yourself what the grantor expects of you and match their requirements with your internal policies and procedures

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers

- ▶ Create written guidelines that focus on:
 - Grant compliance
 - Roles & responsibilities
 - Record keeping
 - Communications: best practices
 - Budget development and revisions
 - Financial management standards
 - Time and effort reporting
 - Financial tracking and monitoring
 - Year end closeout activities

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers

- ▶ Explain the District's policies and how they integrate with federal and state requirements.
 - If your policies are more restrictive, grant managers need to know that.
- ▶ Keep it concise
 - Don't regurgitate word for word the federal regs and cost principles. Put the info in layman's terms, keep it easy to understand and relevant to what a grant manager needs to know. Use links to reference documents such as regs and circulars.

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers

- ▶ Update written guidance when needed.
 - Putting the information on your website makes it easier to update and access.
 - Go through your training materials at least once every two or three years to make sure the information is current.
- ▶ Follow up with trainings.
 - Annual training is critical. Need face-to-face meetings, especially with new grant managers.

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers–Written Guidelines

- ▶ Grant compliance
 - What does the term mean and why is compliance important.
 - Explain general laws and regs (EDGAR)
 - Explain purpose of OMB Circulars A–133 and A–87
 - What to look for in the actual grant award documents.
 - Factors affecting allowability of costs: reasonable and allocable

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers–Written Guidelines

- ▶ Roles & responsibilities
 - Look at the lifecycle of a grant within your organization.
 - Explain the roles individuals and departments play in the grant lifecycle.
 - Discuss commonly used grant documents and how they flow through the lifecycle.
 - The goal is to prevent paperwork, approvals and reviews from falling through the cracks.

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers–Written Guidelines

▶ Record keeping

- In order to demonstrate compliance and good internal controls your grant documentation must be in order.
- Provide guidelines for how to create the program and grant files.
- Documentation should be consistently filed so anyone opening the file can find what they are looking for, i.e., grant award, budget revisions, etc.
- Electronic documentation should be similarly organized.

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers–Written Guidelines

- ▶ Communications: best practices
 - Document verbal discussions with grantors and if necessary ask for clarification or acknowledgement in writing.
 - Written communication: don't forward emails without permission from originator, use formal language (not slang), don't send if you don't want a copy in someone's file.

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers–Written Guidelines

- ▶ Budget development and revisions
 - Before developing the budget, know the program goals and objectives.
 - Provide training on the State Chart of Accounts so grant managers can create an accurate budget.
 - If your internal COA is different from the State explain how the two integrate.
 - Make sure there is a consistent review process for budget development and budget revisions and communicate that process.

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers–Written Guidelines

- ▶ Financial management standards–EDGAR 80.20
 - Financial reporting
 - Accounting records
 - Internal controls
 - Budget control
 - Allowable costs
 - Source documentation
 - Cash management

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers–Written Guidelines

- ▶ Time and effort reporting
 - Make sure you have a system for determining required time and effort reporting.
 - Explain difference between semi–annual certifications and personnel activity reports.
 - Show grant managers how to: monitor employees being charged to their grants and complete required forms.
 - Place emphasis on this area as a common compliance finding that can end up being very expensive if required documentation is lacking.

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers–Written Guidelines

- ▶ Financial tracking and monitoring
 - Provide training on how to access your financial management system to review transactions.
 - Provide training on how to read reports that are produced by the system.
 - Without these skills grant managers cannot monitor critical financial milestones.

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers–Written Guidelines

- ▶ Year end closeout activities
 - It's imperative grant managers understand how transactions flow through your financial system.
 - They need to understand the concept of encumbrances, accruals, and the importance of getting transactions recorded in the right accounting period.
 - Cutoff dates will help. Year–end planning should start in February and March and cutoff dates should be communicated to all staff.

Fiscal Education of Grant Managers–Written Guidelines

Questions?