

OMB Uniform Guidance (A-81): Updates

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OMB Uniform Guidance – A-81 Recap

Fight On

- Combines A-21, A-110, A-133 and 5 other circulars into one circular, A-81
- Intended to reduce administrative burden and streamline operations

2/28/12 – Advanced Notice of Proposed Guidance

2/1/13 – Federal Register Notice

6/2/13 – Comments from research community submitted to OMB

12/26/13 – Uniform Guidance released

12/26/14 – Uniform Guidance effective

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- Although OMB has issued A-81, agencies also must specify how they will implement the new requirements
- Agencies were required to submit their implementation plans to OMB and the research community by **6/26/14**
- NSF issued its proposed guidance on how it will implement A-81 on **5/9/14**
- According to COGR, other agency plans may not be released until close to **12/26/14**
- Therefore, while A-81 is final, there is still uncertainty about how agencies will implement

Implementation at USC



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- Current working group: Department of Contracts and Grants, OFA, SPA, and Office of Compliance.
- Working group has been reviewing current practices against the new rules to find any gaps. Also working with key research administrators to develop implementation strategy.
- Fall 2014: Continue to document compliance with the new rule, continue training and development of guidelines to meet implementation deadline of December 26, 2014.
 - Guidance for direct charging admin/clerical salary and computing devices
 - Possible training on HSC in late 2014/early 2015



Cost Principles (200.413)

The salaries of administrative and clerical staff should still normally be treated as indirect (F&A) costs. Direct charging of these costs **may be appropriate** if all of the following conditions are met:

- (1) Administrative or clerical services are **integral** to a project or activity;
- (2) Individuals involved can be **specifically identified** with the project or activity;
- (3) Such costs are **explicitly included in the budget** or have the prior written approval of the Federal awarding agency; and
- (4) The costs are not also recovered as indirect costs.

Guidance in development

Highlights of Applicable Sections



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Cost Principles (200.453)

Materials and supplies used for the performance of a Federal award may be charged as direct costs. In the specific case of computing devices under 5k, charging as direct costs is allowable for devices that are essential and allocable, but not solely dedicated, to the performance of a Federal award.

Guidance in development

When does this start?

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Should applications submitted prior to 12/26/2014 for Federal awards which will be made after 12/26/2014 reflect the Uniform Guidance?

- Yes. All awards made on or after 12/26/2014 will be made with terms and conditions subject to the Uniform Guidance. Applications that are submitted before 12/26/2014 for Federal awards to be made on or after 12/26/2014 should be developed in accordance with the Uniform Guidance.

<https://cfo.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/2014-08-29-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf>

Procurement Standards (200.317-326)

There are five procurement types:

- Micro-purchases \$1-2,999 – must be reasonable
- Simplified \$3,000 - \$149,999 – must have documentation of more than one bid
- Sealed Bids > \$150,000
- Competitive Bids
- Noncompetitive bids (sole source)

OMB delayed implementation until 2016 – MORE TO COME



Procurement Standards (200.317-326)

200.318(c)(1) No employee, officer, or agent must participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a Federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest.

More to come on this, COGR has recommended a technical correction