



Illinois Department of Natural Resources Coastal Management Program

Coastal Grants Frequently Asked Questions

Contact Information

Who do I contact?

Please contact us at any time with questions about your grant agreement or project. We encourage grantees to submit all questions, forms, and paperwork to our office's shared e-mail account, DNR.CMP@illinois.gov. This account is checked daily, and allows us to direct your inquiry to the appropriate individual. Please include your grant number and topic in the subject line and body of all email correspondence.

Questions about reimbursements and payment processing should be directed to the Coastal Management Program Accountant - Belinda Moreno at DNR.CMP@illinois.gov or 312-814-6365.

Please direct all other inquiries to your assigned IDNR project administrator. This varies from one grant to another. If you are unsure who that individual is, contact DNR.CMP@illinois.gov or 312-814-1405 for clarification.

Acknowledgements

How do we acknowledge this funding source?

Grantees must acknowledge the IDNR Coastal Management Program and the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) as funding sources on all printed and online project materials including reports, publications, signs, banners, videos, media releases, event invitations, fliers, advertisements, and final documents. Grantees are also required to notify our office (email is acceptable) 10 days prior to issuing any public announcements or press releases concerning work performed as part of your project, and to cooperate with our office in coordinating the release of information. Logos are available for download at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/cmp/pages/granteeinformation.aspx>.

Detailed information about acknowledgement polices can be found in Section I of the updated Manual for Grantees.

Reporting

I have more than one current grant from the Coastal Management Program, which reporting forms do I use?

For grants that started prior to January 1, 2020, use the old reporting forms. For grants that started January 1, 2020 or later, use the new reporting forms. Both versions of the form can be found on the [Grantee Information Webpage](#). If you are unclear as to which forms to use, please contact your assigned IDNR project administrator.

Detailed information about reporting can be found in Section II of the updated Manual for Grantees.

Eligible Costs & Reimbursements

Can grant funds be spent on food? Can food be used as match?

Food, whether for staff or participants, cannot be purchased with grant funds or used as match. This means that food for meetings, workshops, or other events cannot be included as a grant cost or as match. The only exception to this policy is the purchase of food or per diem for staff members on travel status. These travel costs must be in accordance with your organization's written travel policies. We reserve the right to ask for a copy of your organization's travel policy and travel documentation.

What can we spend funds on?

CMP checks your project budget before your grant agreement is issued to ensure that all costs are "allowable." In order to be allowable, costs must be necessary, reasonable, allocable (which means they can be broken down to accurately reflect the proportion of the expense that is related to the project), and allowed based upon the information contained in the *Uniform Administrative Requirements Cost Principles for Federal Awards*. If you have a question about a specific cost, review your approved budget and read the [Cost Principles](#). You should always contact CMP if you have questions before expending any grant funds. We cannot reimburse expenses or allow them to be used as match if they do not meet the criteria of the cost principles.

Can we spend funds on something that involves ground disturbance? Can ground disturbing activity be used as match?

Projects that involve ground disturbance (e.g. sign installation, plantings, moving dirt) as grant or match costs are subject to additional approvals prior to issuance of a grant agreement. Unless your project has this approval, these costs will not be allowed.

What documentation is required for grant and match costs?

Below is a partial list of acceptable source documentation for reimbursements and match. If you are unsure whether your documentation is sufficient, contact our office in advance of your financial report deadline.

- Canceled checks
- Bank statements
- Invoices
- Paid bills
- Payroll receipts
- Travel reports
- Donation letters of third party in-kind (non-cash) contributions (i.e. meeting space or staff time)
- Signed time and attendance records for volunteers or program participants. For example, detailed logs of volunteer hours, including dates, time span of activity, scope of activities, and pay rate for equivalent paid work.

How long will we wait between submitting financial reports and receiving payment?

You can expect to wait for payment 8-12 weeks from the time you submit your completed financial report to our office. Wait times may be longer during the summer due to re-appropriation. You can check the status of your reimbursement here:

<https://illinoiscomptroller.gov/vendors/>.

Detailed information about eligible costs & reimbursement procedures can be found in Section II of the updated Manual for Grantees.

Project Budget & Scope Revisions

Can we make changes to our approved project budget?

Discretionary transfers between line items in your approved project budget may be made if the total amount transferred does not exceed either 10% of the line item or \$1,000 of the line item, whichever is greater. Discretionary line item transfers must not result in an increase to your overall project budget.

For changes greater than 10% or \$1,000 of the line item, you must request a formal budget amendment from the Coastal Management Program. Please contact our office to request a formal budget amendment, and before expending funds. We cannot reimburse expenditures that are not part of your approved project budget. Please note, an amendment request does not constitute an approved budget amendment.

How long does it take to get a budget revision approved?

We will notify you of the determination of whether the revision has been approved, denied, or the date which a decision will be reached within 30 calendar days of the date we receive your budget revision request.

Can we make a change to the scope of our project?

We rarely allow substantive changes project scopes, as it is unclear how these changes would have impacted the competitive scoring of a proposal. If you are considering a scope change, contact your assigned IDNR project administrator immediately. We will inform you as soon as possible about whether any changes to your project scope will be allowable and, if so, the process for formally amending the scope of work.

Who do we contact if our project personnel changes?

You are required to notify your assigned IDNR project administrator via email at DNR.CMP@illinois.gov if the primary staff member(s) on your grant reduce their time on the project by more than 25% or if your organization is unable to work on your project for more than three months.

Detailed information about changes to the terms of your grant agreement can be found in Section IV of the updated Manual for Grantees.

Grant Closeouts

What is the procedure for closing a grant at the end of the grant period?

The final step in your grant process is submitting a Closeout Report Package to the Coastal Management Program. This package is due no later than 60 days after the end project date specified in your grant agreement. A single two-week extension may be granted for extenuating circumstances. An extension request must be submitted to our office in writing (email is acceptable), at least 10 business days before your closeout report due date.

What do we do if we did not spend all of the grant funds?

If you do not spend all of the allotted funds during the period specified in your grant agreement, you have two options. 1) Send us an email that includes the amount of funding remaining and acknowledges you are aware the remaining funds cannot be reimbursed in the future, or 2) Complete, sign, and email the [Remaining Funds Acknowledgement form](#) to DNR.CMP@illinois.gov. This form is due 60 days after your grant end date, the same time as your final financial report is due.

What is the procedure for closing a grant early?

If you complete your grant funded project before the end of your grant agreement, you may close your grant early. The closeout procedure is the same as above.

Detailed information about closing your grant can be found in Section VI of the updated Manual for Grantees.

Grant Extensions

We need additional time to complete our project. How do we request a grant extension?

All grantees have the right to request a no-cost project end date extension. Generally, one 12-month extension is allowable unless the circumstances for the extension were reasonably foreseeable or the federal award funding your project is ending in less than 15 months. Rationales for extensions can include staffing changes, contracting delays, or delays caused by other projects.

To be considered for a no-cost grant extension, we need a signed letter on letterhead which requests an extension, gives reasons why and requests a new end date no later than 90 days before the end date listed in your grant agreement. If you have a question about whether you are likely to receive a no-cost extension, please contact us.

How long does it take to get a fully approved grant extension?

Grant extensions typically take 60-90 days to receive full approval. You can expedite the process by returning all documentation promptly, and ensuring that your extension request is signed by an authorized executive staff member (President, Executive Director, CEO, CFO, etc.).

Detailed information about changes to your grant agreement can be found in Section VII of the updated Manual for Grantees.