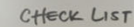


# Navigating Post-Award Activity Request



# What's an Activity Request?

- An activity request or change in scope is submitted by grantee to perform an activity that was **not** specified in the original approved grant application.

*Example:* When grantees have not identified all of their sub recipients in the grant application. In this case, the grantee will then be required to request prior approval for any grant activity not outlined in the approved application.

## Activity



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials  
Safety Administration

"To protect people and the environment by advancing the safe transportation of energy and other hazardous materials that are essential to our daily lives."

2



# Activity Request Submissions

- An activity request can only be submitted online and not through email.
- For activity request submissions please go to weblink:  
<https://hazmatgrants.phmsa.dot.gov/>
- Submit activity request when:
  1. Activities not specified in approved grant application
  2. Change in training schedule due to natural disaster, activation of unit to respond to an emergency etc.
  3. Budget Revisions
  4. Additional funds identified

## Activity



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials  
Safety Administration

"To protect people and the environment by advancing the safe transportation of energy and other hazardous materials that are essential to our daily lives."

3



## Budget Revision Between 2 Different Object Class Categories



- A budget revision involves any significant modification to the approved grantee SF-424A budget and budget narrative.

**Example:** Calisota budgeted \$100,000 for Personnel and \$250,000 for Contractual.

They submitted an activity request to provide additional Hazmat Technician Training for their responders. In the request they identified that they would use *\$20,000 from personnel to fund the trainings.*

- Calisota would need to provide an **updated SF-424A that reflects the reallocation of the \$20,000 from personnel to contractual.**



# Example: Allocations Between 2 Different Object Class Categories

**Number of Participants:** 50

**Activity Description:** We have \$626.15 remain in our year 1 HMEP grant because our contractual obligations came in under budget. We would like to transfer the money into the supply category and purchase seven (7) International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) Hazmat Operations 5th edition training manuals to be used in our hazmat ops class.

**How does this further your organization's program mission?** The state of Whales strives to use the most up to date cutting edge hazmat instruction. We will need the textbooks so that students can study current hazmat curriculum.

**Does this activity replace an item included in the approved application?** yes

**If yes, what activity is being replaced and why?** We are replacing contractual activities because the contractor came in under budget.

Note: **The SF-424A update is necessary** because these expenditures do require the transfer of allocations between two different object classes



## Budget Revision Additional Funds Identified



- Identification of additional funds include the completion of an activity under budget or the cancellation of an activity.
- An update SF-424A is *not required* if **only one object class category, is involved in the budget adjustment.**

**Example:** Calisota budgeted \$20,000 under Contractual for HazMat Operations Level Refresher Training. It was completed on schedule and **\$4,000 under budget**. They submitted an activity request to reallocate the \$4,000 for Hazmat Specialist Training under Contractual to allow for an increase in the number to be trained.





# Example: Allocations Between 1 Object Class Category

**Activity Description:** Division X LEPC hosted a transportation exercise in Disney World on July 25. Disney World is located in Woodpecker County. Woodpecker County experienced flooding this year which required projects to sit on hold. This exercise was not confirmed a go until the morning of July 25. Because of the hold on the exercise, Division X LEPC did not request supply approval or order what was needed. The items used were taken from Disney World Fire and now require replacement. We are requesting approval for Chem Max suits, a weather monitor that was damaged in the exercise, a 12 round drain cover and two 4x10 booms. The costs are listed below and copies of the items will be emailed.

**How does this further your organization's program mission?** The Division Hazmat Grant Program's mission is to assist in improving community preparedness in handling chemical accidents, promoting cooperation among state and local governments, increasing awareness of chemicals in the community and enhancing capabilities through planning, training and exercise.

**Does this activity replace an item included in the approved application?** No

**If yes, what activity is being replaced and why?** Division X LEPC has an approved project for exercise. We stated in our application we would provide an AR for supplies. Chem Max Coveralls XL (package of 6) \$269.70 Chem Max Coveralls 2X (package of 6) \$299.70 Kestrel 3500 weather monitor (1) \$199.00 12 round drain cover (1) \$182.95 4x10 boom (2) \$223.00 Total \$1,066.90

Note: Remember to update your final HMEP grant application to include these post-award activities and inform your fiscal office about the activities to update the final budget.



# Applicability of Needs Assessment



- A **needs assessment** is a systematic process for **determining** and **addressing** needs, or "gaps" **between** current conditions **and** desired conditions or "wants".
- The discrepancy between the current condition **and** wanted condition must be measured to appropriately identify the need.
- **New activities** should still align with your original needs assessment **or** alternatively, a newly identified need should be clearly explained in the activity request.





# Requirement for Budget Breakdown

- The activity request form is composed of 4 sections. This is intended to help you communicate both the resources and expenses for the project.
- It helps your Grant Specialist identify unallowable expenditures that may be included under generic headings.



# Section A: Requesting Organization

## HazMat Grant Activity Request Form

Please make sure to complete all sections. Make sure your organization is complete and address is most current.

### Section A - Requesting Organization

Organization:\*

Street  
Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:



# Section B: Point of Contact

## Section B - Point of Contact

First name: \*

Last name: \*

Phone: \*

Email: \*

Position: \*

Please make sure to complete all sections. Make sure the person who is completing the Activity Request information goes here. Once the activity is approved or rejected **this person will be notified.**



## Section C: Grant Information

Please make sure to complete all sections. Make sure your information is current and valid.

### Section C - Grant Activity Request Information

Grant Program:  
\*

☐ HMEP ☐ HMIT ☐ SPSTG

Grant Number: \*

(example: HM-ABC-1234-56-78-90)

DUNS Number: \*

Amount: \*

Activity to  
Fund: \*

Account Type to  
Fund: \*

☐ Plannin  
g ☐ Trainin  
g

Activity to  
Offset:  
(if applicable)

Account Type To  
Offset:  
(if applicable)

☐ Plannin  
g ☐ Trainin  
g



## Section D - Activity Description

\_\_\_\_\_

[illegible][illegible]

**No**

[illegible]

# \*Section D: Activity Description

## Things to remember when writing your activity description

- Please make sure you complete all answers.
- More is better! Include details of the activity information.
  - Is it allocable? (e.g., Is part of the activity benefiting another grant?)
  - Is it necessary?
  - Is it reasonable? (e.g., Is the cost comparable to other suppliers/contractors?)
  - Be sure to include: cost, any equipment, number being trained for the cost.





# Common Errors When Submitting An Activity Request



1. Amount includes Federal Allocation and match instead of allocation only.
2. No explanation of circumstances including if it is a planning or training activity at grantee level or subgrantee level that resulted in new planning or training activity request for grantee or subgrantee.
3. Source of match not identified if applying match for specific activity.
4. 50% tie-in to hazmat in transportation not illustrated via URL, attachment, or activity description.
5. No budget breakdown and if applicable inclusion of cost per unit to distinguish between supplies and equipment.



# Common Errors When Submitting An Activity Request



6. No reference request for approved HMEP grant activities only or prorated expenditures if request not for approved HMEP grant activities only.
7. Federal allocation does not align with amount displayed in activity description.
8. Some of the form's questions are unanswered.

**Example:** The Activity to Fund and if applicable the Activity to Offset.

9. No attachment of an updated SF-424A when the activity request includes the shift of funds from different object class categories (i.e., Contractual and Supplies instead of one object class category such as Contractual).
10. Activity Request submitted as new request instead of for retroactive approval consideration when activity initiated with grantee's organization approval only.



# Updates and Notifications



- Remember to update your final HMEP grant application to include this post-award activity. Grantees should keep an application addendum section to document post-award changes.
- Inform your fiscal office about the activity to update the final budget.
- Keep your Records current.



# Frequently Asked Questions (I)

## **1. On the Activity Request form in the amount requested, is that the full amount or only the federal amount of the full project?**

The amount requested under Section C-Grant Activity Request Information is the Federal allocation and does not include the grantee's match. If the match is specific to the activity instead of the overall match explained in the approved application, please address it in the Activity Description field under Section D-Activity Description.

## **2. Can grantees dispute a rejection?**

If the rejection is due to a lack of a transportation tie-in, please revise your activity request to identify how the activity relates to transportation. Activities should include at least a 50% tie-in to hazmat in transportation.

If you believe you were issued a rejection in error and would like to appeal, please email the grants team lead, Carla Sheppard at [Carla.Sheppard@dot.com](mailto:Carla.Sheppard@dot.com). Please attach your original request and supporting documentation.



## Frequently Asked Questions (II)

### 3. What is the cap on grant money requests?

For HMEP grantees, your cap is the maximum amount awarded during that fiscal year.

For reallocation, there is no cap on the Federal amount you request for reallocation via an activity request unless the reallocation involves an adjustment of your management and administration (“M&A”) of the HMEP grant. Up to 25% may be used for activities such as monitoring and evaluating the program. Other examples include: personnel and fringe costs for state employees involved with oversight of the grant, travel and supplies costs associated with monitoring the grant, and indirect costs.



## Frequently Asked Questions (III)

### 4. What if I need to move money between fiscal years for an activity request?

For states, Year 2 and Year 3 funds are added to your existing award issued in Year 1. For tribes, a performance period extension should be requested to use any remaining funds.

For states and territories, to document this change via an activity request, please include in the Activity Description field under Section D-Activity Description, the reason, source and fiscal years for the funds being reallocated. For example, Hazmat Technician Training designated under Contractual for year 1 was \$3,000 under budget, and the \$1,000 allocated for year 2 under Supplies is no longer required. Therefore, I propose reallocating the \$4,000 for a Hazmat Technician Training designated under Contractual for year 2 to allow an increase in the number to be trained.





## Frequently Asked Questions (IV)

### **5. Do sub-grantees have the ability to submit an activity request or just the grantee?**

The grantee is responsible for the management and administration of the grant. Therefore, the grantee submits the activity requests on behalf of the subgrantee and for activities proposed at the grantee level.

### **6. What if I don't know the number of participants for Section D?**

The number of participants is an estimate for the individuals benefitting from the activity. After the completion of the activity, the grantee should include the exact number of participants in the performance report covering the activity's completion period.

### **7. Will the slideshow be available to us?**

All presentations are posted at: <https://cms.phmsa.dot.gov/grants/hazmat/hmep-resources>



# Frequently Asked Questions (V)

## 8. How many changes are allowed?

PHMSA does not designate the number of allowable requests because of the variation of the need and frequency of the submissions. The reasons for activity request submissions are as follows:

- Activities not specified in the approved grant application
- Change in training schedule due to natural disaster, activation of the unit to respond to an emergency, etc.
- Budget Revisions
- Additional funds identified

If there are significant changes to the approved application, please work with your grant specialist to complete an activity request that includes multiple activity changes to reduce the number of requests and the administrative burden on the grantee.



## Frequently Asked Questions (VI)

### **9. Is the purpose of the activity request to determine allowability or to define budget changes?**

The purpose of the activity request is to determine the allowability of proposed new activities, changes in schedules, revisions of budget, and the usage of newly identified funds.

### **10. What if our grant number isn't listed or available in the activity request portal?**

PHMSA changed systems for awarding for the FY2018 grant funds. Grantees should refer to the grant number provided on the Notice of Agreement (NGA) when submitting an activity request. If your grant number is not listed, please email the activity request to your grant specialist and [HMEP.Grants@dot.gov](mailto:HMEP.Grants@dot.gov). Include a notification that the grant number is not currently listed.



## Frequently Asked Questions (VII)

### **11. Can you ask for additional funds? As opposed to just a change?**

The purpose of the activity request is not for supplemental funding requests. PHMSA only allows HMEP states and territories to request supplemental funds during Year 3 of the grant cycle.

### **12. Is it a best practice to include circumstances that created new or retro request such as agency turnover or federal declarations and states of emergency?**

Yes, PHMSA welcomes the justifications to track trends of events that necessitates activity requests.



## Frequently Asked Questions (VIII)

**13. Do you have to submit an activity request form when we are moving funds within the same budget category?**

No. If an activity is not changing and the costs are within the same category, an activity request is not needed. However, if you are moving funds to conduct an activity that was not in approved application, you must submit an activity request.

**14. Is it required to know the exact date of a course before the grant award has been made to a state?**

It is not uncommon for the exact date for a course to be undetermined before the grant is awarded. The grantee needs to provide an estimated month/year as well as a draft agenda or course overview. If the course/activity is topically diversified, typically verification of the activity's 50% tie-in to hazmat in transportation is required. This can be substantiated with course agendas or overviews.



## Frequently Asked Questions (IX)

**15. Grant number only allows 01 or 02 , you cannot enter year 03. It is rejected if you do, why? Is this a bug?**

PHMSA changed systems for awarding for the FY2018 grant funds. Grantees should refer to the grant number provided on the Notice of Agreement (NGA) when submitting an activity request.

**16. Is there a form for retroactive approval requests or is it simply a letter to be submitted?**

No, there is no designated form for retroactive approval. The grantee should submit an activity request and identify it as a request for retroactive approval consideration in the Activity Description field under Section D-Activity Description.

