

# Video Transcript – Grantee Amendments

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Carolyn: Hi this is Carolyn, and I'm here with Jonathan to talk about post award amendments for SAMHSA grants. Jonathan, can you tell me a little bit about post award amendments? What does the phrase post award amendment mean?

Jonathan: Sure. Post award amendments are changes or modifications to grant awards that you as a grantee may need to make during the year to accomplish your programs goals. The kinds of changes we will be talking about in this video require formal prior approval from SAMHSA before the changes can take effect. To obtain SAMHSA's formal prior approval in the form of an updated notice of award you'll need to submit a post award amendment application so it can be reviewed and approved by federal staff.

SAMHSA has several types of post award amendments that require formal prior approval. They are divided into these seven categories in the eRA system. Budget revision, Carryover request, Change in Scope, Key Personnel Changes, Merger Transfer etc which is also used for successor in interest actions, no-cost extensions, and organization change which is used for changes in your organizational information, not changes of the organization itself.

Carolyn: Okay, that makes sense but how do I submit a post award amendment application? What are the most important things to know before I start this process?

Jonathan: Good question. The most important things to know before starting are how to initiate post award amendment applications in era commons, how to fill out an application in assist, how to access an in-progress in assist, and finally who can submit applications in assist and how they do so.

Let's start with how to initiate post award amendments. You'll need to be the project director of a grant, or a signing official with the grantee organization. Once you've logged in to eRA commons with your username and password, access the non-research tab. Then, choose the manage post award amendments subtab. If you're a signing official you'll have to search for the grant you are looking for. You can do that using the IC and serial number, which can be found in the grant number of your existing award, or just click search without entering anything to bring up a list of all your organization's grants.

Then click the initiate dropdown and select an amendment type. This will open a new application for you in ASSIST, the system that all post award amendments for SAMHSA grants are processed in.

If you are a project director, you can initiate a post award amendment application by going to the manage post award amendments page but you don't need to search. Instead, a list of all the grants you

are listed as the project director on will be displayed. To start a new post award amendment application simply select your amendment type from the initiate dropdown.

You'll notice I didn't have to select which year I wanted to submit an amendment for. That's because whenever you initiate an amendment application it is automatically tied to the current budget period. Once the amendment application opens in assist, no matter who started it the first thing you should do is take note of the application identifier. This is a unique identification that can be used to find your application later.

Carolyn: Alright, that seems easy enough. Once I've started the application, how do I fill it out?

Jonathan: First you should check to see if you need to add any optional forms. All of the required forms for the amendment type you selected in commons will automatically pop up, but if there's an optional form you want to fill out you'll have to add it yourself. You might need to do this if for example, you were filling out a key personnel change application and wanted to include a biographical sketch or resume of the new staff member. You could add the other narrative attachments form to be able to upload your PDF documents. Let's do that now.

First, click the add optional form button then select the form you want to add. Click submit query to add it to your application and be taken to that form.

If you accidentally add the wrong form you can click edit, and then click remove form. Make sure you only remove optional forms you added though, because if you remove a form that is required for your amendment type, you won't be able to submit your application until it is re-added and filled out.

If you don't need any extra forms, you can just click edit on a form and start filling it out. Anything with an asterisk is required, but some fields will automatically be filled out for you using information from your existing award. You should still check to make sure that they are accurate and up to date.

Carolyn: Okay but what if I have to fill out some of my application later? How do I access an application I've started? Or what if I'm a project director and I need my business official to fill out a form? How do they find the application?

Jonathan: You can find your in progress applications by searching in assist. If you're logged in to eRA Commons, click the ASSIST link in the navigation bar to be taken straight to ASSIST. Once there, the easiest thing to search by is the application identifier which can be found on the summary page of every application. This is the field we highlighted earlier and said you should write down. If you know the application identifier, just navigate to the assist homepage, click on the search option, and enter in the identifier. If you don't know the identifier you'll have to use other search criteria such as the project title but if you have the application identifier just enter it and click search and you'll only bring up one search result. Select it to be taken to the application summary page for that application.

Carolyn: Great. Let's say my application is all filled out. What's next?

Jonathan: Next you'll want to submit your application. The first part of this is updating the submission status. Do this by clicking the update submission status button on the left and selecting ready for submission in the dropdown. Then either add a comment or click the option to proceed without a comment. These comments aren't shown to SAMHSA and aren't required. Updating the status will also

run assist validations on your application, which are rules that check to make sure your application is complete.

They are divided into warnings and errors, with warnings being things you can submit with if you need to but errors being problems that will prevent you from submitting your application until they are resolved.

If you have any errors go back and correct them by editing your forms and repeat the process to change the application status. If you have only warnings or no errors or warnings your application status will be changed to ready for submission.

Next you'll want to submit your application so SAMHSA can review it. To do this you have to have an eRA commons signing official role with your organization, which your organization's business official will have, and you'll need to enter grants.gov authorized organizational representative, or AOR for short, credentials.

Project directors have the PI role in commons, so they won't be able to submit applications. If you have the Signing official, or SO for short, role in eRA commons, and access to grants.gov AOR credentials, click the submit application button on the summary tab. This is where you will need your grants.gov AOR credentials. Fill them out or have an AOR fill them out, and then click submit to complete submitting your application.

You'll see a confirmation message after you've submitted your application.

Carolyn: Got it. So only someone with both an SO role in eRA commons, and AOR credentials with grants.gov can submit the application. What happens after that?

Jonathan: The project director and business official will get an email that looks like this. This is just a confirmation that your application was submitted, so the next steps are with SAMHSA. You can keep track of what's going on with your application by heading to the manage post award amendments page. Let's do that now.

First access era commons and select the non research tab. Then click manage post award amendments. Remember, if you're an SO you need to click search before you can see grants. If you're a project director you'll have a list of all your grants displayed without having to search.

In the list of search results or your list of grants, click view to be taken to a page where you can see all of your submitted amendment applications for that grant. You can also see their status here with four possible statuses consisting of submitted, in review, disapproved, and awarded.

Submitted means SAMHSA has successfully received your application. In review means SAMHSA staff have started to review your application and depending on if your application is approved or disapproved, the status will either update to awarded or disapproved. Awarded indicates your amendment has been approved and a revised notice of award has been issued, while disapproved indicates that SAMHSA has completed their review of your amendment application and disapproved it.

Carolyn: Great, I feel like I know a lot more about SAMHSA post award amendment process. Thanks for the information Jonathan, and thanks for watching everyone.