

OPTIONAL SPECIAL REQUESTS

Any applicant that has special requests in one or more of the following areas must submit such requests and any supporting documentation as a separate attachment(s) to their PY 2009 application. Requests for approval should provide a substantive rationale, e.g., improved program management, better service to participants, the least disruption possible to participants.

(1) **Additional Funds for Participant Training and Supportive Services, Older Americans Act Sec. 502(c)(6)(C)**. Any applicant that wishes to request such additional funds must provide the specific information listed in this section. In addition, any applicant that requests these additional funds for participant training and supportive services should not submit a separate budget narrative for these activities. Instead, its application's detailed budget narrative should identify the specific training and supportive service activities that it intends to provide to participants if its request is accepted. Costs associated with this request should also be included in their SF 424 and 424A.

The 2006 Amendments permit an exception to the 75 percent minimum level of expenditures on participant wages and fringe benefits that allows grantees to request to use not less than 65 percent of program funds for wages, benefits, and other costs, so that up to an additional 10 percent of funds are available for training and supportive services for the direct benefit of participants. As required in Section 502(C)(6)(C)(IV), applicants interested in seeking this waiver must provide a work plan that includes the following:

- (a) A detailed description of the additional training and supportive services;
- (b) An explanation of how activities will directly benefit participants, improve project effectiveness, and improve employment outcomes for individuals served;
- (c) A sequence and timeline for these activities;
- (d) If applicable, an explanation concerning whether any displacement of eligible individuals or elimination of positions for such individuals will occur, and information on the number of such individuals to be displaced and of such positions to be eliminated; and
- (e) The performance measures that are expected to be improved by expenditure of additional funds and the amounts by which each measure is expected to improve.

(2) **Increase in Administrative Cost Limitations, 20 CFR 641.870**. The Department of Labor may authorize an increase in the amount available for administrative costs to not

more than 15 percent if it determines that it is necessary to carry out the project, and the applicant demonstrates that:

- (a) It is incurring major administrative cost increases in necessary program components; or
- (b) The number of employment positions in the project or the number of eligible minority individuals participating in the project will decline if the amount available for paying the cost of administration is not increased; or
- (c) The size of the project is so small that the amount of administrative expenses incurred to carry out the project necessarily exceeds 13.5 percent of the amount for such project.

General statements that costs have increased do not constitute adequate justification. The applicant must identify which costs have increased, why they have increased, and how these costs relate to program operations.

(3) **Reduction of Maximum Participant Duration, OAA Sec. 518 (a)(3)(B)(i)**. The maximum length of time an individual participant can be enrolled in the SCSEP in the aggregate is 48 months (regardless of whether this participant is enrolled consecutively or not). If an applicant wishes to impose a maximum duration of *less than* 48 months for its program participants, it must request permission to do so from the Department in a separate attachment. Any such durational limit must be uniformly applied to all participants served by all of the applicant's local projects. Because of the current economic recession and Recovery Act funding received by grantees, requests for this waiver will be highly scrutinized, thus a justification for the request of this waiver must be sound.

(4) **Extension of Maximum Project Duration, OAA Sec. 502 (b)(1)(C)(ii)**. The maximum average project duration based on overall participation is 27 months. If an applicant wishes to increase its maximum average project duration from 27 months to 36 months, it must request permission to do so from the Department in a separate attachment. Because of the current economic recession, grantees should avoid terminating participants who remain in need of SCSEP assistance solely because of aggregate time-limits. If the grantee determines that it can better serve the needs of such participants through an extended project period, we expect that we will be inclined to respond favorably to an extension request.

(5) **On-the-Job Experience (OJE)**. If an applicant wants to utilize OJE as an additional training option, it must meet the requirements delineated in Older Worker Bulletin 04-04. The Department must approve the OJE policy and sample contracts before the grantee may exercise this option.

(6) **Cross-Border Agreements, 20 CFR 641.500(b)**. State applicants may enter into agreements to permit cross-border enrollment of eligible participants. Such agreements must cover both state and national grantee slots and must be submitted for approval by the Department.