

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE:

GUIDANCE FOR NIH PEER REVIEWERS

The NIH is deeply concerned for the health and safety of people involved in NIH research, and about the effects on the biomedical enterprise in the areas affected by the HHS declared public health emergency for COVID-19. The NIH is equally grateful to the thousands of reviewers who are serving in NIH peer review during this time.

Note the following guidance for applications that are undergoing review now or will be coming in for review during the coronavirus pandemic national emergency.

- ***Assume that issues resulting from the coronavirus pandemic will be resolved prior to award, and not allow concerns about temporary, emergency situations to affect their scores.*** These issues may include the following concerns (but others may arise):
 - Some key personnel on grant applications may be called up to serve in patient testing or patient care, diverting effort from the proposed research;
 - Feasibility of the proposed approach may be affected, for example if direct patient contact is required;
 - The environment may not be functional or accessible;
 - Additional human subjects protections may be in order, for example if the application was submitted prior to the viral outbreak;
 - Animal welfare may be affected, if institutions are closed temporarily;
 - Biohazards may include insufficient protections for research personnel;
 - Recruitment plans and inclusion plans may be delayed, if certain patient populations are affected by the viral outbreak;
 - Travel for key personnel or trainees to attend scientific conferences, meetings of consortium leadership, etc., may be postponed temporarily;
 - Curricula proposed in training grant applications may have to be converted to online formats temporarily;
 - Conferences proposed in R13/U13 applications may be cancelled or postponed.
- ***The application forms change*** from Forms-E to Forms-F will be implemented for applications submitted for due dates on May 25th and thereafter.
 - Because the NIH is accommodating late applications due to the coronavirus pandemic through May 1, 2020 (See Guide Notice [NOT-OD-20-091 for guidelines and exceptions](#)), some meetings may have a mix of Forms-E and Forms-F applications.
 - A Forms-E application should not be penalized for this format.
- During the pandemic emergency, ***post-submission materials*** will be accepted up to 14 days before the review meeting.