

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE FOR AUGUST/OCTOBER 2021 COUNCIL ROUND:

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.

- Reviewers should assume that problems arising from the COVID-19 pandemic will be resolved and complications related to COVID-19 should not affect their scores. Disregard temporary situations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, e.g. temporary declines in productivity, availability of key personnel, proposed patient populations, animal facility shutdowns, etc.
- Contingency plans will not be considered in peer review but, if needed, COVID-19 contingency plans will be requested and carefully considered by NIH staff, before funding.
- ***The application forms change*** from Forms-E to Forms-F was implemented for applications submitted for due dates on May 25th and thereafter.
 - Because some NIH Institutes and Centers are accommodating late applications due to the coronavirus pandemic, some meetings may have a mix of Forms-E and Forms-F applications.
 - A Forms-E application should not be penalized for this format.
- For this review cycle, preliminary data will be accepted as ***post-submission materials***, up to 30 days before the review meeting. Reviewers should consider these and other post-submission materials in their written critiques and scores.