



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

March 31, 2020

Dear State CTE Directors:

I first want to acknowledge the unprecedented challenges that each of you is facing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and commend you on the steps you have taken, and continue to take, to ensure the health and success of your students. Over the past few weeks, via emails and Town Hall conference calls, we have heard the many questions and issues you are facing regarding your Perkins-funded State formula and discretionary grant programs in the current environment.

Below, we begin by answering the most critical questions that center around the forthcoming State and local application submission and approval flexibilities. We will update this document with additional questions and responses when they become available. And, if at any time you have a new and emerging question, please reach out to your State's Perkins Regional Coordinator (PRC) or send an email to our career and technical education (CTE) mailbox at cte@ed.gov. Thank you for your commitment to the more than 12 million CTE students that we serve!

Sincerely,

/s/

Scott Stump

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1. Is the U.S. Department of Education (Department) providing additional time for States to submit their Perkins V State Plans, which are currently due on April 15, 2020?

Yes. While we encourage States that are prepared to meet the original April 15 application deadline to submit their State Plans by that due date, we recognize that a number of Perkins eligible recipients (States) may have difficulty submitting their Perkins V State Plans, covering fiscal years (FY) 2020-23, by that due date as a result of the challenging circumstances surrounding the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). For example, some States may need additional time to secure State Board approval and/or provide an opportunity for Governor review and joint signature.

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Accordingly, we are providing the following flexibilities for States that need additional time to submit their Perkins V State Plans.

- If the State is able to submit its State plan by June 15, 2020, the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) expects to complete review and approval of the Plan by June 30, 2020, and provide the State its first installment of FY 2020 Perkins funds on schedule on July 1, 2020.
- If the State is unable to submit its State plan by June 15, 2020, the Department will use the transition authority in section 4 of Perkins V to extend the duration by three months, through September 30, 2020, of the State’s One-Year Transition Plan, covering FY 2019-20 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020). For such a State, OCTAE will issue the first installment of FY 2020 Perkins funds on schedule on July 1, 2020, under the condition that the State will submit its full Perkins V State Plan by September 15, 2020. The September 15 date will allow enough time for OCTAE to approve the State’s plan prior to making the State’s supplemental FY 2020 Perkins award on schedule on October 1, 2020. These States may continue to seamlessly administer their Perkins V grants, including issuing FY 2020 Perkins subgrants to local recipients.

States needing these flexibilities should keep their PRCs up to date on the status of their State plan submission. OCTAE commits to working diligently to review and approve State plans as quickly as possible.

2. May a State award a Perkins V subgrant to a local recipient prior to fully approving its local application for funding?

Yes. Under 34 C.F.R. § 76.708, a State may authorize a local recipient applying for a subgrant to obligate funds on the later of the following two dates: (1) the date that the State may begin to obligate funds; or (2) the date that the local recipient submits its application to the State in substantially approvable form. The State has the authority and flexibility to determine what constitutes a substantially approvable application.

3. May a State provide local recipients additional time to complete their local applications, covering FY 2020-23, due to the impact of COVID-19?

Yes. For local recipients that are unable to submit a substantially approvable application to their State for approval by the State’s due date for local applications (July 1, 2020, for most States), the Department is using the transition authority in section 4 of Perkins V to enable States to extend the duration of the local recipient’s One-Year Local Application, covering FY 2019-20, by three months. For such a local recipient, the State may issue its FY 2020 Perkins subgrant on schedule to enable the local recipient to continue to seamlessly administer its Perkins V programs and services.