

IC Coordinators Meeting 5/20/09

Attendees:

Deborah Adams, NIAAA	Iris Johnson, NIA Intramural
Teresa Arnold*	Pam Klein, NHGRI, Extramural
Charles Baron, OD	Shamay Knox, NIAID
Virginia Betson, NIDCR	Andera McGee, NIAID
Meghan Bourne, Deloitte & Touche	James Mitchel, NHLBI
Antoinette Bridges, NIEHS (Telcon)	Vanessa Palacios *
Debbie Britton, CC	Amita Patel, NIMH
Donna Brooks, NCMHD	Tracy Pelan, NEI
Janice Brunson, CC	Rebecca Preston, NICHD Intramural
Joan Coulter, NLM	Robin Prigal, NCRR
Inez Demery, NICHD Intramural	Caren Rasmussen, NCI
Valerie Gheen, NCCAM	Andi Ricchi, NIAMS
Angela Burks, NIBIB	Jody Sallah, NIDDK
Marilyn Cuzzolina, CSR	Candice Scott, NINR
Patricia Simmons Drake, ORF	David Schneider, NHGRI Intramural
Paul Errett, NICHD Extramural	Anne Sumner, NIDCD
Mana Fernandez *	Patrice Thompson, NIDK
Linda Fitzwater, NINR	Theresa Tolbert, NIMH
Michelle Foster *	Jennifer Weidman, Deloitte & Touche
Ignacina Francis, NIA Extramural	Sheila Zichos, NIDA Intramural
Stephanie Greenleaf, CIT	
Beth Goldberg, NIAID	

* Purchase Card Program Office Staff

Opening Remarks

Teresa Arnold introduced Vanessa Palacios, a new member of the Purchase Card Program team. She also mentioned that Ronda Boatright was unable to attend due to a conflict in meetings while adding that Curt Brown (a new program member) was unable to attend the meeting.

Gift Card/Oligos Discussion

Ms. Arnold announced that there had been no changes in gift card policy at the Department level and that current IC policies would remain in effect until a decision is made whether or not to publish a single policy that would apply across HHS, including all NIH ICs.

The oligos card system (which may have different names in various ICs) is currently under review. These cards are considered to be similar to gift cards or debit cards. Holders of oligos cards with a current balance may continue to use them until the card

balance is exhausted. However, no new or monetary reload of cards may be purchased while an interim solution is being explored.

Documentation

There have been a number of issues regarding proper execution of purchase card applications received by the Program Office. The number one challenge is paperwork that is incomplete and/or lacks appropriate signatures. The Program staff attempts to contact individual IC POCs via telephone to correct incomplete paperwork which has become time intense in most cases. To help reduce administrative paperwork errors submitted, a checklist will be developed and sent to IC coordinators. After the purchase card checklist is published, incomplete or incorrect paperwork will be returned. Additional administrative problems that will be addressed in the checklist include incomplete CAO forms and cancellations, lack of Section 508 training certification for both cardholders and card approving officials (CAO), and NBS user access forms not submitted in MS Word format as required by NBS. All forms must be signed by the IC coordinator.

Remember that proxy forms require a minimum of three business days to process. The Program Office will try to expedite proxy requests as quickly as possible, however, anticipate a minimum of three business days.

Convenience Checks

To help convenience check writers, a detailed “do’s and don’ts” checklist is being distributed to check writers based on policies in the HHS Policy Manual and OPDIV supplement. The convenience check package will provide a full explanation of the responsibilities of check writers.

Reconciliation

The Program has received a mandate to resolve all outstanding US Bank transactions that have not been reconciled, some of which go back to 2007. As of June, NBS will no longer allow cardholders to manually log entries.

Disputes

There is information in OMB Circular A123, Management’s Responsibility for Internal Control which impacts purchase cards. Of note is the requirement that a cardholder must initiate action in a dispute or be held personally liable for repayment of the funds to the government (effective January 1, 2009). The provision will be incorporated into the next HHS Guide and NIH supplement. Ms. Arnold agreed to prepare a memo that would outline the A123 requirements so that individual ICs could amend their policies and procedures.

In response to an inquiry about the time to file a dispute, it was noted that although JPMorgan allows 90 days, HHS policy continues to be 60 days. Unauthorized charges must be identified during the reconciliation process. The cardholder should attempt to reconcile differences with the vendor as the first step regarding any dispute.

There was a concern regarding a hotel transaction was considered potentially inappropriate. Ms. Arnold noted that hotels had been unblocked in the merchant category code due to the fact that meetings are often held in hotel venues.

The representative from Deloitte & Touche stated that monthly risk based reviews of purchase card transactions occurs on 100% of account activity throughout NIH. Questionable transactions are identified, cardholders are notified by e-mail and asked to respond, and receive a copy of the final review outcome with a copy to the IC Point of Contact and Program Office. JPMorgan has nothing to do with identifying potentially suspicious transactions to NIH that should be reviewed from a policy and procedures compliance perspective. This is done through risk based data business rules. Ms. Fernandez explained that the Program is notified by the JPMorgan Fraud Department of any instances of suspected fraudulent charges and the cardholder's account is suspended and reissued. The Program Office forwards the e-mail notice to the cardholder and the IC Coordinator. Ongoing resolution is between the cardholder and the Bank and the Program Office is not advised of the final outcome of the specific account activity.

Marilyn Cuzzolina thanked Ms. Arnold for all her assistance in responding to purchase card inquiries and she also thanked the other staff members for their assistance.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.