



CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH
INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

GUIDANCE RELATED TO COVID-19

Governor Abbott declared a State of Disaster for Texas on March 13 related to the COVID-19 pandemic. As COVID-19 precautionary measures and illness hinder business activities, CPRIT is committed to supporting our grant applicants and grantees. We will provide guidance through our website as information becomes available.

CPRIT is reviewing several issues related to COVID-19. The guidance presented below in a “frequently asked questions” format addresses near-term issues that may arise over the next few months and impact grant applications, grantee reporting, and grant project timelines and costs. As always, grant applicants and grantees should follow all relevant policies and procedures, including those of your organization, and apply those practices consistently to the extent possible.

CPRIT and grantees may identify additional issues requiring further consideration as COVID-19 continues to affect Texas. Grantees should contact program managers (Patty Moore, Academic Research; Rosemary French, Product Development; and Ramona Magid, Prevention) with questions about COVID-19’s effect on individual grant projects. CPRIT has also created a dedicated email (covid19@cprit.texas.gov) for grantee questions.

CPRIT will consider new COVID-19 developments in line with current cost principles, state law, and CPRIT rules. We are committed to working with grant applicants and grantees to support cancer research and prevention projects and provide necessary flexibility.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

What if I cannot submit my CPRIT grant application by the deadline because of COVID-19?

CPRIT has 10 [open requests for applications](#) currently. Applications for the three CPRIT Recruitment Award applications are due by the 20th of each month. The Dissemination of CPRIT-Funded Cancer Control Intervention Award applications are due June 2. Applications for CPRIT’s Academic Research Program Training Award and the five different Individual Investigator Research Awards are due June 3.

At this time CPRIT expects to maintain our normal review schedule. We will monitor COVID-19 effects and revise application deadlines if necessary. CPRIT will announce any change via CPRIT’s list serve and on our website.

Will COVID-19 affect CPRIT’s timeline for reviewing and approving awards for applications already submitted to CPRIT?

Peer reviewers are currently evaluating applications submitted for the second review cycle of fiscal year 2020, with award recommendations set for approval at the August 19 Oversight Committee meeting.

CPRIT’s review panels will meet virtually (rather than in-person) because of COVID-19. Governor Abbott authorized options for state agency governing boards to also meet virtually pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act while COVID-19 concerns limit in person gatherings and travel.

With these measures in place, CPRIT expects the peer review and award recommendation timeline to remain on course for the Oversight Committee to approve awards in August.

GRANT REPORTING

What should I do if I cannot file my quarterly Financial Status Report (FSR) on time?

The next FSR deadline (covering expenses incurred December 1, 2019 – February 29, 2020) is May 29, 2020. [CPRIT rules](#) permit an additional 30-day grace period (through June 28, 2020) to submit the FSR and supporting documentation.

CPRIT recognizes that grantees may have reporting delays due to the impact of COVID-19. If a grantee is unable to file the FSR by the May 29 deadline, [CPRIT’s rules](#) include a process to defer submission of the FSR until August 29, the due date of the FSR for next fiscal quarter (covering expenses March 1 – May 31). The FSR filed by August 29 will include six months of project costs and supporting documentation, rather than three months.

The grantee should submit a request to defer submitting the next FSR (due May 29) until August 29 through CGMS/CARS using the “Change Not Otherwise Specified” option under the “Change Request” tab. The grantee should submit the request by May 29. CPRIT will approve deferral requests related to delays caused by COVID-19.

More information about FSR deadlines and deferral requests is available in [CPRIT’s administrative rule §703.24](#) and [CPRIT’s Grant Policies and Procedures Guide at Section 6.2](#).

What should I do if I cannot file my audit on time?

Grantees expending \$750,000 or more in CPRIT grant funds or a combination of CPRIT and other state grant funds in the grantee’s fiscal year must complete a single audit, program specific audit, or agreed upon procedures audit no later than nine months after the end of the grantee’s fiscal year.

[CPRIT's rules](#) allow for a grantee to request additional time to submit a required audit to CPRIT. If the grantee is unable to complete and submit a required audit by the due date because of the effects of COVID-19, please notify CPRIT compliance staff that the audit will be late. When notifying CPRIT, include the expected filing date for the audit. CPRIT will work with the grantee to extend the deadline as appropriate.

More information about audit deadlines is available in [CPRIT's administrative rule §703.13](#) and [CPRIT's Grant Policies and Procedures Guide at Section 6.5](#).

What should I do if I cannot file other required reports on time?

[CPRIT's rules](#) require all grantees to submit required reports within 60 days of the anniversary of the grant contract's effective date. These reports include annual progress reports, Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) forms, annual inventory reports, and revenue sharing forms. In addition, matching certification forms are due 30 days following the due date of the last quarterly FSR of the grant year. Some grantees must also submit quarterly progress reports.

CPRIT recognizes that grantees may have reporting delays due to the impact of COVID-19. The grantee should contact the program manager if the grantee is unable to submit a required report by the reporting deadline. CPRIT will work with grantees to extend the deadline, if appropriate.

How will CPRIT assess progress if COVID-19 stops or disrupts work on my project?

CPRIT understands that the potential effects of COVID-19 may impact the progress of CPRIT-supported research and prevention projects. Grantees should explain the COVID-19 effects that disrupted the project's activities in the required progress report. CPRIT is committed to working with its grantees and will consider the grantee's explanation when evaluating overall progress.

More information about progress report deadlines is available in [CPRIT's administrative rule §703.21](#) and [CPRIT's Grant Policies and Procedures Guide at Section 6.3](#).

PROJECT TIMELINE AND COST ISSUES

What should I do if COVID-19 affects my ability to complete the project's goals and objectives within the budget and timeline included in the grant contract?

CPRIT recognizes that the potential effects of COVID-19 may affect the grantee's ability to complete project goals and objectives within previously agreed timelines. CPRIT will work with the grantee to address goals and objectives changes necessary because of COVID-19. The grantee requests and CPRIT approves any changes to goals and objectives through CGMS/CARS.

The grantee may make transfers between or among lines within budget categories to accommodate changes resulting from COVID-19 without prior CPRIT approval if the transfer

meets certain criteria listed in [CPRIT's rule](#) addressing budget changes. CPRIT will work with the grantee to review and approve all other contract goal, objective, and budget changes due to COVID-19.

More information about goals, objectives, and budget changes is available in CPRIT's administrative rules [§§ 703.10](#) and [703.25](#) and CPRIT's [Grant Policies and Procedures Guide at Sections 5.14 and 5.15](#).

What should I do if I cannot complete my CPRIT-funded project on time because of the effects of COVID-19?

CPRIT provides grantees additional time to complete the work on CPRIT-funded projects through no-cost extensions (NCE). The grantee may request an NCE via the "Change Request tab" of CGMS/CARS within the last six months of the grant. Once approved, CPRIT will amend the contract to reflect the new termination date. When requesting an NCE, the grantee should indicate that COVID-19 affected the grantee's ability to complete the work on time.

More information about no cost extensions is available in [CPRIT's administrative rule §703.14](#) and [CPRIT's Grant Policies and Procedures Guide at Section 13.3](#).

Will CPRIT reimburse personnel costs (salaries and benefits) for employees assigned to the project who are not working on the project because of COVID-19?

CPRIT recognizes that COVID-19 related business closures and other effects may prevent grantee personnel assigned to the CPRIT-funded project from working. We are seeking guidance from the Governor's Office and the Texas Comptroller regarding CPRIT's authority to reimburse otherwise eligible personnel costs when no work is performed because of COVID-19 business closures and other effects. We will notify grantees once we receive more information.

Will CPRIT reimburse stipend payments to trainees who are not working because of COVID-19?

CPRIT recognizes that COVID-19 related business closures and other effects may prevent trainees from working. We are seeking guidance from the Governor's Office and the Texas Comptroller regarding CPRIT's authority to reimburse stipends when no work is performed because of COVID-19 business closures and other effects. We will notify grantees once we receive more information.

Can I charge travel costs and/conference costs to a CPRIT grant for travel booked and paid, but not taken, because my employer limited employee travel or the event was cancelled due to coronavirus?

CPRIT recognizes that institutional travel bans and other COVID-19 related effects have caused some grantees to incur nonrefundable travel and conference costs for travel and registration fees booked but not taken. We are seeking guidance from the Governor's Office and the Texas

Comptroller regarding CPRIT's authority to reimburse otherwise eligible travel costs and registration fees that are nonrefundable. We will notify grantees once we receive more information.