



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Centers for Independent Living Executive Director Changes

Introductory Note: Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are grantees that receive funding from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, in Subchapter C. Federal guidelines require grantees to inform funding agencies and receive prior approval of changes in “Key Personnel.” For the purposes of this FAQ, “Key Personnel” refers to the CIL Executive Director (ED) or interim Executive Director who also serves as the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). It is critical to the business activities of both the grantee and ACL that information about the Executive Director/Authorized Organizational Representative is always current and accurate. It is, therefore, important for grantees to have a clear understanding of the requirements associated with changes to the ED/AOR position. The following FAQ is provided as guidance to assist CIL grantees in managing changes to ED/AOR.

Q 1: What are the responsibilities of the Authorized Organizational Representative and of the CIL grant program, who typically serves in the role?

A 1: The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) is the designated representative of the recipient organization with the authority to act on the organization’s behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing the grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by the applicable Federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a grant is awarded. These responsibilities include accountability both for the appropriate use of funds awarded and the performance of the grant-supported project or activities as specified in the approved application. For CILs, the Executive Director or interim Executive Director typically serve as the AOR.

Q 2: What is considered a “change” in status or absence of ED/AOR?

A 2: A change is when the existing ED/AOR, as identified on the Notice of Award, resigns or withdraws from the project entirely, is absent from the project during any continuous period of three (3) months or more, or reduces time devoted to the project by 25 percent or more from the level that was approved at the time of award.

Q 3: What if the ED/AOR remains the same but changes his/her name?

A 3: The grantee must update the SAM, IRS, D&B websites and all federal reporting systems and notify the Project Officer (PO) of the name change.

Q 4: Are there minimum qualifications that fulfill the requirements for ED/AOR hiring?

A 4: No. Each grantee determines the qualifications necessary to successfully serve as an ED/AOR. However, the grantee should be able to show ACL/ILA that the individual has an appropriate level of qualifications and authority to direct the project to be supported by the award.

The Board of Directors (BOD) should refer to the ILRU website that provides hiring tips for executive directors “Tips for hiring an Executive Director” (<http://ilnet-ta.org/wp/2017/01/06/tips-for-hiring-an-executive-director/>), for additional guidance.

Q 5: Where can I find the statutory and regulatory authority requiring ACL/ILA preapprovals after a key personnel status change?

A 5: The US Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 45 – Public Welfare, Part 75—Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards Subpart C—Pre-Federal Award Requirements and Contents of Federal Awards, 45 CFR §75.308 - [Revision of budget and program plans](https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2016-title45-vol1/xml/CFR-2016-title45-vol1-part75.xml), which is available online at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2016-title45-vol1/xml/CFR-2016-title45-vol1-part75.xml>. The Department of Health and Human Services Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS), which is located in Section II-54 and II-56, and online at <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/grants/grants/policies-regulations/hhsgps107.pdf>, has guidance on preapproval requirements.

Q 6: What are the steps a grantee must take when there is a change in ED/AOR?

A 6: The interim agent of the organization responsible for the CIL award should ensure the BOD has access to the “FAQ: CIL Executive Director Changes” document, the grantee checklist, and the project officer’s contact information at all times. Before the recruitment/promotion/hiring process begins, the BOD should refer to all related materials for guidance. The recruitment/promotion/hiring process should be open, fair, and transparent.

Q 7: What happens if the arrangements proposed by the grantee, including the qualifications of any proposed ED/AOR, are not acceptable to the Project Officer?

A 7: Requests for changes in ED/AOR can be disapproved. In the event an individual disapproved by a PO is hired, the grantee’s award may be suspended or terminated. If the grantee wants to terminate the project voluntarily because it cannot complete a suitable hire, the PO should be notified in writing, and closeout instructions will be provided.

Q 8: What role does a CIL’s BOD play in a change in status of the ED/AOR?

A 8: The Board of Directors plays an important role in the transition. The BOD must notify the PO, in writing, of the decision to start the process of hiring or promoting for the ED/AOR position. The BOD must submit a copy of the final candidate’s biographical sketch, resume, and supporting documents to the PO for review. If applicable, the BOD or a proxy it designates must submit budget

changes resulting from the proposed key personnel change to the PO for approval or present any alternate arrangements for replacing the ED/AOR. The PO will notify the BOD when the review is complete and the candidate is approved for hire or a promotion. The BOD must submit to the PO a signed copy of the meeting minutes that indicate the BOD's approving of the candidate and a hire date.

Q 9: What are the first steps a new ED/AOR should take after the hire date?

A 9: The ED/AOR should (1) provide the PO with his/her full contact information, (2) Update contact information on the following websites: System for Award Management (SAM) and Dun & Bradstreet (D&B), and (3) Complete a request for Change in key personnel in GrantSolutions.

To complete a new amendment in GrantSolutions, access "Manage Amendments," click "New," select appropriate key personnel change amendment (ACL Change in AOR), and select "Create Amendment." GrantSolutions has a training video showing grantees how to request and manage grant amendments.

Q 10: Does ILA have a quick and easy checklist that grantees can use to make sure no steps are missed?

A 10: Yes. ILA has developed a checklist, with this FAQ, titled "Grantee Checklist for Changes to ED/AOR."

Q 11: Are there resources available that would be helpful to a new ED/AOR?

A 11: Yes, additional information on managing a grant can be found on ACL's website at "Managing a Grant" (<https://www.acl.gov/node/670>). ACL also funds Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU) to provide grantees training and technical assistance ("CIL-NET Technical Assistance" [<http://www.ilru.org/projects/cil-net/cil-net-technical-assistance>]). ILRU hosts monthly teleconference calls for new CIL EDs and has resources available on issues such as service delivery, nonprofit management, and general operations of a CIL.

Additional ILRU resources that may be helpful include:

- IL-NET TA: [Tips for hiring an Executive Director](http://ilnet-ta.org/wp/2017/01/06/tips-for-hiring-an-executive-director/), <http://ilnet-ta.org/wp/2017/01/06/tips-for-hiring-an-executive-director/>;
- Job Announcements: [Post a job announcement on the ILRU website](http://www.ilru.org/job-announcements), <http://www.ilru.org/job-announcements>;
- On-Demand Training: [CIL Financial Management](http://www.ilru.org/topics/cil-financial-management), <http://www.ilru.org/topics/cil-financial-management>; and
- On-Demand Training: [CIL Management and Operations](http://www.ilru.org/topics/cil-management-operations), <http://www.ilru.org/topics/cil-management-operations>.

Q 12: What is the role of the Project Officer?

A 12: The PO's role is to review the items submitted and approve or disapprove the promotion/hiring request to change ED/AOR. These items include:

- Recruitment and selection process for new key employee(s);
- Position description;
- Biographical sketch;
- Resume and supporting documents;
- Budget changes (if applicable); and
- Signed meeting minutes of the BOD approving the hire of the candidate.

The PO will check [SAM.Gov, https://www.sam.gov/portal/SAM/#1](https://www.sam.gov/portal/SAM/#1), to confirm the candidate has not been suspended or debarred.

Once the PO has reviewed submitted materials, provided a hire approval, and received the required response from the grantee, the Office of Grants Management will review the change and issue a new of a Notice of Award.

Q 13: What grant-related systems may be impacted by a change in ED/AOR and how are these systems updated with changes?

A 13: The new ED/AOR should learn how to use and update all Federal reporting systems used by grantees. These systems include:

- GrantSolutions – An end-to-end grants management service that provides solutions for grantors, grantees, and the public.
 - Website: <https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/>.
 - [Recipient User Account Request Form](#).
- Payment Management System (PMS) – The Payment Management System accomplishes all payment-related activities for HHS grants from the time of award through closeout. PMS was developed for the purpose of creating a central system that is capable of paying most Federal assistance grants, block grants, and contracts.
 - Website: <https://pms.psc.gov/>.
 - [PMS System Access Form](#).
- ACLReporting – The ACL Reporting system is an ACL-wide grantee management application focusing on program performance, planning and federal report submission.
 - Website: <https://reporting-pilot.acl.gov/#/>.
 - Training Manual: Available upon request to PO