

**CHAPTER 1-120**  
**ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT APPLICATIONS AND AWARDS**

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**1-120-00 What does this chapter do?**

- A. This chapter explains how you, an applicant can apply for a grant or cooperative agreement funding awarded by us, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE). It also explains how we review your application, and the process we use to award an agreement if we approve your application.
- B. This chapter does not apply to the assistance programs specifically described in other chapters of this manual: the Coal Regulatory program, Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program, Watershed Cooperative Agreement Program, and Technical Studies Program. This chapter applies to all other OSMRE financial assistance agreements, such as new, experimental, or one-time grants, or cooperative agreements.

**1-120-10 How can you send us your application?**

You may send us your application by any of the following methods.

- A. E-mail your application to us. You must show the name and title of the authorized official who signed the original forms and the date signed in the signature section of the application. You must maintain the original signed documents in your files;
- B. Mail us your signed original paper application.
- C. Enter your application in an approved electronic portal such as [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

**1-120-20 When should you apply?**

You should send us a complete application at least 60 days before you intend to start the project.

**1-120-30 What should you include in your application?**

A complete application must provide all the information we need to decide whether to approve your application and also to process your assistance agreement. Include the following items in

your application:

- A. Signed or approved Application for Federal Assistance, [SF-424](#).
- B. The Program Narrative must explain the proposed project. You may use your own electronic medium to develop this narrative. You must provide the following information:
  - 1. Objectives and Need for Assistance. Explain the need for the assistance. State the principal and subordinate objectives of the proposed assistance agreement. Include relevant data, and identify the sources of the data.
  - 2. Results and Benefits Expected. Identify results and benefits that the proposed program will produce. For example, describe how this assistance agreement will help improve the environment and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.
  - 3. Approach. Outline a plan of action for the assistance agreement. Describe how the proposed work will be accomplished. Cite factors which might help or hinder the work. Explain your reasons for taking this approach as opposed to others. Describe any unusual features of this assistance agreement. Identify the kinds of data to be collected and maintained. Discuss the criteria and methodology to be used to evaluate the results, and success of the proposed program.
- C. The itemized budget must list the project costs. It must break out the total costs by line item, such as personnel and supplies. If your project will include more than one activity, the budget must break out the total costs by activity. If your project will include funds from other sources, the budget must break out total costs by the source of the funds. You may use the optional [OSMRE 47](#) form or any format.
- D. Your budget justification narrative must explain each cost included in your itemized budget list. Describe how you calculated the cost and why the item is needed. You must provide enough information for us to determine whether the line items included under each activity are reasonable, necessary, and allowable.
- E. Describe your organization briefly.
- F. Describe any partners, other funding, and other support for the project.
- G. Provide an appropriate Assurances form signed and dated by your organization's authorized official. Use either the Assurances for Non-Construction Programs, form [SF 424B](#); or the Assurances for Construction Programs, form [SF 424D](#).

### **1-120-40 How will we review your application and decide whether to approve it?**

We will normally review and process your application within 60 days of receiving it. Our awarding office must take the following actions to review your application:

- A. If we receive your application by email or regular mail, we must confirm our receipt of the application within three working days.
- B. Determine that the application is administratively complete and that there are no obvious mathematical errors.
- C. Confirm that funds are available for the award.
- D. Check that your organization is eligible for Federal assistance funds. Check the System for Award Management (SAM) to determine whether a participant or principal is debarred, suspended, or otherwise ineligible. Confirm that your organization is in compliance with the single audit requirements if applicable.
- E. Review the application. The programmatic review will assess the need for the program, its likelihood of success, and its appropriateness for OSMRE. The financial review will address whether the proposed costs are reasonable and necessary, the program will be efficient and effective, and your organization is able to manage Federal funds.
- F. We will determine whether to approve the application based on our reviews. If we disapprove the application, we will notify you in writing of our decision. If we approve the application, we will award your grant or cooperative agreement.

### **1-120-50 How will we award your grant or cooperative agreement?**

After we decide to award your agreement, our awarding office will take the following actions to process the award:

- A. Before the award, we will provide information about the planned award to our Office of Communications for Congressional and public news release.
- B. We must process the award through our electronic grant system. Our accounting system will post the award to Treasury's grant payment system, where it will be available for you to request funds.
- C. We will send you a written agreement award document. We will also send you information about programmatic and financial reporting requirements, how to manage the agreement, and how to contact us.

### **1-120-60 What Information will we keep in our official assistance agreement file?**

The following is considered the minimum level of documentation that we will maintain in the official assistance agreement file. We will include additional supporting information and reports as appropriate for the particular application, the recipient, and the awarding office:

- A. Your application as originally received, all subsequent additions or revisions, and any other information we received from you.
- B. Records of all meetings or telephone conversations which provided information in support of the application.
- C. All correspondence between you and us about the application or the award decision.
- D. All our internal reviews of the application or parts of the application.
- E. All explanations or resolutions of questions raised during the review process.
- F. All records or explanations of the timing of the award process, especially any time period when the awarding office could not process the award because it was waiting for actions outside its control, such as your responses to questions or availability of funds.