

Grant Administration: Always Read the Grant Agreement – April 14, 2023

“Always read the fine print.” It is an old adage that holds true when it comes to your grant agreement. Read it. Reading a federal or state grant agreement and its terms and conditions can seem like a daunting and arduous process, especially if you are doing so for the first time. The agreement may include unfamiliar terms, refer to sections of federal statute, rules, and codes (i.e., 2 C.F.R Part 200), and generally make you want to sign it without reading it.

Don't! The agreement is your contract with your funder - the state or federal government – and you are bound to it upon signature. It contains your legal obligations regarding the money you are accepting. Agreements have administrative requirements, like reimbursement limits; programmatic requirements, like data collection and reporting schedules; and specific conditions related to the grant, like web accessibility and document credits. Unpack your grant agreement – use it to make a list of required activities, due dates/deadlines, and items that require review should they occur, such as notifications regarding changes in personnel. The internet is a good tool for researching unfamiliar terms and conditions. Some state and federal agencies post their standard grant agreement terms and conditions on their website so applicants can review them prior to applying.