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§ 1629.5 What losses must the bond cover?

The bond must provide recovery for loss caused by such acts as fraud, dishonesty, larceny, theft, embezzlement, forgery, misappropriation, wrongful abstraction, wrongful conversion, willful misapplication, or any other fraudulent or dishonest act committed by an employee, officer, director, agent, or volunteer.

§ 1629.6 What is the required minimum level of coverage?

(a) A recipient must carry fidelity bond coverage or similar coverage at a minimum level of at least ten percent of its annualized funding level for the previous fiscal year.

(b) If a recipient is a new recipient, the coverage must be at a minimum level of at least ten percent of the initial grant.

(c) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, recipients must not carry coverage under this part at a level less than \$100,000.

§ 1629.7 Can LSC funds be used to cover bonding costs?

Costs of bonding required by this part are allowable if expended consistent with 45 CFR part 1630. Costs of bonding such as rates, deductibles, single loss retention, and premiums, are allowable as an indirect cost if such bonding is in accordance with sound business practice and is reasonable.

PART 1630—COST STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

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Subpart A—General Provisions

§ 1630.1 Purpose.

This part is intended to provide uniform standards for allowability of costs and to provide a comprehensive, fair, timely, and flexible process for the resolution of questioned costs.

§ 1630.2 Definitions.

As used in this part:

(a) *Corrective action* means action taken by a recipient that:

(1) Corrects identified deficiencies;

(2) Produces recommended improvements; or

(3) Demonstrates that audit or other findings are either invalid or do not warrant recipient action.

(b) *Derivative income* means income earned by a recipient from LSC-supported activities during the term of an LSC grant or contract, and includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services (including attorney fee awards and reimbursed costs), sales and rentals of real or personal property, and interest earned on LSC grant or contract advances.

(c) *Disallowed cost* means those charges to an LSC award that LSC determines to be unallowable, in accordance with the applicable statutes, regulations, or terms and conditions of the grant award.

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(d) *Final written decision* means either:

(1) The decision issued by the Vice President for Grants Management after reviewing all information provided by a recipient in response to a notice of questioned costs; or

(2) The notice of questioned costs if a recipient does not respond to the notice within 30 days of receipt.

(e) *Membership fees or dues* means payments to an organization on behalf of a program or individual to be a member thereof, or to acquire voting or participatory rights therein. *Membership fees or dues* include, but are not limited to, fees or dues paid to a state supreme court or to a bar organization acting as an administrative arm of the court or in some other governmental capacity if such fees or dues are required for an attorney to practice law in that jurisdiction.

(f) *Questioned cost* means a cost that LSC has questioned because of an audit or other finding that:

(1) There may have been a violation of a provision of a law, regulation, contract, grant, or other agreement or document governing the use of LSC funds;

(2) The cost is not supported by adequate documentation; or

(3) The cost incurred appears unnecessary or unreasonable and does not reflect the actions a prudent person would take in the circumstances.

(g) *Real estate* means land and buildings (including capital improvements), excluding moveable personal property.

(h) *Single purchase, single lease, and single contract* mean a single order or lease of goods or a single contract for services from a single vendor.

§ 1630.3 Time.

(a) *Computation.* In computing any period of time under this part, the time period begins the day following the event and includes the last day of the period, unless the last day is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday observed by the Federal government. In those cases, the time period includes the next business day. When the prescribed time period is seven days or less, intermediate Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays shall be excluded from the computation.

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(b) *Extensions.* A recipient may, within the applicable timeframe for a particular response under this part, submit a written request for an extension of time for good cause to LSC. LSC will respond to the request for extension within seven calendar days from the date of receiving the request. LSC may grant the request for extension and shall notify the recipient of its decision in writing.

§ 1630.4 Burden of proof.

The recipient shall have the burden of proof under this part.

Subpart B—Cost Standards and Prior Approval

§ 1630.5 Standards governing allowability of costs under LSC grants or contracts.

(a) *General criteria.* Expenditures are allowable under an LSC grant or contract only if the recipient can demonstrate that the cost was:

(1) Actually incurred in the performance of the grant or contract and the recipient was liable for payment;

(2) Reasonable and necessary for the performance of the grant or contract as approved by LSC;

(3) Allocable to the grant or contract;

(4) In compliance with the Act, applicable appropriations law, LSC rules, regulations, guidelines, and instructions, the Accounting Guide for LSC Recipients, the terms and conditions of the grant or contract, and other applicable law;

(5) Consistent with accounting policies and procedures that apply uniformly to both LSC-funded and non-LSC-funded activities;

(6) Accorded consistent treatment over time;

(7) Determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles; and

(8) Adequately and contemporaneously documented in business records accessible during normal business hours to LSC management, the Office of Inspector General, the General Accounting Office, and independent auditors or other audit organizations authorized to conduct audits of recipients.

(b) *Reasonable costs.* A cost is reasonable if, in its nature or amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the same or similar circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost. In determining the reasonableness of a given cost, consideration shall be given to:

(1) Whether the cost is of a type generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the operation of the recipient or the performance of the grant or contract;

(2) The restraints or requirements imposed by such factors as generally accepted sound business practices, arms-length bargaining, Federal and State laws and regulations, and the terms and conditions of the grant or contract;

(3) Whether the recipient acted with prudence under the circumstances, considering its responsibilities to its clients and employees, the public at large, the Corporation, and the Federal government; and

(4) Significant deviations from the recipient's established practices, which may unjustifiably increase the grant or contract costs.

(c) *Allocable costs.* (1) A cost is allocable to a particular cost objective, such as a grant, project, service, or other activity, in accordance with the relative benefits received. Costs may be allocated to LSC funds either as direct or indirect costs according to the provisions of this section.

(2) A cost is allocable to an LSC grant or contract if it is treated consistently with other costs incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances and if it:

(i) Is incurred specifically for the grant or contract;

(ii) Benefits both the grant or contract and other work and can be distributed in reasonable proportion to the benefits received; or

(iii) Is necessary to the recipient's overall operation, although a direct relationship to any particular cost objective cannot be shown.

(3) Recipients must maintain accounting systems sufficient to demonstrate the proper allocation of costs to each of their funding sources.

(d) *Direct costs.* Direct costs are those that can be identified specifically with a particular grant award, project, service, or other direct activity of an organization. Costs identified specifically with grant awards are direct costs of the awards and are to be assigned directly thereto. Direct costs include, but are not limited to, the salaries and wages of recipient staff who are working on cases or matters that are identified with specific grants or contracts. Salary and wages charged directly to LSC grants and contracts must be supported by personnel activity reports.

(e) *Indirect costs.* Indirect costs are those that have been incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective. A recipient may treat any direct cost of a minor amount as an indirect cost for reasons of practicality where the accounting treatment for such cost is consistently applied to all final cost objectives. Indirect costs include, but are not limited to, the costs of operating and maintaining facilities, and the costs of general program administration, such as the salaries and wages of program staff whose time is not directly attributable to a particular grant or contract. Such staff may include, but are not limited to, executive officers and personnel, accounting, secretarial and clerical staff.

(f) *Allocation of indirect costs.* Where a recipient has only one major function, *i.e.*, the delivery of legal services to low-income clients, allocation of indirect costs may be by a simplified allocation method, whereby total allowable indirect costs (net of applicable credits) are divided by an equitable distribution base and distributed to individual grant awards accordingly. The distribution base may be total direct costs, direct salaries and wages, attorney hours, numbers of cases, numbers of employees, or another base which results in an equitable distribution of indirect costs among funding sources.

(g) *Exception for certain indirect costs.* Some funding sources may refuse to allow the allocation of certain indirect costs to an award. In such instances, a recipient may allocate a proportional share of another funding source's share

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of an indirect cost to LSC funds, provided that the activity associated with the indirect cost is permissible under the LSC Act, LSC appropriations statutes, and regulations.

(h) *Applicable credits.* Applicable credits are those receipts or reductions of expenditures which operate to offset or reduce expense items that are allocable to grant awards as direct or indirect costs. Applicable credits include, but are not limited to, purchase discounts, rebates or allowances, recoveries or indemnities on losses, insurance refunds, and adjustments of overpayments or erroneous charges. To the extent that such credits relate to allowable costs, they shall be credited as a cost reduction or cash refund in the same fund to which the related costs are charged.

(i) *Fundraising.* Costs associated with fundraising for the purpose of increasing recipient funds available to carry out the purposes of the LSC grant are allowable and allocable to the LSC grant if they meet the requirements of this section.

(j) *Guidance.* The regulations of the Office of Management and Budget shall provide guidance for all allowable cost questions arising under this part when relevant policies or criteria therein are not inconsistent with the provisions of the Act, applicable appropriations law, this part, the Accounting Guide for LSC Recipients, LSC rules, regulations, guidelines, instructions, and other applicable law.

§ 1630.6 Prior approval.

(a) *Advance understandings.* Under any given grant award, the reasonableness and allocability of certain cost items may be difficult to determine. To avoid subsequent disallowance or dispute based on unreasonableness or nonallocability, a recipient may seek a written understanding from LSC in advance of incurring special or unusual costs. If a recipient elects not to seek an advance understanding from LSC, the absence of an advance understanding on any element of a cost will not affect the reasonableness or allocability of the cost.

(b) *Costs requiring prior approval.* (1) Without LSC's prior written approval, a recipient may not expend \$25,000 or

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more of LSC funds on any of the following:

- (i) A single purchase or single lease of personal property;
- (ii) A single contract for services;
- (iii) A single combined purchase or lease of personal property and contract for services; and
- (iv) Capital improvements.

(2) Without LSC's prior written approval, a recipient may not expend LSC funds on a purchase of real estate.

(3) For costs apportioned between LSC funds and one or more other funding sources, this requirement applies when the cost allocable to LSC funds is \$25,000 or greater.

(4) The process and substantive requirements for requests for prior approval are in 45 CFR part 1631—Purchasing and Property Management.

(c) *Duration.* LSC's advance understanding or approval shall be valid for one year, or for a greater period of time which LSC may specify in its approval or advance understanding.

[82 FR 37337, Aug. 10, 2017; 82 FR 55053, Nov. 20, 2017]

§ 1630.7 Membership fees or dues.

(a) LSC funds may not be used to pay membership fees or dues to any private or nonprofit organization, whether on behalf of the recipient or an individual.

(b) Paragraph (a) of this section does not apply to the payment of membership fees or dues mandated by a governmental organization to engage in a profession, or to the payment of membership fees or dues from non-LSC funds.

§ 1630.8 Contributions.

Any contributions or gifts of LSC funds to another organization or to an individual are prohibited.

§ 1630.9 Tax-sheltered annuities, retirement accounts, and penalties.

No provision contained in this part shall be construed to affect any payment by a recipient on behalf of its employees for the purpose of contributing to or funding a tax-sheltered annuity, retirement account, or pension fund.

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§ 1630.10 Recipient policies, procedures, and recordkeeping.

Each recipient must adopt written policies and procedures to guide its staff in complying with this subpart and must maintain records sufficient to document the recipient's compliance with this subpart.

Subpart C—Questioned Cost Proceedings

§ 1630.11 Review of questioned costs.

(a) LSC may identify questioned costs:

(1) When the Office of Inspector General, the General Accounting Office, or an independent auditor or other audit organization authorized to conduct an audit of a recipient has identified and referred a questioned cost to LSC;

(2) In the course of its oversight of recipients; or

(3) As a result of complaints filed with LSC.

(b) If LSC determines that there is a basis for disallowing a questioned cost, LSC must provide the recipient with written notice of its intent to disallow the cost. The notice of questioned costs must state the amount of the cost and the factual and legal basis for disallowing it.

(c) If a questioned cost is disallowed solely because it is excessive, only the amount that is larger than reasonable shall be disallowed.

(d)(1) Within 30 days of receiving the notice of questioned costs, the recipient may respond with written evidence and argument to show that the cost was allowable, or that LSC, for equitable, practical, or other reasons, should not recover all or part of the amount, or that the recovery should be made in installments.

(2) The written notice shall become LSC's final written decision unless:

(i) The recipient responds to LSC's written notice within 30 days;

(ii) The recipient requests an extension of time pursuant to § 1630.3(b) within 30 days; or

(iii) LSC grants an extension of time pursuant to § 1630.3(b) within 30 days.

(e) Within 60 days of receiving the recipient's written response to the notice of questioned costs, LSC management must issue a final written decision

stating whether the cost has been disallowed and the reasons for the decision.

(f) If LSC has determined that the questioned cost should be disallowed, the final written decision must:

(1) State that the recipient may appeal the decision as provided in § 1630.12 and describe the process for seeking an appeal;

(2) Describe how it expects the recipient to repay the cost, including the method and schedule for collection of the amount of the cost;

(3) State whether LSC is requiring the recipient to make financial adjustments or take other corrective action to prevent a recurrence of the circumstances giving rise to the disallowed cost.

§ 1630.12 Appeals to the president.

(a)(1) If the amount of a disallowed cost exceeds \$2,500, the recipient may appeal in writing to LSC's President within 30 days of receiving LSC's final written decision to disallow the cost. The recipient should state in detail the reasons why LSC should not disallow part or all of the questioned cost.

(2) If the recipient did not respond to LSC's notice of questioned costs and the notice became LSC's final written decision pursuant to § 1630.11(d)(2), the recipient may not appeal the final written decision.

(b) If the President has had prior involvement in the consideration of the disallowed cost, the President shall designate another senior LSC employee who has not had prior involvement to review the recipient's appeal. In circumstances where the President has not had prior involvement in the disallowed cost proceeding, the President has discretion to designate another senior LSC employee who also has not had prior involvement in the proceeding to review the appeal.

(c) Within 30 days of receiving the recipient's written appeal, the President or designee will adopt, modify, or reverse LSC's final written decision.

(d) The decision of the President or designee shall be final and shall be based on the written record, consisting of LSC's notice of questioned costs, the

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recipient's response, LSC's final written decision, the recipient's written appeal, any additional response or analysis provided to the President or designee by LSC staff, and the relevant findings, if any, of the Office of Inspector General, General Accounting Office, or other authorized auditor or audit organization. Upon request, LSC shall provide the recipient with a copy of the written record.

§ 1630.13 Recovery of disallowed costs and other corrective action.

(a) LSC will recover any disallowed costs from the recipient within the time limits and conditions set forth in either LSC's final written decision or the President's decision on an appeal. Recovery of the disallowed costs may be in the form of a reduction in the amount of future grant checks or in the form of direct payment from you to LSC.

(b) LSC shall ensure that a recipient who has incurred a disallowed cost takes any additional necessary corrective action within the time limits and conditions set forth in LSC's final written decision or the President's decision.

§ 1630.14 Other remedies; effect on other parts.

(a) In cases of serious financial mismanagement, fraud, or defalcation of funds, LSC shall refer the matter to the Office of Inspector General and may take appropriate action pursuant to parts 1606, 1623, and 1640 of this chapter.

(b) The recovery of a disallowed cost according to the procedures of this part does not constitute a permanent reduction in a recipient's annualized funding level, nor does it constitute a limited reduction of funding or termination of financial assistance under part 1606, or a suspension of funding under part 1623 of this chapter.

§ 1630.15 Applicability to subgrants.

When disallowed costs arise from expenditures incurred under a subgrant of LSC funds, the recipient and the subrecipient will be jointly and severally responsible for the actions of the subrecipient, as provided by 45 CFR part 1627, and will be subject to all

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remedies available under this part. Both the recipient and the subrecipient shall have access to the review and appeal procedures of this part.

§ 1630.16 Applicability to non-LSC funds.

(a) No cost may be charged to non-LSC funds in violation of 45 CFR 1610.3 or 1610.4.

(b) LSC may recover from a recipient's LSC funds an amount not to exceed the amount improperly charged to non-LSC funds. The review and appeal procedures of §§ 1630.11 and 1630.12 govern any decision by LSC to recover funds under this paragraph.

[85 FR 63216, Oct. 7, 2020]

§ 1630.17 Applicability to derivative income.

(a) Derivative income resulting from an activity supported in whole or in part with LSC funds shall be allocated to the fund in which the recipient's LSC grant is recorded in the same proportion that the amount of LSC funds expended bears to the total amount expended by the recipient to support the activity.

(b) Derivative income allocated to the LSC fund in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section is subject to the requirements of this part.

Subpart D—Closeout Procedures

§ 1630.18 Applicability.

This subpart applies when a recipient of LSC funds:

(a) Ceases to exist as a legal entity, including merging or consolidating functions with another LSC recipient when the other recipient becomes the LSC recipient for the service area; or

(b) Otherwise ceases to receive funds directly from LSC. This may include voluntary termination by the recipient or involuntary termination by LSC of the recipient's LSC grant, and may occur at the end of a grant term or during the grant term.

§ 1630.19 Closeout plan; timing.

(a) A recipient must provide LSC with a plan for the orderly conclusion of the recipient's role and responsibilities. LSC will maintain a list of the

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required elements for the closeout plan on its Web site. LSC will provide recipients with a link to the list in the grant award documents.

(b)(1) A recipient must notify LSC no less than 60 days prior to any of the above events, except for an involuntary termination of its LSC grant by LSC. The recipient must submit the closeout plan described in paragraph (a) of this section at the same time.

(2) If LSC terminates a recipient's grant, the recipient must submit the closeout plan described in paragraph (a) of this section within 15 days of being notified by LSC that it is terminating the recipient's grant.

§ 1630.20 Closeout costs.

(a) The recipient must submit to LSC a detailed budget and timeline for all closeout procedures described in the closeout plan. LSC must approve the budget, either as presented or after negotiations with the recipient, before the recipient may proceed with implementing the budget, timeline, and plan.

(b) LSC will withhold funds for all closeout expenditures, including costs for the closing audit, all staff and consultant services needed to perform closeout activities, and file storage and retention.

(c) LSC will release any funding installments that the recipient has not received as of the date it notified LSC of a merger, change in status, or voluntary termination or that LSC notified the recipient of an involuntary termination of funding only upon the recipient's satisfactory completion of all closeout obligations.

§ 1630.21 Returning funds to LSC.

(a) *Excess fund balance.* If the recipient has an LSC fund balance after the termination of funding and closeout, the recipient must return the full amount of the fund balance to LSC at the time it submits the closing audit to LSC.

(b) *Derivative income.* Any attorneys' fees claimed or collected and retained by the recipient after funding ceases that result from LSC-funded work performed during the grant term are derivative income attributable to the LSC grant. Such derivative income

must be returned to LSC within 15 days of the date on which the recipient receives the income.

PART 1631—PURCHASING AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

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