

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**

1.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? The purpose of this chapter is to promote effective and consistent administration of financial assistance awards through the delivery of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)-specific financial assistance training.

1.2 What are the objective and scope of this chapter?

A. Objective: This chapter establishes the minimum training requirement and standards for Service employees who work with grant and cooperative agreement (financial assistance) awards.

B. Scope: This chapter covers all Service employees who work with financial assistance awards throughout the award life cycle, i.e., pre-award, award (project period), closeout, and post-closeout (see section 1.8 and Exhibit 1, *Financial Assistance Tasks List*).

1.3 What are the authorities for this chapter?

A. [370 DM 312.3](#), Departmental Personnel Program, Competencies.

B. [370 DM 410](#), Departmental Personnel Program, Human Capital Training and Development.

1.4 Who is responsible for the Service’s financial assistance training? See Table 1-1.

| Table 1-1: Responsibilities for Financial Assistance Training | |
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| These employees . . . | Are responsible for . . . |
| A. The Director | <p>(1) Ensuring that the training policy and standards in this chapter are implemented, and</p> <p>(2) Ensuring there is a viable training program for employees who work with financial assistance awards, i.e., grants and cooperative agreements.</p> |
| B. The Assistant Director – Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Program through the Division of Administration and Information Management (AIM), Branches of Information Management (IM), Financial Assistance Policy and Oversight (FAPO), and Financial Assistance Systems (FAS) | <p>(1) Developing training topics, strategies, approaches, and materials customized to meet the training needs of employees working with financial assistance awards; and</p> <p>(2) Overseeing Servicewide implementation of this policy consistent with procedures established for the management, development, and approval of required training (see 231 FW 6).</p> |
| C. Directorate members in Headquarters and the Regions | Ensuring employees who work with financial assistance awards throughout the award life cycle—i.e., pre-award, award (project period), closeout, and post-closeout—are aware of and follow the requirements in this policy. |
| D. Supervisors and Managers | <p>(1) Ensuring that employees are properly trained to perform their financial assistance work, and</p> <p>(2) Implementing the continuous learning policy (see 231 FW 1).</p> |

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1.5 What is the training requirement for Service employees who work with financial assistance awards, and what is the timing for fulfilling it?

A. Training requirement:

(1) Based on their work assignment, employees who work with financial assistance awards must complete one of two Service training courses that meet the minimum training requirement and the standards:

- (a) WSFR employees must take the *Basic Grants Management Course (WSFR-BGM)*.
- (b) All other Service employees who work with grants and cooperative agreements (see section 1.8) must take the *Service-wide Basic Financial Assistance Course*, also referred to as the *Basic Grants and Cooperative Agreements Course (FWS-BFA)*.

(2) Employees who completed either course before the date of this policy have fulfilled this requirement unless one or more of the circumstances in section 1.11 occur.

B. Timing: Employees who have not already taken one of the courses before the date of this policy and are currently assigned one or more tasks related to working with financial assistance awards (see Exhibit 1, *Financial Assistance Tasks List*) must complete the training requirement by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2017. After FY 2017, employees must complete the training requirement within 12 months of being assigned a task(s) related to working with financial assistance awards.

1.6 How much of the employee's time does this requirement take? The FWS-BFA training course is 3 days (i.e., 24 hours of an employee's time), and the WSFR-BGM training course is 4 days (i.e., 32 hours of an employee's time).

1.7 Are there any other training courses besides those described in section 1.5A that will meet the training requirement? No. Training offered by other entities is not specific to Service policies and procedures.

1.8 To which employees does this policy apply? This policy applies to all employees who work with financial assistance awards.

A. These employees:

- (1) Perform one or more of the tasks in Exhibit 1, *Financial Assistance Tasks List*, and
- (2) May include, but are not limited to, those with position titles like Administrative Officer (GS-0341), Budget and Fiscal Officer (GS-0561), Grants Management Specialist (GS-1109), Project Officer (GS-0301), Refuge Manager (GS-0485), and Wildlife Biologist (GS-0486).

B. The requirement applies to all approving officials, i.e., those authorized to sign awards, either directly or with delegated signature authority (see [516 FW 3](#)).

1.9 How do employees register for the Service financial assistance training courses? Registration is available through [DOI Learn](#).

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1.10 What are the basic Service standards these courses must cover? See Table 1-2.

| Table 1-2: Service Standards for WSFR-BGM and FWS-BFA Courses | |
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| Course Topics | Basic Standard |
| Fundamentals | Understanding Grants and Cooperative Agreements |
| | Award Management Process |
| | Compliance |
| Phases of Award Life Cycle | |
| Pre-Award | Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), Grants.gov Announcement, Application/Project/Budget Review, Indirect Cost Rate Agreements, Risk Assessment, Award Selection |
| Award (Project Period) | Award – Notice of Award |
| | Managing and Monitoring |
| | Reporting Requirements |
| Closeout | Closeout Process |
| Post-Closeout | Ongoing Responsibilities |

1.11 When might an employee who works with financial assistance awards be required to take some other training in addition to the training required in this policy? Additional training may become necessary to address new or changing circumstances, such as:

- A.** Governmentwide or Departmentwide financial assistance requirements;
- B.** Findings from an investigation, review (e.g., an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) A-123 Appendix A review), or an audit; or
- C.** If the Director requires it.

/sgd/ Stephen Guertin
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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