



516 FW 3
Signature
Authority for
Grant and
Cooperative
Agreement
Awards

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Wildlife and Sport Fish
Restoration

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3.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter:

- A. Clarifies which actions related to grant and cooperative agreement awards require the Director's signature (see [section 3.4](#)),
- B. Describes who has the authority to sign grant and cooperative agreement award documents (see [sections 3.5 and 3.6](#)), and
- C. Clarifies when a recipient accepts responsibility for the terms and conditions of the award (see [section 3.9](#)).

3.2 What is the scope of this chapter? This chapter:

- A. Applies to all Service programs that issue grant and cooperative agreement awards to States, local and tribal governments, universities, non-profit organizations, small businesses, individuals, and other non-Federal entities;
- B. Covers signature authority during the new award and amendment phases; and
- C. Does not cover the selection process for awards.

3.3 What are the authorities for this chapter? The authority for this chapter is the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977 ([31 U.S.C. 6301](#)). See [Exhibit 1](#) for an extensive list of our authorities for issuing grant and cooperative agreement awards.

3.4 Which actions related to grant and cooperative agreement awards require the Director's signature and must not be delegated to staff? The following actions require the Director's signature and must not be delegated to staff:

- A. Apportioning funds provided under the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife and Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Acts;
- B. Allocating or reallocating funds provided under the:
 - (1) Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act,

(2) Anadromous Fish Conservation Act,

(3) Endangered Species Act, and

(4) Partnerships for Wildlife Act;

C. Issuing new awards and amendments for programs that the Assistant Director – Endangered Species (AD-ES) administers;

D. Declaring that a State is ineligible to receive Pittman-Robertson Wildlife and Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act funds because of diversion. Diversion means a State uses revenue from hunting and fishing licenses for something other than administration of the State's fish and wildlife agency; and

E. Approving State license certifications (such as for hunting and fishing licenses, stamps, etc.) following [50 CFR 80](#).

3.5 Who may sign grant or cooperative agreement award documents? Except for those items listed in [section 3.4](#), Regional Directors (RDs), the Assistant Director – Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (AD-WSFR), the AD – International Affairs (AD-IA), and the AD – Migratory Birds (AD-MB) may award Federal funds by signing grant and cooperative agreement award documents.

3.6 May the RDs, AD-WSFR, AD-IA, and AD-MB redelegate signature authority to senior staff specialists?

A. Yes. The RDs, AD-WSFR, AD-IA, and AD-MB may redelegate signature authority in writing (see section 3.7) to senior staff specialists, but only if the staff member:

(1) Has completed the mandatory financial assistance training required by Service policy in 232 FW 1; and

(2) Is not the Service Project Officer/Coordinator/Leader/Manager assigned to manage and monitor the grant or cooperative agreement award being signed.

B. Staff who are given authority to sign award documents must be able to provide evidence of their compliance with section 3.6(A)(1) during subsequent management reviews or audits.

3.7 How must the re delegation of the signature authority be documented?

A. The re delegation of signature authority must be documented in a memorandum that the RD, AD-WSFR, AD-IA, or AD-MB signs and dates. Following is suggested text for the re delegation memorandum:

"In accordance with Service policy (see 516 FW 3), I redelegate the authority to sign grant and cooperative agreement awards in (insert Regional Office, Program Division) to the following individuals:

- Primary (insert name and title);
- Secondary (insert name and title).

Staff performing duties in an "acting" capacity for me or for the people named in this memorandum may NOT sign grant and cooperative agreement awards."

B. The memorandum must be maintained in Regional, AD-WSFR, AD-IA, or AD-MB office files for review and audit purposes.

C. As the sample language indicates, only staff members specifically named in the signature authority memorandum may sign award documents. Employees who are “acting” for an RD, the AD-WSFR, AD-IA, AD-MB, or an employee named in the signature authority memorandum may NOT sign grant or cooperative agreement awards.

3.8 Does the person with the Grants Agreement Officer (FA_AGO) role in the Financial and Business Management System (FBMS) have to be named in the redelegation of signature authority memo?

No. Programs must validate that authorized staff sign the Notice of Award document before the FA_AGO approves the award in FBMS. The signed Notice of Award letter must be uploaded as a supporting document to the FBMS-PRISM record.

3.9 Must we require recipients to co-sign the Notice of Award document?

A. No. Asking a recipient to co-sign the Notice of Award document adds an unnecessary burden and processing time to the grant or cooperative agreement award transaction.

B. The Department’s standard award terms and conditions specifically state that, “Acceptance of a Federal Financial Assistance award from the Department of the Interior carries with it the responsibility to be aware of and comply with the terms and conditions of award. Acceptance is defined as the start of work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means.” It is not necessary to have the recipient sign a grant or cooperative agreement award document to consider it accepted.

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