

## Escalation Protocol for Non-Responsive Principal Investigators (PIs) on Sponsored Projects

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- I. **Title:** Escalation Protocol for Non-Responsive Principal Investigators (PIs) on Sponsored Projects
- II. **Objective:** To establish a formal escalation process for addressing instances in which Principal Investigators (PIs) are non-responsive or fail to meet required responsibilities on sponsored projects. This protocol outlines the steps taken when PIs do not provide necessary reports, deliverables, budget information, payroll confirmations, or other requirements essential to ensuring compliance with sponsor requirements and institutional policies.
- III. **Scope:** This procedure applies to all sponsored projects administered by UTA
- IV. **Procedure:**

The following steps outline the escalation protocol when Principal Investigators (PIs) do not respond to communications regarding reports, deliverables, payroll confirmation, or other compliance-related items.

  - 1. Initial Communication
    - Reports/Deliverables: Reminder emails are sent 2–4 weeks prior to the sponsor or institutional due date.
    - Payroll Confirmation Reports: A system-generated email is issued at the time the report is created.

- **Other Compliance Requirements:** For items such as budget documentation, subrecipient monitoring actions, or other required action items, a due date will be provided by Post-Award in the initial communication

## **2. First Email Notification**

- **Reports/Deliverables/ Other compliance requirements:** A first follow-up email is sent on the due date, requesting a response within 5 business days.
- **Payroll Confirmation:** The first manual follow-up is sent 60 days after the report creation date.

## **3. Second Email Notification**

- If no response is received within 5 business days of the First Email, a second email is issued reiterating the outstanding compliance requirement and requesting immediate action.

## **4. Third Email Notification (Escalation)**

If no response is received 10 business days after the First Email, a third communication is sent and escalated to the following individuals:

- Department Chair
- College Dean
- Associate Vice President for Research (AVPR)

This email outlines the continued non-responsiveness and the potential compliance and financial risks to the institution.

## **5. Final Step (15 Business Days After Initial Email)**

If no response is received within 5 business days of the Third Email:

### **Federal / State / Local Awards:**

For federal, state, and local sponsored projects, the following action may be taken if the PI remains non-responsive after the final escalation step:

### **Administrative Freeze:**

The project(s) may be administratively frozen, restricting further spending or transactions until the PI resolves all outstanding requirements.

### **Post-End Date Freeze of Other Active Projects:**

If the non-responsive project has already ended, the PI's other active

sponsored projects may also be placed on administrative freeze until the outstanding compliance items are resolved.

Reasonable Hold on PreAward Actions:

PreAward may place a reasonable hold on new proposals, Just-in-Time submissions, or award setups for the PI until all overdue items are addressed.

**Private / Non-Profit Awards:**

For private and non-profit sponsored projects, the following actions may be taken if the PI remains non-responsive after the final escalation step:

Administrative Freeze:

If outstanding items pose a risk to institutional compliance with award terms and conditions or create potential financial liability, the project(s) may be administratively frozen, restricting further spending or transactions until the PI resolves the outstanding requirements.

**V. Definitions**

PI: Principal Investigator

PostAward: Office responsible for post award administration

Frozen Status: Financial system status preventing new charges or actions on a project

**VI. Relevant Federal and State Statutes**

2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

**VII. Relevant UT System Policies, Procedures and Forms**

UTA Employee Handbook

Office of Grant and Contract Services procedures

**VIII. Who Should Know**

All UTA faculty and staff involved in sponsored projects

**IX. UTA Office(s) Responsible for Procedure**

**Responsible Officer:** Director, PostAward

**Sponsoring Department:** Office of Grant and Contract Services

**X. Dates Approved or Amended**

November 19, 2025

## **XI. Contact Information**

All questions regarding this policy should be directed to: [ogcs@uta.edu](mailto:ogcs@uta.edu)

Send notifications of errors or changes to: [ogcs@uta.edu](mailto:ogcs@uta.edu)