

Changes to Key Personnel – Prior Approval Requests (PARs)

What?

Changes to Key Personnel is needed when a PI, Co-PI, or key personnel is added, removed, or devotes substantially less effort (25% reduction) to the work than anticipated in the approved proposal; leaves the university; or otherwise relinquishes active direction of the project. The sponsor's decision to support or not to support a proposal is based to some extent on the evaluation of the PI's knowledge of the field of study and ability to conduct the project. Therefore, sponsors expect to be notified formally.

When?

You will need to engage with the ORA on a **Change to Key Personnel** when there are changes in the availability of the PI, Co-PI, or key personnel. This activity always requires notification and/or approval from ORA and sponsor.

Contact the ORA as soon as you have an indication that you will need to change key personnel for your award. A determination will be made on the steps to attain an approval for this type of request.

Prior approval should be requested in the following instances:

- An addition and/or removal of Key Personnel
- A reduction in time devoted to the project of 25% or more from the proposed and awarded level
- Disengagement from the project for more than three months
- The grant award and grant policies of the specific sponsoring agency should be reviewed for any additional requirements.

When a PI's appointment will terminate before the agreement end date or is scheduled for a leave of absence, it is mandatory that the sponsoring agency concurs in writing before the PI departs. Satisfactory arrangements are to be made for a substitute PI and the continuation of the specified research or training. Any leaves of absence are coordinated through the ORA.

How?

Contact the ORA as soon as you have an indication that you will need to change key personnel for your award. A determination will be made on the steps to attain an approval for this type of request. Principal Investigators (PIs) are generally not authorized to communicate key personnel changes directly to the sponsor unless otherwise established in the terms and conditions of the award.

Many Federal sponsors allow the University to approve select types of unanticipated changes for grants and cooperative agreements. This is commonly known as expanded authority, issued through [2 CFR §200.308](#) and the [Federal Research Terms and Conditions](#). ORA is the designated unit that reviews, approves, and documents such types of prior approvals.

- External approvals will be monitored by ORA pending the sponsor's decision. The final approval or denial from the sponsor will then be communicated to the PI once it is received. This response will be documented in InfoEd.

****A CV (biosketch)** must be provided to ORA along with the request if you are adding Key Personnel.

Of note: If the arrangements are not satisfactory to the sponsor, the award may be terminated.

Contact Information

For questions regarding this procedure, please contact researchadministration@wcu.edu.