You've Secured the Funding. Now, Let's Ensure Your Project's Success.

Congratulations on your award. This guide is your roadmap for what comes next.

At WCU, award management is a partnership between you and the Office of Research Administration (ORA). We will walk you through the entire award lifecycle, clarifying each step, defining our roles, and providing the tools you need to manage your award with confidence.

The Award Management Lifecycle: A Three-Phase Journey

We structure the lifecycle of an award into three distinct phases. Understanding this path from the start helps manage expectations and ensures a smooth process from account setup to final reporting.

1. Award & Account Set-Up

Laying the foundation for your project.

2. Active Financial Management

Navigating the project and its finances.

3. Award Closeout

Reaching the destination and ensuring compliance.

Phase 1: Award & Account Set-Up

This initial phase is dedicated to translating your award notice into an active university account in the Banner system. Accuracy here is critical to prevent issues later on.

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Timeline:

Expect this process to take **4-6 weeks**, depending on the award's complexity and compliance needs.

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The Five Key Milestones of a Successful Set-Up

Awarded Budget of Record (ABOR)
The final financial blueprint for your project. The ORA team works with you to align the proposed budget with the awarded funds, creating an itemized plan with official institutional account codes for every expense.

Time & Effort
Defining compensation for key personnel, whether as academic year replacement salary or summer extra expenses.

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Hiring Personnel
Planning for any new hires (temporary, full-time, student) and establishing salary and fringe benefit rates.

Purchasing & Recurring Charges
Establishing the account codes needed for requisitions, reimbursements, and any recurring charges (e.g., phone, computer fees).

Compliance
Identifying and completing all required training and attestations (e.g., WCU Policy 54, Conflict of Interest, Responsible Conduct of Research).

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Your Role vs. ORA's Role in Set-Up

Your Responsibilities
(The PI)

- ✓ Collaborate with the Pre-Award Team on any necessary budget revisions.

- ✓ Ensure you and all covered employees complete required compliance training and attestations.

- ✓ Initiate the hiring process by coordinating directly with Human Resources (HR).

- ✓ Attend the **mandatory kickoff meeting** before any spending or hiring can occur.

ORA's Responsibilities
(Your Partner)

- ✓ Review all award terms and conditions, flagging items for legal review.

- ✓ Negotiate any modifications with the sponsor.

- ✓ Finalize the Awarded Budget of Record (ABOR).

- ✓ Schedule and lead the mandatory kickoff meeting to review grant terms and management expectations.

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Your Essential Tools for Managing Funds and Compliance

The Post-Award team provides several tools and processes to help you monitor your award's financial health.

Fund Reviews

Your regular financial "health check." These reviews show line-item balances and cumulative spending, allowing you to compare against your own records (your "shadow budget") and catch errors.

Inaccurate charges must be recoded **within 60 days**. Cost transfers across fiscal years (July 1 – June 30) are strictly prohibited.

Time & Effort Reporting

Per Federal Uniform Guidance, anyone compensated by the award must certify their effort. Expect to receive a payroll certification report via Adobe Sign **3 times per year** (fall, spring, summer).

Progress Reporting

You are responsible for timely submission of technical reports to the sponsor. The ORA is responsible for financial reports. We will collaborate to ensure deadlines are met.

Subawarding

The ORA manages all legal and administrative aspects of subawards and subcontracts on your behalf. PIs are not authorized to enter into these agreements directly.

When Your Project Needs to Pivot,
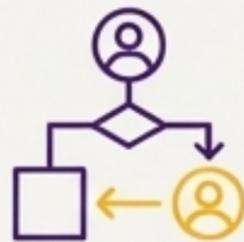## Start with a Prior Action Request (PAR)

The PAR is the official process for requesting changes to your award.
PIs are not authorized to request changes directly from the sponsor.
Always contact the ORA first.

When you need a PAR
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BUDGET

Budget Revisions or Adjustments

Changes in Project Scope or Key Personnel

No-Cost Extensions (NCEs)

Activating, Adding, or Canceling Subawards

How it Works
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Submit the PAR form (found on the Granting Success website).

The Post-Award team reviews the request against award terms (allow 3-5 business days for initial review).

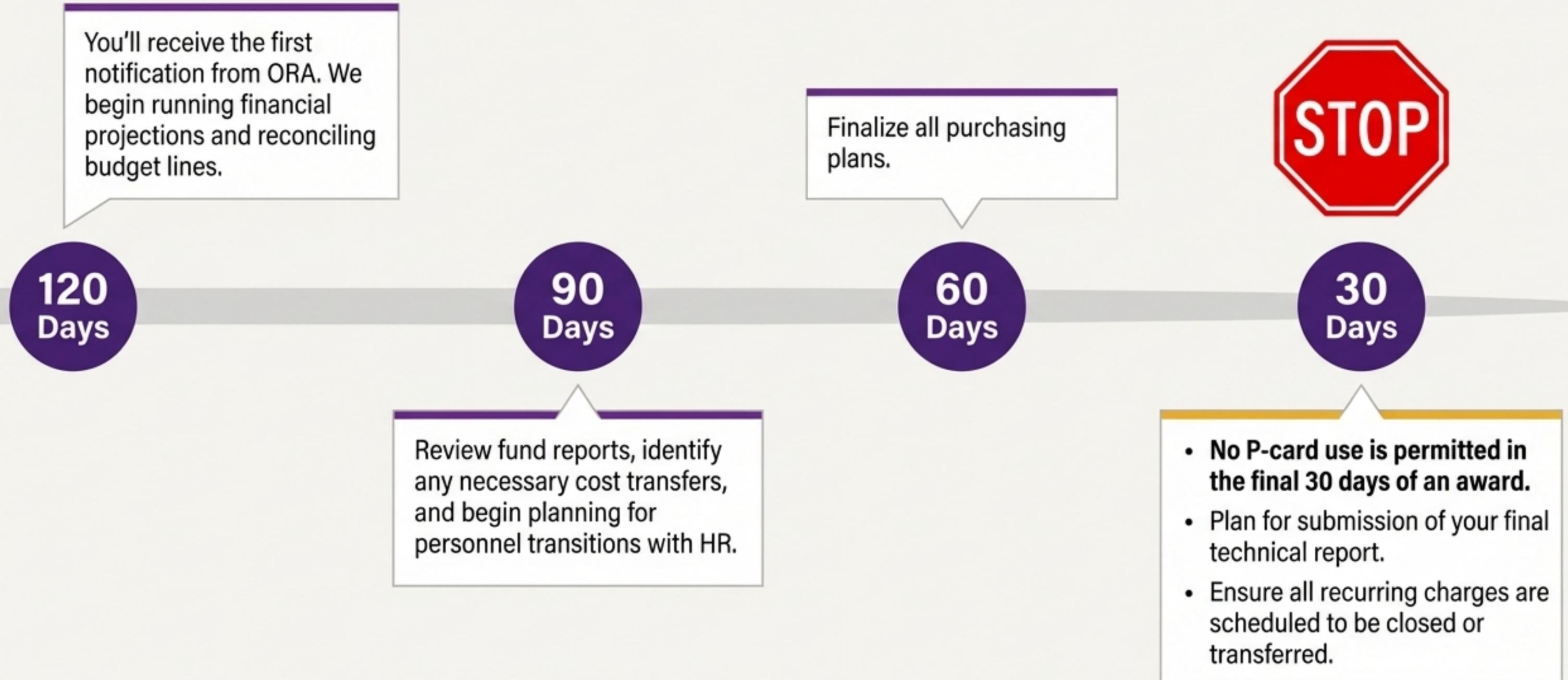If approved, the ORA communicates officially with the sponsor.

Note: PARs can take several weeks to months to resolve. Please plan accordingly.

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Phase 1:
Pre-Award Setup

Phase 2:
Award Management

Award
Closeout

Phase 3: Award Closeout

Closeout is a comprehensive process of financial reconciliation, reporting, and administrative closure that begins **120 days** before your project's end date. It requires careful planning and collaboration to ensure a smooth and compliant finish.

The 120-Day Countdown to Closeout

120 Days

You'll receive the first notification from ORA. We begin running financial projections and reconciling budget lines.

90 Days

Review fund reports, identify any necessary cost transfers, and begin planning for personnel transitions with HR.

60 Days

Finalize all purchasing plans.

30 Days

STOP

- **No P-card use is permitted in the final 30 days of an award.**
- Plan for submission of your final technical report.
- Ensure all recurring charges are scheduled to be closed or transferred.

Your Final To-Do List for a Successful Closeout

- Attend the mandatory **closeout meeting** scheduled by the Post-Award team.

- Work directly with **HR** to provide **timely notice** for any grant-funded personnel whose positions are ending or transitioning.
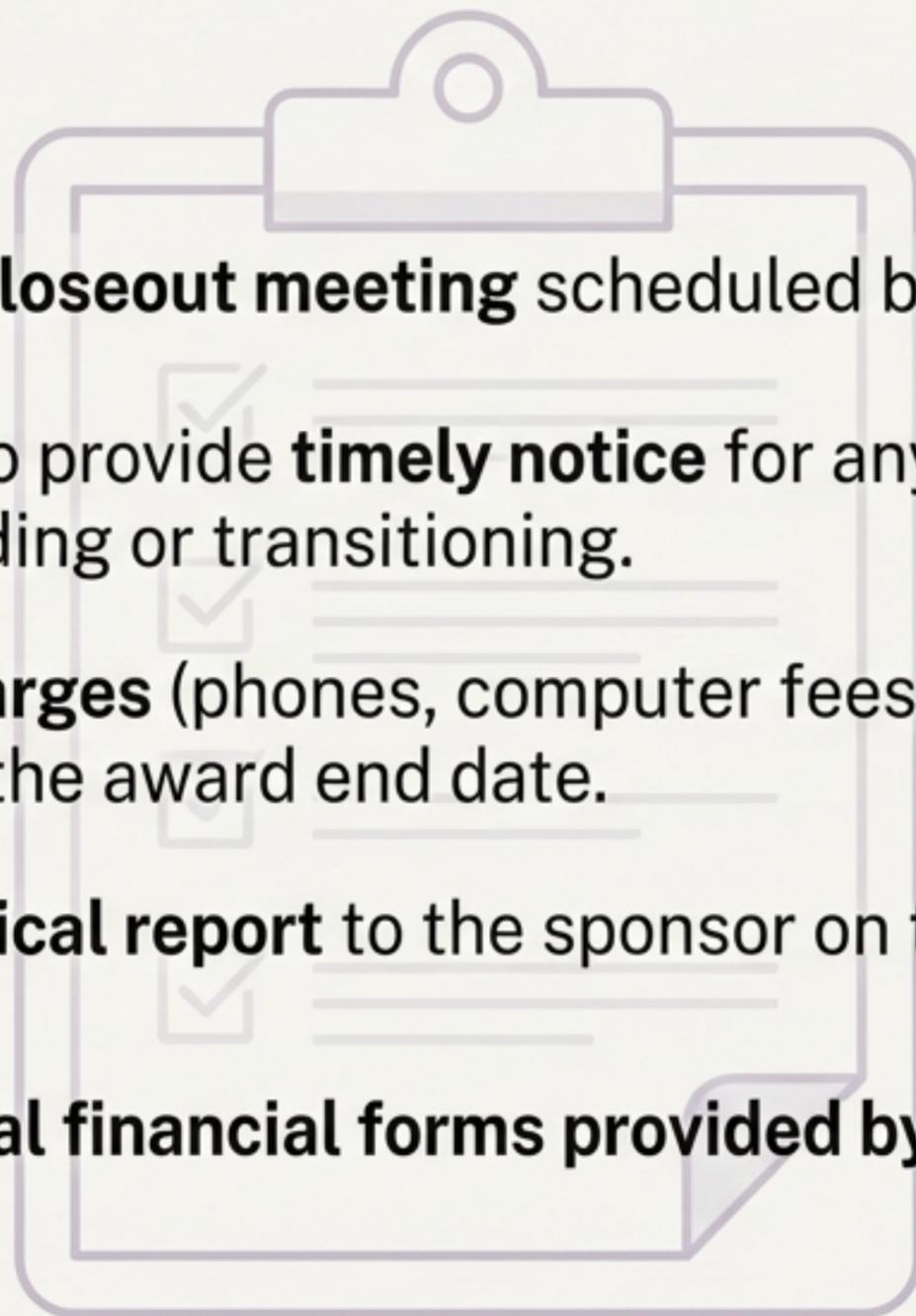
- Ensure all **recurring charges** (phones, computer fees, etc.) are closed or transferred to another fund before the award end date.

- Submit your **final technical report** to the sponsor on time and provide a copy to ORA.

- **Review and sign the final financial forms provided by ORA** to officially close the award account.

The ORA Post-Award Team: Your Partners in Success

We are with you every step of the way. Our team provides support, guidance, and institutional oversight, managing risk so you can focus on your research.

Award & Account Set-up

Financial Management
(fund reviews, expenditure approvals)

Prior Action Requests (PARs)

Financial Reporting

Accounts Receivable
(collecting payments from sponsors)

Award Closeout

Connect with Your ORA Partners

Post-Award Team

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Granting Success Starts Here.

For all forms, policies, and guidance documents mentioned in this presentation, your central resource is the Research Cat website.

Visit us at: go.wcu.edu/research

Look for the 'Granting Success' tab.

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