

PHS Operating Support Account Policies FY 2008

Background

These Center budget accounts, begun in FY 2006, were put in place to ensure that research-related costs that are best allocated to F&A funds, and not to sponsored projects, have an account available.

In every case, the key to deciding where an item should be charged is whether it is reasonable, allowable, and allocable to a sponsored project.

If a charge is allowable on a grant and there is a reasonable mechanism to allocate the charge to the grant (or to multiple grants), then the cost should be borne by the grant(s). Project administrators should make every effort to identify charges with a specific grant(s).

Since operating support funds are quite limited for FY 2008, we needed to limit the list of items; focusing on those that most closely fit within the purpose of the accounts. PIs should work with their program head and program administrator to find the most appropriate budget for needed items. There may be some purchases that will need to be foregone or deferred.

Items Allowed on Operating Support Accounts

- Items needed to support research but difficult to clearly allocate to a specific grant or grants:
 - Office supplies
 - Shared printer supplies
 - Internal phone charges for conference calls, custom lines, toll free charges, long distance charges and pagers
 - Dry ice
 - Liquid nitrogen
 - Monthly \$10 VPN charges (Center IT will make available a free VPN software client in the coming months)

Items Not Allowed on Operating Support Accounts

- In some cases the items below may be allowable on a sponsored project. If not, the cost should be borne by the individual or charged to a PI discretionary account, if one is available.
 - Dues for subscriptions to technical and professional periodicals. Note that many journals are available electronically in their full-text format through Arnold Library.
 - Reprints of articles and journal page charges

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- Memberships and licensing fees to technical and professional organizations
- Travel/Training
- Cell phone purchase and/or monthly charges
- Blackberry/other PDA/email device purchase and charges
- IT remote charges (other than the \$10 VPN charged mentioned above)

Unless the Center has explicitly agreed to provide support, costs for **equipment service contracts** should be borne by the projects using the equipment. The Center expects that shared equipment will have a logbook in place to track usage. Projects that use the equipment will be charged for a portion of the equipment maintenance agreement. Where it is not reasonable to allocate usage via a logbook, the need for a service contract should be reviewed. In some rare instances, after approval from the Division Administrator and Finance, service contracts for shared equipment may be charged to the operating support accounts, subject to funds being available.