



T-VSTTA
OVC TRIBAL VICTIM SERVICES TRAINING
AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

BEST PRACTICES FOR GRANT FILE MANAGEMENT

Establishing a clear and organized grant file management system is essential for ensuring timely access to critical information and maintaining compliance with federal requirements.

Prior to program implementation, grant recipients should define procedures for developing, sharing, securing, storing, and disposing of grant-related documents. A standardized system promotes consistency and coordination across programmatic, financial, administrative, and governance teams involved in grant oversight. To support long-term effectiveness, it is important to train all relevant staff and adhere to established practices. While such systems may also benefit broader organizational recordkeeping, this guide focuses specifically on best practices for managing grant file documentation.

Tips on Setting Up and Managing Your Grant File

To support compliance, transparency, and efficient operations, grant recipients should establish a structured approach to grant file management. The following best practices offer guidance on organizing, protecting, and maintaining grant-related documentation:

- **File Storage and Retention Options:** Grant recipients may store documents in hardcopy format (e.g., binders with labeled dividers), digital format (e.g., secure electronic file systems), or both—based on organizational needs and policies.
- **Grant File Policy and Procedures:** Develop a written policy that outlines the structure of your filing system, naming conventions, procedural updates, and file organization standards.
- **Safekeeping Measures:** Protect physical files using fireproof cabinets and ensure digital files are backed up regularly to prevent data loss.
- **Data Protection Protocols:** Restrict access to personally identifiable information (PII) and other sensitive data. Use password protection or encryption for digital files and locked cabinets for paper records.
- **Retention Requirements:** Establish a retention policy that aligns with state, Tribal, and grant-specific regulations. Federal grant recipients must retain records for at least 3 years from the date of submission of the final Federal Financial Report, per 2 CFR § 200.334.
- **Secure File Disposal:** Define procedures for securely disposing of records once the retention period ends. This includes shredding paper documents and permanently deleting or wiping electronic files.

Contact Information

Email or call to request training and technical assistance. A member of the T-VSTTA team will respond promptly.

Email: Support@t-vstta.org

Phone: 833-887-8820

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Grants Financial Management Award Cover Page

Include a cover page on your grant file that quickly summarizes award details to help you quickly access high-level information. The cover page should include your award number and amount, Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) title, award beginning and end dates, key points of contact, such as your OVC Grant Manager, and reporting due dates. The OVC Tribal Grants Financial Management Center’s [Grants Financial Management Award Cover Page](#) resource provides additional instruction.

Resources:

- [Journey in Grants Financial Management Essentials Session One: Charting Your Pathway to Success](#) (TFMC)

Grant File Checklist

Use the checklist below to set up and manage your grant files effectively. Creating and maintaining a dedicated file for each grant—with back-up copies of all related documents—centralizes key information, supports day-to-day grant management, and simplifies monitoring visits with your Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) grant manager.

Grant File Section	Documents to Include
Pre-Award – Preparing for grant management occurs during the application process and prior to award notification.	
Application and Requirements / Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Budget detail worksheet<input type="checkbox"/> Certifications required for application and construction forms (Standard Form (SF)-424, SF-424C, CD-511, SF-LLL)<input type="checkbox"/> Department of Justice (DOJ) Financial Capability Questionnaire<input type="checkbox"/> Letter of Intent<input type="checkbox"/> Approved or most recent indirect cost rate agreement<input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)<input type="checkbox"/> Population Certification Form<input type="checkbox"/> Project narrative or a printed copy of the Project Narrative Questionnaire<input type="checkbox"/> SAM.gov entity registration email<input type="checkbox"/> Construction Questionnaire, if applicable
Project Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Correspondences (all pre-application)<input type="checkbox"/> Programmatic policies and procedures<input type="checkbox"/> Record retention policy<input type="checkbox"/> Project timeline<input type="checkbox"/> Staff job descriptions and resumes

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Post-Award – Grant management and implementation occur after the award notification.

Agreement Documents	<input type="checkbox"/> Signed award document <input type="checkbox"/> Award package and award conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation related to award decisions <input type="checkbox"/> JustGrants and ASAP roles associated with awards <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), including partnership, cooperative, or intermunicipal agreements, if applicable
Budget	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved budget <input type="checkbox"/> Budget-to-actual report <input type="checkbox"/> Financial policies and procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Records showing all award expenses (e.g., receipts, invoices, conference costs)
Procurement Contracts (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Contracts and contract modifications <input type="checkbox"/> Invoices and receipts <input type="checkbox"/> Procurement policies and procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation to demonstrate federal approval for noncompetitive contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Requests for proposals and vendor responses
Construction (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> NEPA documents <input type="checkbox"/> Analysis <input type="checkbox"/> RFP's <input type="checkbox"/> Construction Correspondence
Subawards (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Subaward agreements and modifications <input type="checkbox"/> Subrecipient monitoring checklist and documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Policies and procedures related to subawards <input type="checkbox"/> Subaward invoices and supporting documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Program and financial reports
Program activities (as outlined in your project narrative)	<input type="checkbox"/> Semiannual Program Reports <input type="checkbox"/> Community needs assessment, if applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of program activities (e.g., agendas, sign-in sheets, community event fliers, brochures, educational materials, meeting notes, documents tracking and describing services or activities over time) <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic planning documents, if applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Correspondence	<input type="checkbox"/> Grant manager correspondence and approvals <input type="checkbox"/> Training and technical assistance correspondence

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Post-Award – Grant management and implementation occur after the award notification.

Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> ASAP drawdowns with documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Budget-to-actual reports <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Financial Reports (FFRs) and documentation (quarterly) <input type="checkbox"/> Grants financial management certificates (Required for the Financial Manager and Grant Award Administrator) <input type="checkbox"/> Grant ledger reports <input type="checkbox"/> Performance reports (quarterly, semiannual) <input type="checkbox"/> Subrecipient reports, if applicable
Internal Audits and Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Audit reports <input type="checkbox"/> Corrective action plans <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation from desk review and onsite monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Findings reports <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up records (resolution of findings)
Grant Award Modifications (GAM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Budget Clearance GAM <input type="checkbox"/> Budget Modification GAM <input type="checkbox"/> Sole Source Approval GAM <input type="checkbox"/> Project Period Extension GAM <input type="checkbox"/> Scope Change GAM

Closeout – Final stage of the grant management process. It begins the day after the end of the award period.

Final Report and Supporting Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Closeout <input type="checkbox"/> Final FFR <input type="checkbox"/> Final Performance Report (PR) <input type="checkbox"/> Property reports, if applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Record of reconciliation
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Ask questions and/or request individualized grant financial management training and technical assistance by contacting the TFMC Virtual Support Center [703-462-6900](tel:703-462-6900) or TFMC@usdoj.gov.