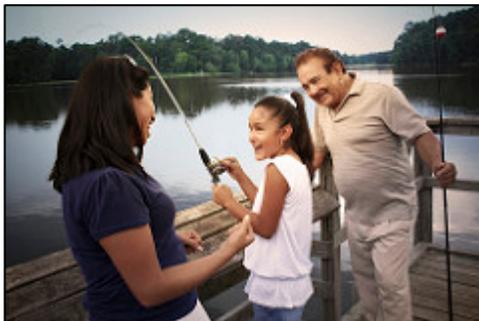




RECREATION GRANTS BRANCH

# COMMUNITY OUTDOOR OUTREACH PROGRAM

## PROGRAM GUIDANCE



Updated September 2018

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## APPENDIX

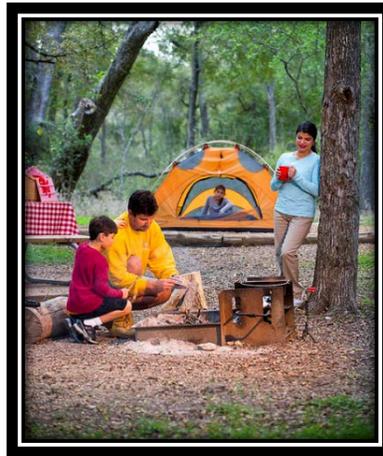
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# About the Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP)

## TPWD

### MISSION STATEMENT

To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.



## CO-OP

### MISSION STATEMENT

To provide funding to local governments, schools and non-profit organizations for programming that engages under-represented populations in TPWD mission-oriented outdoor recreation, conservation and environmental education activities.

## CO-OP FUNDING & AUTHORIZATION

The Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) is authorized by the Texas State Legislature in Chapter 24 of the Parks and Wildlife Code. CO-OP is funded in the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) appropriation budget as a specialized component of the Texas Recreation and Parks Account Program (TRPA). The TRPA was established by an act of the 73<sup>rd</sup> State Legislature in 1993, through House Bill 706. TRPA replaced the Texas Local Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Fund which existed from 1979 to 1993. Funds are derived from a dedicated portion of the state sales tax collected on sporting goods. Appropriated funds are determined by the Texas legislature in the budgeting process and vary each biennium.

TRPA programs include the Outdoor Recreation Grant, Indoor Recreation Grant, Small Community Park Grant, Regional Park Grant and the Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP). TRPA provides funding assistance throughout Texas for the acquisition and development of public recreation areas and facilities and for providing outdoor activities (CO-OP only).

## CO-OP PURPOSE & PRIORITIES

CO-OP provides funding to local governments, schools and non-profit organizations for programming that engages under-represented populations in TPWD mission-oriented outdoor recreation, conservation, and environmental education activities. This program builds relationships with non-traditional constituencies who have been under-represented in Texas Parks & Wildlife Department activities and programs.

In general, recommended priorities for CO-OP projects are:

1. To improve communities outdoor opportunities for inner-city, rural, low-income, minority, female, physically/mentally challenged and youth-at-risk citizens;
2. To increase use of TPWD programs and facilities;
3. To reward promotion of outdoor and environmental educational activities.
4. To maximize the use of funds for direct community outdoor outreach opportunities;
5. To reward partnerships between local applicants and other organized groups;
6. To increase the number of participants served;
7. To ensure applicant performance on active grants and compliance on previous grants; and
8. To reward commitment of applicant resources;

# APPLYING FOR A GRANT

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

### Eligible Applicants

Grants are available to tax-exempt organizations introducing non-traditional constituents to TPWD related outdoor recreation, conservation and environmental education programs. Organizations must be a tax-exempt organization which includes non-profit organizations, school districts, universities, state agencies, local government and churches. Religious groups are eligible only if the project scope is for non-religious activities.

Each applicant must submit their Federal Tax Identification Number, [System for Award Management \(SAM\) Cage code](#), and [DUNS number](#) as part of the CO-OP Application Form. If you haven't already registered for these, do so immediately as they may take several weeks to receive. Applicants must be in good standing with the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts to be eligible and to receive any reimbursements.

Previous CO-OP Grant recipients can apply once every two years as long as all their grant award has been closed. All final closing documentation must be received and approved by CO-OP staff at least *60 days prior* to submitting another application. Only one award may be allowed per organization every two years and organizations are not allowed to submit a new application under a different Federal Identification Number if they have a current, active grant. Public schools within the same district use the same EIN number; therefore, only one application per school district will be reviewed. Each University will be considered one organization, even if they have a different EIN number through a sub entity. Projects are not allowed to provide financial resources derived from CO-OP funds to partnering organizations that have received a CO-OP grant in the previous year's funding cycle. An organization who has received previous grant funding and failed to meet contract requirements or expend 100% of awarded funds may not be eligible for future grant funding.

If a proposal includes ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the proposal will be will be ineligible for funding, and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the proposal, render the entire application ineligible for funding. The following items are not an exhaustive list of eligible and ineligible CO-OP grant activities. For questions regarding activity eligibility, contact CO-OP staff.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES	INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES
Archery	Community Festivals or Expositions
Backpacking / Hiking	Facility Construction Projects or Exhibits
Birding / Wildlife Viewing	For-Profit Programs
Camping	Indoor Classroom Only Projects
Canoeing / Kayaking / SUP / Boating	Landscaping or Vegetable Gardens
Caving	Multimedia Projects
Cultural Resource Exploration	Out-of-State Travel
Environmental / Outdoor Education	Promotional Events or Fundraisers
Equestrian	Religious-Based Camps and Activities
Fishing / Angling	Research Projects
Hunting	Retreats
Mountain Biking	Ropes and Challenge Courses
Nature Photography	Self-Guided Tours of Non-TPWD Facilities
Orienteering / Geocaching	Special Events or Celebrations
Outdoor Cooking (Participants Involved)	Tournaments / Competitive Events
Rock Climbing / Rappelling	Traditional Sports (Baseball, Soccer, Football, etc.)
Shooting Sports	Training Only Projects

## TIMELINE

ACTIVITY	DATE DUE
Applications Open	Mid October
Application Deadline	February 1
Grant Awards Announced	May 1
Grant Management Workshop (Mandatory)	Late May in Austin, Texas
Grant Contract Period	May 1 – November 1 the following year (18 months)
Quarterly Reporting Due	Quarter 1: July 15 for May 1 – June 30 Quarter 2: October 15 for July 1 – September 30 Quarter 3: January 15 for October 1 – December 31 Quarter 4: April 15 for January 1 – March 31 Quarter 5: July 15 for April 1 – June 30 Quarter 6: October 15 for July 1 – September 30
Final Reporting Due	45 days after end of contract period

Approved projects shall be pursued in a timely manner by the applicant, unless delays result from extraordinary circumstances beyond the applicant’s control. Failure to meet the above time frames may be grounds for the Department to initiate cancellation of the affected project or to deny requests for additional grant funds for new projects.

## WORKING WITH PARTNERS

Only one award may be allowed per organization every two years and organizations are not allowed to submit a new application under a different Federal Identification Number if they have a current, active grant. Please note that public schools within the same district use the same EIN number and each University will be considered one organization, even if they have a different EIN number through a sub entity. Projects are not allowed to provide financial resources derived from CO-OP funds to partnering organizations that have received a CO-OP grant in the previous year’s funding cycle or have an open CO-OP grant.

If a Project Sponsor is working with a partner who also has an open CO-OP grant and their project scopes overlap, the Project Sponsor must disclose to CO-OP staff who the partner is and the nature of their partnership. In certain instances, CO-OP may request an MOU or other written assurances between the organizations to ensure no program participants, events or budget expenses are duplicated or counted twice between the organizations. The responsibility is on Project Sponsors to determine and disclose any such instances where supported projects and partnerships overlap. While we believe partnerships create a strong community and leverage resources of both organizations, sometimes they create grant-related reporting and accounting issues.

## PROJECT PRIORITY SCORING SYSTEM

Grant amount requests *must* range between \$5,000 - \$50,000 to be eligible and no sponsor contribution is required, although project scores are weighted to reward projects that include sponsor contributions. A committee of TPWD personnel will score each project against the scoring criteria approved by TPWD commission and outlined below. Scores are based on applicants' responses to the questions and attached documentation required in the application. Grant funds will be distributed to those projects who score the highest based on this criteria until the funds have been exhausted.

POINTS POSSIBLE	FUNDING PRIORITY
1	Sponsor Contribution amount included in Resolution
5	Project Description
3	Action Plan
2	Geographic Population Size (rural or urban)
10	Total Number of Unduplicated Participants Served
13	Participant Demographics Served >50% Ethnic Minority – non-Anglo (3 points) >50% Female (3 points) >50% Low Income (3 points) At least 1 Physically or Mentally Challenged Participant (2 points) At least 1 Youth Participant (2 points)
5	Direct Relationship with TPWD Personnel, Facilities or Programs
5	Outdoor Recreation Activities Incorporated
3	Career Development and Mentoring Components
3	Outdoor Service Project Components
4	Partnership Letters
3	Budget
10	Extent to which Project Prioritizes Direct Program Costs
4	Sponsor Contribution
<b>71</b>	<b>TOTAL MAXIMUM SCORE</b>
-10	Deduction if applicant did not fulfill previous reimbursement requirements.

## GRANT EXPECTATIONS

It is *very important* to understand that all aspects of the grant proposal, unless otherwise disallowed or approved by CO-OP staff, will be required per the Award Agreement. Any unused funds cannot be rolled over or re-allocated to future grant years. Therefore it is imperative that applicants submit a proposal that is feasible and realistic to implement by the organization. Failure to meet contract requirements or to spend all of the awarded funds could result in the termination of the Award Agreement or could affect eligibility or scoring penalties for future grant proposals.

## **APPLICATION ASSISTANCE**

Multiple Grant Writing Workshops are coordinated throughout Texas each year to assist organizations in applying for grant funds. These workshops outline eligibility requirements, expectations of the grant, and walk applicants through the steps to submit an online application. Stay current on all grant announcements and upcoming Grant Writing Workshops by signing up for “grants information” via the TPWD E-news updates. Once you subscribe, you will receive periodic emails about all grant information and upcoming workshops.

Start the application process early. Review the Program Guidance and CO-OP Application well in advance before submitting a proposal for grant funds. Projects with partnerships in place that demonstrate fully developed and detailed project plans will receive priority funding. Some aspects of the grant application include additional documents that may require time to be received from project partners. Take this into account when preparing your application and provide your project partners with plenty of time to submit these attachments before the application deadline. Proposals with late, missing or incomplete information will be ruled ineligible for consideration.

## **APPLICATIONS THROUGH RECREATION GRANTS ONLINE**

CO-OP utilizes an online application process through Recreation Grants Online (RGO). Paper applications will not be accepted. To access the online application, please create an account for your organization at <https://tpwd-recgrants.fluidreview.com/>. After you have logged in, click on “View My Submission,” scroll down to “Create a New Submission,” choose “CO-OP,” enter your project name and select “Get Started.” To submit a full application, click on the “start” button next to the “Apply for a CO-OP Grant” task and begin your application. Remember to click “Save & Continue Editing” frequently to save the information and click “Submit” once complete. After the application is submitted, an email notification will be sent to the application account owner. If this email notification is not received, contact CO-OP staff immediately to confirm the application was submitted properly. For questions regarding project eligibility, review the eligibility section or contact CO-OP staff.

RGO is designed so that you can manage your own account representatives. You may add or delete members as you wish. Edit members by logging into your account and under “members” on the right hand side of the page, click on “Add Member.” You will be asked to provide name and email and designate the type of membership for this person. The creator of the account will automatically be designated as the owner. The “member” category allows members to submit all reports and requests. There is also a “read only” member category where individuals can see all the documents but not edit or submit them. Once you request someone to be added as a member, they will receive an email (check your spam folders). They need to follow directions on the email to create a password for their account. To change the site owner, email CO-OP staff to request the change.

All required documents and samples are imbedded in the application for reference. See “Budget & Allowable Expenses” in the “Managing A Grant Award” section of this document for detailed information on creating the application budget. Additional resources and CO-OP documents can be found in RGO at the “Resources” link located at the top, right-hand portion of your screen.

If you have any technical questions about how to use the site, contact CO-OP staff. Technical support is available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CST.

All applicants will receive an email on May 1 with notification of their award status.

# MANAGING A GRANT AWARD

## AWARD AGREEMENT & GENERAL PROVISIONS

Once grant awards are announced, projects must log into RGO to complete the following tasks: Award Agreement, General Provisions and Application for Texas Identification Number (TIN). Once these documents are executed by all parties, the grant award will be activated. The General Provisions covers the assurances and policies required by projects when accepting grant funds. The Award Agreement serves as the grant contract and outlines all programmatic responsibilities for the project. Specific information listed on the contract includes the project number, name, time period, approved state funds, total cost, project description and other programmatic expectations required when the grant is accepted. These expectations include:

- Overview of project scope (full details supported by project application)
- Total unduplicated participants
- Participant demographics
  - Ethnic minority – Non-Anglo
  - Female
  - Low income (defined by USDA Food Eligibility for Free & Reduced School Lunch Program)
  - Physically/mentally challenged (includes ADD, ADHD, special education, etc.)
  - Youth (age 17 and under)
- Number of TPWD direct relationships
- Number of outdoor recreation activities
- Career development and mentoring
- Outdoor service project

The components listed along with the supported information provided in the application proposal will serve as the requirements for the grant. If some of the above components were included in the application but not listed in the Award Agreement, this means scoring criteria points were not awarded for this category and you're not required to complete that component per your contract. It is *very important* to understand that all aspects of the grant proposal, unless otherwise disallowed or approved by CO-OP staff, will be required per the Award Agreement. Any unused funds cannot be rolled over or re-allocated to future grant years. Failure to meet contract requirements or to spend all of the awarded funds could result in the termination of the Award Agreement or could affect eligibility or scoring penalties for future grant proposals.

## REPORTING

Reporting allows staff to evaluate your project goals and accomplishments during the grant award. Reports are due within 2 weeks of quarter closing dates. Final reimbursement requests and final reports are due within 45 days after the project period end date. Reports must be submitted regardless of grant inactivity for that quarter and are late if received after the due date. Reimbursements may be placed on hold if reports are delinquent.

REPORT #	DATE DUE	REPORTING PERIOD
1	July 15	May 1 – June 30
2	October 15	July 1 – September 30
3	January 15	October 1 – December 31
4	April 15	January 1 – March 31
5	July 15	April 1 – June 30
6	October 15	July 1 – September 30
7	December 15	Final Report comprehensive for entire contract period

Quarterly and final reports are submitted in the online grant management system (RGO) under the appropriate task. Reports consists of two primary components: the reporting narrative and the activity spreadsheet. The narrative portion requests a detailed summary of the objectives and activities that were met during the reporting period. The activity spreadsheet requires you to list specific activities/events that occurred during the reporting period and also requires you to list certain elements that align with contract requirements such as participant demographics, TPWD direct relationships and outdoor recreation activities. A template of quarterly and final reports are provided in the resources section of RGO.

All grantees are required to report duplicated and unduplicated participants along with participant demographics. If required on your Award Agreement, the required demographics must be furnished in quarterly reports. Both unduplicated and duplicated participant numbers will be required in the final report.

- Duplicated Participants – The total participant count. If participants attend multiple events and are counted in each event, it becomes a duplicated count of participants.
- Unduplicated Participants – The actual number of individual participants served. Participants may attend multiple events, but they are counted only once as unduplicated.

If required on your Award Agreement, you must maintain a minimum of 50% of unduplicated participants for ethnic minority, female and low income and serve at least 1 physically/mentally challenged or youth participant. If CO-OP staff have questions regarding the reporting of these demographics or participant numbers, they may request evidence supporting how you obtained and recorded participant demographics. Failure to provide timely, accurate and complete reports or failure to meet any of your contract requirements could mean penalties imposed on future applications or affect future eligibility for grant funds. Refer to the Records and Retention Policy illustrated in this Guidance for additional guidelines.

## **BUDGET & ALLOWABLE EXPENSES**

Projects are required to use the [Budget template](#) and submit the completed budget in Excel format when applying for grant funds. This section details the allowable and non-allowable expenses for CO-OP grants. Read this section carefully as any non-allowable expenses on the proposed budget will be disallowed during staff review and organizations will be unable to replace those items with other allowable expenses.

If using general categories such as kayaking supplies, fishing supplies, etc., provide examples for these purchases in the Budget Summary portion of the application. All expenses listed in the budget should be supported by activities detailed throughout the proposed application. If items listed on the budget are not supported by activities described in the proposed application, those items may be disallowed.

Costs must be necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient operation of the grant project; be allowable expenses toward the project as described in the Award Agreement; not be a general operation expense required to carry out the overall responsibilities of state or local governments, or non-profit organizations. Expenditures must be authorized (or not prohibited) under state or local laws and regulations. Expenditures must conform to the limitation of manuals, state law, federal law, or other governing limitations in the agreement as to type or amount of costs. Expenditures must not be charged or eligible to be charged to any other grant-financed program unless guidelines in administering the particular program permit. Supplies purchased at the end of the grant period without future activities supported by CO-OP may be disallowed.

The sponsor will be notified if eligible expenses are not allowed and disallowed expenses will be listed on the approved Budget. Disallowed items may be paid on the next reimbursement request if the Sponsor provides the information requested and if expenses are justified. Purchases must be made from a registered business entity (registered in the state as a business entity).

Allowable expenditures include but are not limited to:

- Personnel, including employees, fringe and contract staff (capped at 40% of request)
- In-state trainings for personnel or participants (Out-of-state trainings for personnel are approved on a case-by case basis)
- Program liability insurance for participants, staff and volunteers
- Food, non-alcoholic beverages and eating supplies
- Transportation
- Fees including entrance, program and housing fees
- Supplies and equipment directly related to grant activities, including trailers and related items
- Service project expenses, if applicable

#### Personnel/Contract Services

Personnel/contract expenditures up to 40% of the grant award may be claimed for reimbursement. The sponsor must provide proof the individuals are on the payroll of the organization. The time can then be claimed on weekly work records (see forms in appendix or use own form if all required information is included) and signed by the authorized supervisor/owner. Timesheets are for staff that are employees (not contractors) and should include the employee's name, hours worked each day, total hours worked in the week and total hours worked on the grant. If salaried employee, work record should reflect all hours worked, not just those charged to the CO-OP grant. If benefits are requested, the hourly benefit rate should be included as well. Contract staff expenditures can be claimed by submission of invoices and proof of payment. The invoice provided by the contract staff should include the amount, the description of services/activities, the date of services/activities, address, telephone number and if applicable a Taxpayer Identification Number.

#### Liability Insurance

CO-OP will reimburse the cost of general liability insurance for the participants and staff supported in your approved project. It can only be purchased for the Project Sponsor, not third parties associated with the project. Costs reimbursed by CO-OP must reflect only the participants and staff supported by the CO-OP project and will not support the total amount that covers the entire organization. The Sponsor must determine how to allocate liability insurance cost between their programs. Examples include dividing cost per personnel headcount between programs, by total participants served or by total project expenditures. Written policies should be developed for how general liability insurance is tracked and split between programs, which may be requested during the reimbursement process. If requesting liability insurance, please provide an explanation of the above calculations within your organization in the Budget Summary portion of the application. When submitting a reimbursement, the amount requested should be based on actual insurance cost incurred.

#### Program Food

Food costs can be reimbursed and must be for the actual event. Disallowed costs include food purchased solely for planning meetings. CO-OP staff will make a final determination if items purchased are considered reasonable and appropriate items for the event.

#### Transportation

Transportation costs can be claimed for reimbursement. Transportation costs can be either for fuel (with receipt) or mileage (with documentation), but not both. If the sponsor is requesting reimbursement for fuel, submit dated fuel receipts and proof of payment. If the sponsor is requesting reimbursement for mileage, submit a vehicle mileage log and the mileage rate must follow the current rate from the IRS. Mileage logs must include the date the vehicle was used, starting and ending addresses (for personal and fleet vehicles), explanation on how the vehicle was being used to support the grant, total miles claimed, the current IRS standard mileage rate and the total claimed. Transportation cost can also include use of school district buses or the rental/charter of vans or buses. Driver cost is included as a transportation cost.

### Lodging

Lodging costs can be claimed for reimbursement. Sponsor will have to provide receipts that include date of stay, nightly rate, number of rooms each night, name of establishment, proof of payment and how the lodging is tied to a specific grant activity. Project Sponsor must follow state guidelines regarding per diem and lodging rates found <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>.

### Supplies & Equipment

Supplies and equipment must be used for the activities described in the application's Program Narrative and used by the participants served through the CO-OP grant. This includes but is not limited to items such as camping supplies, rock climbing gear, canoes & kayaks, archery materials, hunting equipment, fishing supplies, mountain bikes and outdoor cooking ware. Environmental education supplies are allowable and may include education trunks, skulls/skins/tracks, binoculars, microscopes, telescopes, field guides, water testing supplies, scientific models and other items used for hands-on interpretive learning. Computers and tablets are allowable only if used directly by the participants in the field and not planning purposes. Equipment (unit price is equal to or greater than \$5,000) purchased with grant funds, requires additional management requirements including detailed property records and physical inventories. Projects purchasing equipment should contact CO-OP staff for additional management requirements.

### Plants & Related Materials

Project Sponsors may include the purchase of plants and other vegetation needed for the project. Only native plants and trees are allowed for restoration or wildscaping. While habitat and restoration projects are allowed, please note that no activities or expenses related to vegetable gardens or sustainable agriculture are allowed.

### Trailer Purchases

Project Sponsors will need a Bill of Sale (invoice) which includes the VIN number. Trailers must be purchased from a business with a motor vehicle sales permit and proof of payment. The title must be in the organization's name. Motor vehicle sales tax (this is not the standard sales tax) will likely be charged on the invoice and can be reimbursed. If the trailer is over \$5,000, it is considered "equipment" and additional tracking will be required.

### **NON-ALLOWABLE COSTS**

Advertising, marketing or promotional materials	Indirect costs (telephone, utilities, etc.)
Alcoholic beverages	Insurance- D&O, vehicle or facility (liability allowed)
Arts or craft materials	Interest expense
Charges for deficits & overdrafts	Losses from uncollectible accounts & related costs
Climbing walls (purchased or constructed)	Membership fees
Computer games, software, or website development	Office, meeting room, storage, property leasing
Curriculum development or design consultants	Prizes, souvenirs, awards or certificates
Damage judgments- judicial decision, arbitration, etc.	Purchases made before or after the grant period
Discounts not taken	Religious activities (revivals, etc.)
Donations or contributions made by sponsor	Ropes or challenge courses
Drones, vehicles, motor boats, anything w/a motor	Sales tax
Entertainment or ceremony expenses	Scholarships paid directly to sponsor
Exhibits (purchase or constructed)	Self-guided tour entrance fees
Facility construction- structure, bench, gazebo, etc.	Storage buildings
Facility grounds general maintenance	Used supplies & equipment or maintenance costs
Facility or program fees paid directly to sponsor	Value of personal property
Fines, penalties and finance charges	Vegetable or non-native plants
Forfeited deposits	Vehicle maintenance

### Cost Principles

To be allowable under federal or state awards, costs must meet the following general criteria:

- Be necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient performance and administration of Federal or state awards.
- Be allocable to federal or state awards under the provisions of the State of Texas Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS) and 2 CFR 200 guidance.
- Be adequately documented. Documentation required may include, but is not limited to, travel records, time sheets, invoices, proof of payment, contracts, mileage records, billing records, and other documentation that verifies the expenditure amount and appropriateness to the grant.

### Reasonable Costs

- A cost is reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost. The question of reasonableness is particularly important when governmental units or components are predominately state or federally-funded. In determining reasonableness of a given cost, consideration shall be given to:
  - a) Whether the cost is of a type generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the performance of the federal or state award.
  - b) The restraints or requirements by such factors as: sound business practices; arm's length bargaining; federal, state and other laws and regulations; and, terms and conditions of the Federal or state award.
  - c) Market prices for comparable goods or services.
  - d) Whether the individuals concerned acted with prudence in the circumstances considering their responsibilities to the governmental unit, its employees, the public at large, and the State or Federal Government.
  - e) Significant deviations from the established practices of the governmental unit which may unjustifiably increase the federal or state award's cost.

### Allocable Costs

- A cost is allocable to a particular cost objective if the goods and services involved are chargeable or assignable to such cost objective in accordance with relative benefits received.

## **AMENDMENTS**

During grant implementation it may be necessary to make adjustments in your budget or project scope. Any changes will have to be approved by CO-OP staff. Some changes can be approved via email but some must be approved via the amendment process.

The grant budget groups approved items in specific categories (e.g. fees, supplies, transportation) with a total amount specified for each category. Funds may be allocated within each budget category as long as it doesn't exceed the specified total amount by 20%. You must have email authorization to exceed expenditures of more than 20% for each category. This authorization must be provided before the expenditure to be reimbursed.

Amendment requests should be completed under the following conditions:

1. To add an item a budget item that is not on the approved grant budget. This will not increase your grant award. You will need to make adjustments on other budget items.

2. To request an extension to your grant period. Requests must be made before the end of your grant term and are only granted under extenuating circumstances if the project is in good standing with grant & reporting requirements. In the event of an extension, additional quarterly reports will be required.
3. To request a significant change in project scope. Note that a change in project scope is only granted as a result of extraordinary circumstances that are beyond the grantees' control.

Amendments must be approved and processed before the expenditure is authorized. To request an amendment, log into your RGO account and complete the TASK "CO-OP Program Amendment Request." If approved, an RGO email notification will be sent when the amendment is ready for execution. Authorized sponsor staff should sign, date, and upload the signed amendment. Once uploaded into the system, sponsor is authorized to proceed with the expenditure. Sponsor must be registered in SAM with good standing in order to process amendments.

## REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES

CO-OP funds are distributed through grant awards to eligible organizations on a reimbursement basis, meaning applicants are required to make the purchase and be reimbursed after the transaction is complete. Reimbursement is made only after the Sponsor has accomplished the work and made the expenditure. Sponsor is required to submit reimbursement requests through the online grants management system (RGO) at <http://tpwd-recgrants.fluidreview.com/>. **A reimbursement request must be submitted each quarter when grant costs have been incurred.**

Prior to expending funds on expenditures, the sponsor must check their Approved Budget listed in the Attachment Section of RGO to make sure the expenditure is within the approved grant scope. Items listed in your application are not always approved. If you want an item added to your Approved Budget or wish to make substantial changes to your approved budget, contact CO-OP Staff or submit an Amendment Request in RGO. Project Sponsors should be aware of their Award Agreement start and expiration dates. Expenses incurred before the grant begins or after the expiration date are not eligible for reimbursement. Adherence to these procedures will be considered while evaluating eligibility for future grants.

Sponsor must show expenditures (i.e. cash expenditures or donations) applied to the sponsor contribution requirements of the grant. The supporting documentation for the sponsor contribution does not need to be submitted with the reimbursement but must be retained and made available upon request. These expenditures, if any, must be recorded on the spreadsheet and submitted along with each of the reimbursement requests. Volunteer hourly rates for sponsor contribution are calculated using the current Independent Sectors rate for the State of Texas: [https://independentsector.org/resource/vovt\\_details/](https://independentsector.org/resource/vovt_details/).

Project Sponsors are required to keep all grant documentation including but not limited to receipts, proof of payment, personnel timesheets, reimbursement spreadsheet, participant tracking and program data for three years after the close date of the grant award.

A one-time "Seed Money" advance not to exceed 10% of the grant may be requested through the online grants management system. Receipts and proof of payment must be provided to document the entire advance obtained prior to receiving any additional reimbursements. The reimbursement request submitted subsequently after the advance request should be equal to or larger than the advance reimbursement amount. The advance must be satisfied first before any additional amount can be reimbursed.

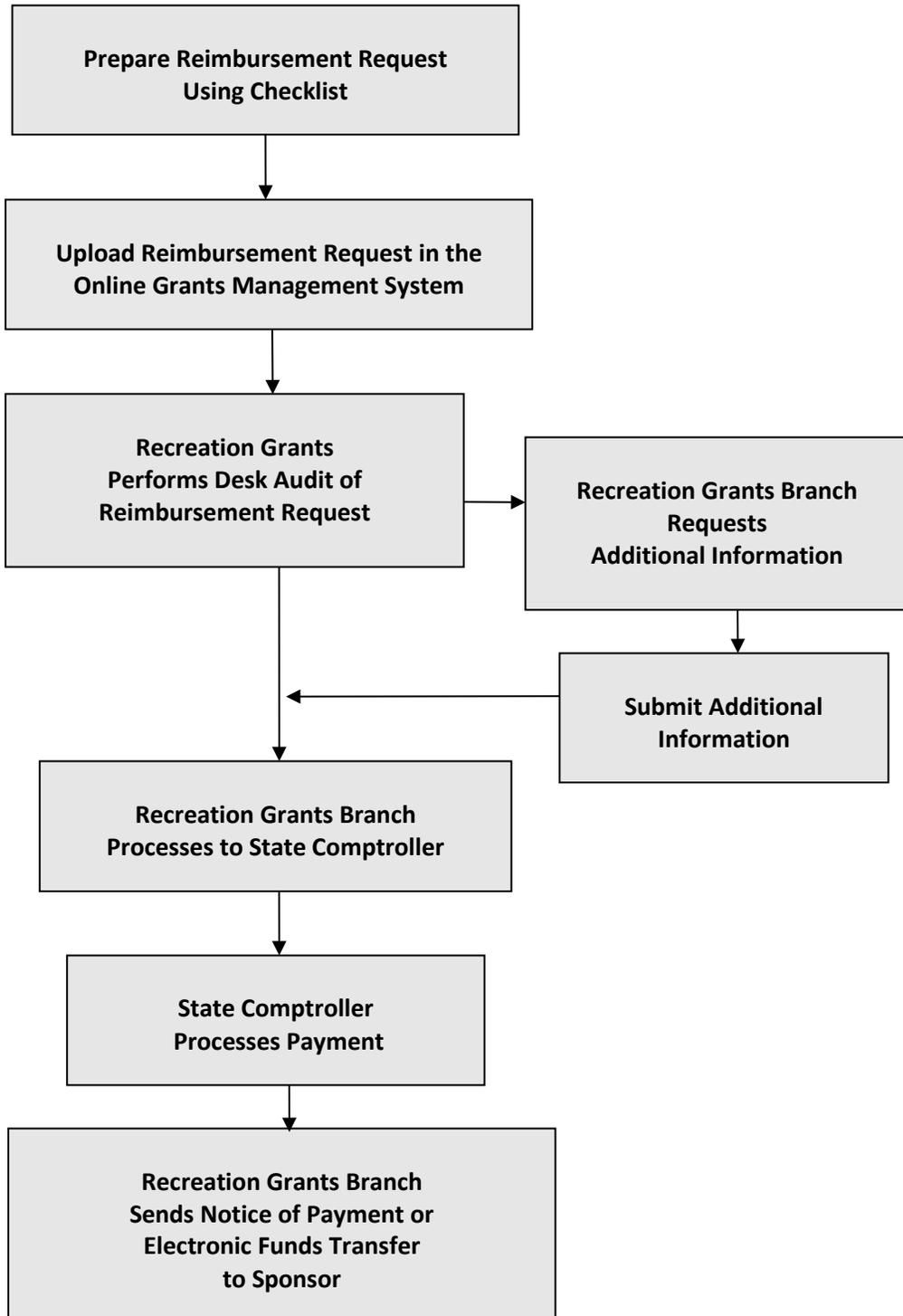
If all required documents are submitted, approximately three weeks are required by the Department to process a reimbursement request. If the eligibility of an expenditure item is not addressed in these guidelines, contact the Department.

## Reimbursement Request Checklist

The following information is a guide for submission of grant project reimbursement requests. The Sponsor should review this checklist carefully before submitting each request. *Incomplete reimbursement requests will result in a delay in processing.* Sample reimbursement documents are found in the appendix of this document and available under the reimbursement request task or resource section in RGO.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. **Certification for Recreation Grants Reimbursement Request** - A signed Certification for Recreation Grants Reimbursement Request form must be submitted with each reimbursement request with the correct amount requested.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. **Reimbursement Spreadsheet** - A spreadsheet must be provided with each reimbursement request. The spreadsheet must contain the following information: Invoice date, vendor name, type of payment (check, credit card, petty cash, etc.), amount being allocated for TPWD consideration, amount being allocated for sponsor contribution, activity date, and activity description (what activity does the purchase support).
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. **Invoice/Receipts** – A copy of each invoice or receipt must be legible. The receipt should clearly show: The date of purchase, vendor name, and itemization of items purchased. All sales tax will be disallowed. Hand written receipts generated by purchases at smaller stores must include: Name of company, address and phone number, date of purchase, items purchased, amount paid, type of payment (check, credit card or petty cash check) and signature of the merchant. For requirements on specific budget line items, please refer to the Budget and Allowable Expenses section above.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. **Proof of Payment** - Provide the below documentation as proof of payment depending on your purchase type:
  - i. **Digital Check Copy:** copy of front side of check containing check amount digitally printed by bank under the signature line or copy of non-canceled check with bank statement showing check cleared account. Electronic copies of checks obtained online are acceptable.
  - ii. **Credit Card:** copy of credit card statement showing the payment for the expenditure and copy of digital check copy showing the payment of that statement.
  - iii. **Debit Card:** copy of the bank statement showing the debit payment for the expenditure.
  - iv. **Petty Cash or Gift Card Transaction:** an itemization for the cash being withdrawn from the petty cash account during the specified period in which the expenditure occurs and copy of digital check copy showing the replenishment of those funds. Transactions paid for by donated gift cards are not eligible for reimbursement.
  - v. **Personal Funds:** a copy of the receipt as well as a copy of the digital check used to reimburse the individual will be required for reimbursement.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. **Documenting Salary Cost (Weekly Work Record)** - The Sponsor may use either the Department’s Work Record, or their own, including the supervisor’s signature. Please refer to the Budget and Allowable Expenses section above for more information.

**Reimbursement Flow Chart**



## **CLOSEOUT PROCEDURES**

The end of the grant period is listed in your grant award agreement. The following requirements must be met to successfully close your grant:

- All **programs and purchases** must be incurred **before** the contract expiration date.
- Final reimbursement requests and the final report are due no later than 45 days after the contract expiration date. Submit your final reimbursements early and don't wait until the last minute. Some items may be ineligible for reimbursement or more documentation may be needed. It may take 3-4 weeks for reimbursements to be paid. Failure to spend 100% of grant funds will negatively impact future grant review scores.
- In order to be eligible to re-apply for CO-OP funding the following year, open grants must be closed no later than 60 days before the grant application deadline, meaning the final report has been reviewed by CO-OP staff and all reimbursements have been paid.
- The final report is comprehensive and must include activities for the entire grant period. Unduplicated participant numbers and demographics are required in the final report.
- The final report and reimbursement will be reviewed to determine if all requirements have been met. Once the final reimbursement has been deposited and the final report reviewed, the grant will officially close. An email notification will be sent via Recreation Grants Online stating the grant has closed.
- All grant records must be maintained for 3 years past the official closing date and are subject to audit.

Failure to comply with the above requirements may affect your organization's eligibility for future grant opportunities from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

## **SUPPLY & EQUIPMENT DISPOSITION**

After the grant period ends, the supplies and equipment belong to the awarded organization to use for similar programming. Otherwise contact CO-OP staff for disposition instructions. All documentation must be retained for three years after the grant closing date.

## **POLICIES & GUIDELINES**

This Program Guidance document contains rules and regulations governing the eligibility for and disbursement of program funds, and describes the required elements of an application. This document replaces all previous guides.

### Alcohol & Drug Policy

The use, possession, sale, manufacture, or distribution of a controlled substance during CO-OP applicant events/activities is strictly prohibited. The abuse of prescription drugs or inhalants and/or their use in any way which adversely affects safe performance of duties involving CO-OP events/activities is also prohibited.

CO-OP applicants and participants will not use or possess alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while conducting CO-OP sponsored events/activities. Reporting to CO-OP sponsored events/activities under the influence of alcohol or drugs is also considered a violation of this policy. The operation of any vehicles of any type used to transport participants and volunteers of CO-OP sponsored events/activities while under the influence or in possession of alcohol, drugs or other intoxicants is prohibited.

### Conflict of Interest

No official or employee of the State, local government, or non-profit organization who is authorized in his official capacity to negotiate, make, accept, or approve, or to take part in such decisions regarding a contract purchase or subcontract in connection with this project shall have any financial or other personal interest in any such

contract. No person performing services for the State, local government, or non-profit organization in connection with this project shall have a financial or other personal interest other than their employment, in any contract purchase, or subcontract in connection with this project. No officer or employee of such interest is openly disclosed upon the public records of the State, and such officer, employee or person has not participated in the acquisition for or on behalf of the Sponsor.

#### Logo Use & Marketing

If you would like to utilize the Texas Parks & Wildlife logo on any of your grant-related materials, you must complete the Logo Use Agreement found in RGO. Grantees are authorized to use the **TPWD Proud Partner logos only** once this form is complete. See specifications on logo use in the agreement. Please note that grantees must provide a sample of the graphic with the logo on the product to CO-OP program staff for approval before use.

#### Non-Compliance

Grant recipients are contractually obligated to follow all grant requirements. By accepting the grant award, the grant recipient becomes a steward of state funds, charged with and held accountable for proper use and expenditure of state money. Grants are monitored for compliance with all fiscal and program rules as well as performance. Monitoring actions include review of reports and reimbursement requests, written and oral communication, desk reviews, audits and site visits. Non-compliance issues along with necessary corrective action will be communicated to the grant recipient. Where unallowable cost have been claimed and reimbursed to the grant recipient, they must be refunded to the state. Failure to comply with grant requirements may affect your organization's eligibility for future Texas Parks and Wildlife grants. Grants are subject to audit up to three years after the official closing date.

#### Nondiscrimination

The Sponsor shall comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which in part,

- a) Prohibits discriminatory practices resulting in unequal treatment of person who are or should be benefitting from the grant-aided program.
- b) Prohibits discriminating against any person on the basis of residence.

#### State and Federal Regulations

The sponsor is obligated to adhere to all requirements of the Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS) established by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts <https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/grant-management/> and Code of Federal Regulations 2 CFR 200 [https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200\\_main\\_02.tpl](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl)

#### Termination

The Department may temporarily suspend CO-OP assistance under the project pending corrective action by the Sponsor or pending a decision to terminate the grant by the Department. The sponsor may unilaterally terminate the project at any time prior to the first payment of the project. After the initial payment, the project may be terminated, modified, or amended by the Sponsor only by mutual agreement with the Department.

The Department may terminate the project in whole, or in part, at any time before the date of completion, whenever it is determined that the Sponsor has failed to comply with the conditions of the grant. The Department will promptly notify the Sponsor in writing of the determination and the reasons for termination, together with the effective date. Payments made to the Sponsor or recoveries by the Department under projects terminated for cause shall be in accord with the legal rights and liabilities of the parties.

The Department or Sponsor may terminate grants in whole, or in part, at any time before the date of completion, when both parties agree that the continuation of the project would not produce beneficial results

commensurate with the future expenditure of funds. The two parties shall agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date and, in the case of partial termination, the portions to be terminated. The Sponsor shall not incur new obligations for the terminated portion after the effective date, and shall cancel as many outstanding obligations as possible. The Department may allow full credit to the Sponsor for the State share of the non-cancelable obligations, properly incurred by the Sponsor pending written receipt of the determination and the reasons for termination, together with the effective date. Payments made to the Sponsor or recoveries by the Department under projects terminated for cause shall be in accord with the legal rights and liabilities of the parties.

#### Texas Administrative Code

The sponsor is obligated to adhere to all requirements established in the Parks and Wildlife Code Chapter 24 and the Texas Recreation and Parks Account program including program guidelines set out at 31 TAC Sec. 61 Subchapter E.

#### Record Keeping & Retention

Financial records, supporting documents, statistical records and all other records pertinent to this grant shall be retained for a period of three years after the official closing date of the grant. Records shall be retained beyond the three-year period if audit findings have not been resolved. Retain a copy of all records in your organizational files and don't rely on retrieving the information from your RGO account, as occasionally accessibility to these documents are unreliable. The Department, State Comptroller of Public Accounts, State Auditor's Office, or any of their duly authorized representatives, shall have access to any books, documents, papers, and records of the Sponsor which are pertinent to a specific project for the purpose of making audits, examination, excerpts, and transcripts.

#### Religious Activities

Recipients of the CO-OP grant cannot use any part of these monies to fund religious worship, instruction or proselytization; participation in any religious activities by program participants must be voluntary; and efforts must be taken to ensure separation of religious activities from CO-OP funded activities.

# RESOURCES

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions concerning the CO-OP grant application, Program Guidance or any aspect of grant management should be directed to:

Recreation Grants Branch  
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department  
4200 Smith School Road  
Austin, Texas 78744  
<http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/business/grants/>

### ***CO-OP Program Staff***

Cappy Smith	512-389-8254	<a href="mailto:cappy.smith@tpwd.texas.gov">cappy.smith@tpwd.texas.gov</a>
Carly Blankenship	512-389-8209	<a href="mailto:carly.blankenship@tpwd.texas.gov">carly.blankenship@tpwd.texas.gov</a>

If you have any technical questions about how to use the Recreation Grants Online (RGO) site, please contact CO-OP staff. Technical support is available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CST. Additional resources and samples of CO-OP documents can be found in RGO at the “Resources” link located at the top, right-hand portion of your screen. Video tutorials on completing certain tasks for grant management are also available in the resources section.

To be notified of upcoming grant deadlines, workshops, and public hearings go to our website <https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/txpwd/subscriber/new> to register your email and select “Grant Opportunities.”

For information about TPWD State Parks, Historic Sites, programs and activities go to our website at [www.tpwd.texas.gov](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov) or call toll free (800) 792-1112.

# APPENDIX

## APPENDIX I: SAMPLE REIMBURSEMENT SPREADSHEET

Texas Outdoor Experts Kids Adventure Time COOP Project 52-000001														
Reimb# 1	7/1/2017-7/31/2017		Personnel &		Liability					Service	Sponsor	Total	Activity	Activity
Date	Vendor	Type	Fringe	Training	Insurance	Food	Travel	Fees	Supplies	Project	Contribution	TPWD Share	Date	Description
07/05/17	Outdoor Supply Supercenter	AMEX cc #1245							998.75			998.75	ongoing	Loving the Outdoors Event - 5 tents for 7/15 event
07/15/17	Food	AMEX cc #1245				589.65					200.00	589.65	07/15/17	Loving the Outdoors Event - Food for camping meals
07/15/17	Rentals Galore	AMEX cc #1245							200.00		200.00	200.00	07/15/17	Loving the Outdoors Event - Discounted rentals for day of event including tables and chairs (isee invoice for discounted rate).
07/15/17	State Park Fee	AMEX cc #1245						200.00				200.00	07/15/17	Loving the Outdoors Event - Pedernales Falls Park Group Fee
07/22/17	Contractor - B. Smith	Check #5678	150.00									150.00	07/15/17	Loving the Outdoors Event - Hired contractor for day-of-event help
07/22/17	Work Record - A. Garcia	Check #5679	300.00								200.00	300.00	07/15/17	Loving the Outdoors Event - Worked on event planning for 7/15 camping event and split employee pay between TPWD and organization.
			450.00	0.00	0.00	589.65	0.00	200.00	1,198.75	0.00	600.00	2,438.40		
												2,438.40		

