BIOENERGY, CLIMATE, AND ENVIRONMENT

FOOD PRODUCTION AND SUSTAINABILITY

YOUTH, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY

FOOD SAFETY AND NUTRITION

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

NIFA

| Lily Eskanos Branch Chief | Betty McGaughey Team Lead | Tara Warner Division Director |

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National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

https://www.usda.gov/non-discrimination-statement

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- USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Agenda

- What is Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP)?
- ASAP Team Introduction
- ASAP Contacts and Training
- ASAP Return Fund Changes
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)
- Tips

What is ASAP?

- ASAP is a Department of Treasury system and a completely electronic payment application for federal agencies to quickly and securely disburse funds to recipient organizations (grantees).

- The primary tasks for NIFA's ASAP Team include enrolling grantees in ASAP, creating ASAP accounts, authorizing funds, and assisting grantees in troubleshooting issues.

- ASAP is not a USDA system, so technical issues and changes to ASAP accounts must be directed to the Department of Treasury's ASAP Help Desk.

How Does ASAP Work?

- Federal agencies and organizations utilizing federal funds enroll to use ASAP.

- Federal agencies establish and maintain accounts in ASAP to control the flow of funds to organizations. Federal agencies enter spending authorizations into Grantee ASAP accounts in accordance with their program needs and schedules.

- Payment Requestors at organizations initiate payment requests through ASAP to meet cash needs commonly referred to as a draw down. This is done primarily through on-line connections that organizations have with ASAP.

NIFA's ASAP Team

- Division Director – Financial Management Director
  - o **Tara Warner**

- Branch Chief – Accounting & Operation Branch
  - o **Lily Eskanos**

- ASAP Team Lead (Acting)
  - o **Betty McGaughey**

- Staff Accountants
  - o **Jan Gallagher**
  - o **Shelly Snyder**
  - o **Samuel Giles**
  - o **Terry Whitby**

All can be contacted via ASAPCustomerService@usda.gov

Contacts and Training

- For funding issues contact the NIFA ASAP Customer Service Team

  ASAPCustomerService@usda.gov

- For grant management issues contact NIFA Awards Management Division

  Awards@usda.gov

- For technical issues contact the Department of Treasury ASAP Help Desk

  - ASAPHELPDESK@fiscal.treasury.gov

  - 855-868-0151 (option 2, option 3) between 7:30 am and 6:00 pm Eastern weekdays

  - ASAP Training

    https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/ASAP/

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ASAP Changes

ASAP Return Fund Changes

- ASAP has lifted the 32-day restriction for returning funds via ACH

- Search for transactions in 180-day increments

- Banks my require a bank company ID to accept the ACH debt
  - ASAP Bank Number: 0510-3680-3

- ACH or Fedwire are still the required methods

Requirements for ACH Return

- Ensure your bank allows ACH Debits

- A user can initiate an ACH payment return regardless of the date of settlement so long as the following two criteria are met:

  ▪ The account status is NOT "Closed," and

  ▪ The return will not cause the account balance to exceed the total cumulative authorizations

  ▪ Additionally, the application also expanded the search criteria up to 180 calendar days to assist in identifying the appropriate payment to apply the return to

- Can return either the full or partial amount but can only process one return per payment

FAQs

Why am I unable to access my funds?

- User must have role of Payment Requestor.

- Account status must be open or liquidated.

- ASAP is suspended the last 4 business days of every month for month-end reconciliations.

Why am I unable to access my funds?

- New Awards - Upon successful completion of enrollment and the ASAP account becoming active, please allow the Department of Treasury 5 to 10 business days to verify banking information. Once verified, funds will be released between 7 to 10 business days provided that no funding is withheld.

- Existing Awards - If you have had a recent extension to the period of performance or a release of funds, please allow between 7 to 10 business days from the amendment approval date.

- If funds are still not available after these timeframes, please contact the ASAP customer service at ASAPCustomerService@usda.gov.

How do I set up an ASAP account?

- The ASAP Payments Team at NIFA will initiate the Grantee's account in ASAP. The Grantee will then be emailed an individual login ID and temporary password to complete enrollment. Enrollment requires the timely completion of 5 tasks.
  - Point of Contact Names Organization Officials
  - Head of Organization Approves Officials
  - Authorizing Official Defines Recipient Profile
  - Authorizing Official Defines Recipient Organization Users
  - Financial Officials Defines Banking Information

- ** If you have not entered banking information, enrollment is not complete **

User Roles and Responsibilities

User Roles	Description
Point of Contact	Adds user or modifies their roles
Head of Organization	Approves changes to user and their roles
Financial Official	Enters and maintains banking account information
Authorizing Official	Adds Payment Requestors and Inquirer Only users
Payment Requestor	Initiates payment requests
Inquirer Only	Can only run reports so no other role allowed

What do the ASAP statuses mean?

- **Open** – Time frame after the account was created and when it falls during the POP (period of performance)

- **Liquidated** – 120-day time frame following POP, please note you are still able to draw funds during this time

- **Suspended** – Last 4 business days of every month, administrative issues, or time frame after the 120-day period has expired but the grant has not been closed

- **Closed** – Account has been deauthorized, de-obligated, and closed

What if I cannot use ASAP for fund returns?

- In rare circumstances a grantee may need to return funds, but cannot use ASAP to do so.
- Pay.gov is a United States Treasury website that allows individuals, states and institutions to make secure electronic payments to the federal government using the internet.
- If your bank does not allow you to return funds via the ASAP system, Pay.gov is your resource for funds returns. NIFA **strongly discourages** paper checks for return of funds or other payment remittances from this point forward.
- Contact the NIFA ASAP Customer Service Team if you think this applies to you.
- Please note: The site below must be used for proper posting to NIFA:

  - https://www.pay.gov/public/form/start/65117223

Tips

- Maintain User Control
  - Login every 45 days
  - Maintain a POC (Point of Contact) and HOO (Head of Organization)
  - Recommend having 2 POCs
- Use the First In First Out (FIFO) accounting practice
- Withdraw funds before 120 days after the end of the award
- Initiate drawdowns on a regular basis

Questions???

Panelists

Lily Eskanos
Betty McGaughey
Tara Warner

Please put your questions in the Q and A Box

Questions/comments/feedback:
AdminOpsTeam.NIFA@usda.gov
Subject line: Grant Support Technical Assistance Workshop