

OFFICE OF THE STATE CONTROLLER

STATE MANDATED COSTS CLAIMING INSTRUCTIONS NO. 2001-01

FINANCIAL AND COMPLIANCE AUDITS

APRIL 2, 2001

In accordance with Government Code (GC) Section 17561, eligible claimants may submit claims to the State Controller's Office (SCO) for reimbursement of costs incurred for state mandated cost programs. The following are claiming instructions and forms that eligible claimants will use for the filing of claims for Financial and Compliance Audits. These claiming instructions are issued subsequent to the adoption of the program's amended parameters and guidelines (P's & G's) by the Commission on State Mandates (COSM).

Before the enactment of test claim legislation, Education Code Section 41020, as reenacted by Chapter 1010, Statutes of 1976, required school districts and county offices of education (COE's) to undertake annual financial and compliance audits. The subject test claim legislation and the SCO's *Standards and Procedures for Audits of California K-12 Local Education Agencies* revisions impose additional requirements on school districts and COE's.

On July 27, 2000, the COSM determined that the revisions for the Financial and Compliance Audits program establish costs mandated by the State according to the provisions listed in the P's & G's. For your reference, the P's & G's are included as an integral part of the claiming instructions.

Eligible Claimants

With the exception of community colleges, any county office of education or school district, as defined in GC § 17519, that incurs increased costs as a direct result of this mandate is eligible to claim reimbursement of these costs.

Filing Deadlines

Reimbursement claims for the 1994-95 through 1999-00 fiscal years must be filed with the SCO. Claims must be delivered or postmarked on or before **July 31, 2001**. Annually thereafter, having received payment for an estimated claim, the claimant must file a reimbursement claim by January 15, of the following fiscal year. Claims filed after the deadline will be reduced by a late penalty of 10%, not to exceed \$1,000. In order for a claim to be considered properly filed, it must include any specific supporting documentation requested in the instructions. Claims filed more than one year after the deadline, or without the requested supporting documentation, will not be accepted.

All initial reimbursement claims will be considered as one claim for the purpose of computing the late claim penalty. Do not prorate the penalty among fiscal years. If the claims are late, the penalty should be applied to a single fiscal year.

Estimated claims filed with the SCO must be postmarked by January 15 of the fiscal year in which costs will be incurred. However, 2000-01 estimated claims must be filed with the SCO and postmarked by **July 31, 2001**. Timely filed claims will be paid before late claims.

Minimum Claim Cost

GC § 17564(a) provides that no claim shall be filed pursuant to § 17561 unless such a claim exceeds \$200 per program per fiscal year. However, any county superintendent of schools, as the fiscal agent for the district, may submit a combined claim in excess of \$200 on behalf of districts within the county even if an individual claim does not exceed \$200. A combined claim must show the individual claim costs for each eligible district. Once a combined claim is filed, all subsequent fiscal years relating to the same mandate must be filed in a combined form. The county superintendent receives the reimbursement payment and is responsible for disbursing funds to each participating district. A district may withdraw from the combined claim form by providing the county superintendent and the SCO with a written notice of its intent to file a separate claim at least 180 days prior to the deadline for filing the claim. Claims should be rounded to the nearest dollar.

Reimbursement Claims

Initial reimbursement claims will only be reimbursed to the extent that expenditures can be supported and if such information is unavailable, claims will be reduced. In addition, ongoing reimbursement claims must be supported by documentation as evidence of the expenditures. Examples of documentation may include, but are not limited to, employee time records that identify mandate activities, payroll records, invoices, receipts, contracts, travel expense vouchers, purchase orders, and caseload statistics.

Audit of Costs

All claims submitted to the SCO are reviewed to determine if costs are related to the mandate, are reasonable and not excessive, and the claim was prepared in accordance with the P's & G's adopted by the COSM. If any adjustments are made to a claim, a "Notice of Claim Adjustment," specifying the claim component adjusted, the amount adjusted, and the reason for the adjustment, will be mailed within 30 days after payment of the claim.

On-site audits will be conducted by the SCO as deemed necessary. Accordingly, all documentation to support actual costs claimed must be retained for a period of two years after the end of the calendar year in which the reimbursement claim was filed or amended, regardless of the year of costs incurred. When no funds are appropriated for initial claims at the time the claim is filed, supporting documents must be retained for two years from the date of initial payment of the claim. Claim documentation shall be made available to the SCO on request.

Retention of Claiming Instructions

Claiming instructions and forms should be retained permanently in your Mandated Cost Manual for future reference and use in filing claims. These forms should be duplicated to meet your filing requirements. You will be notified of updated forms or changes to claiming instructions as necessary. For your reference, these and future mandated costs claiming instructions and forms can be found on the Internet at www.sco.ca.gov/ard/local/locreim/index.htm.

Address for Filing Claims

Submit a signed original and a copy of form FAM-27, Claim for Payment, and a copy of all other forms and supporting documents to:

If delivered by
U.S. Postal Service:

Office of the State Controller
Attn: Local Reimbursements Section
Division of Accounting and Reporting
P.O. Box 942850
Sacramento, CA 94250

If delivered by
other delivery services:

Office of the State Controller
Attn: Local Reimbursements Section
Division of Accounting and Reporting
3301 C Street, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95816