

OFFICE OF THE STATE CONTROLLER

STATE MANDATED COSTS CLAIMING INSTRUCTIONS NO. 2006-07

NATIONAL NORM-REFERENCED ACHIEVEMENT TEST
FORMERLY STANDARDIZED TESTING AND REPORTING (STAR)

February 21, 2006

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 filing claims for the National Norm-Referenced Achievement Test (NRAT) program. These claiming instructions are issued subsequent to adoption of the program's Parameters and Guidelines (P's & G's) by the Commission on State Mandates (COSM).

On July 28, 2005, the COSM determined that administering the California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6) in grades 3 and 7 established 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

Except for community colleges, any school district, as defined in GC section 17519, that incurs increased costs as a result of this mandate, is eligible to claim reimbursement of these costs.

Filing Deadlines

A. Reimbursement Claims

Initial reimbursement claims must be filed within 120 days from the issuance date of claiming instructions. Costs incurred for this program are reimbursable for fiscal year 2004-05. Claims for the 2004-05 fiscal year must be filed with the SCO and be delivered or postmarked on or before **June 21, 2006**. Actual reimbursement claims for fiscal year 2005-06 and estimated claims for fiscal year 2006-07 must be filed with SCO on or before **January 16, 2007**.

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.**

B. Late Penalty

1. Initial Claims

AB 3000, enacted into law on September 30, 2002, amended the late penalty assessments on initial claims. Late initial claims submitted **on or after September 30, 2002**, are assessed a late penalty of 10% of the total amount of the initial claims **without limitation**.

2. Annual Reimbursement Claims

All late annual reimbursement claims are assessed a late penalty of 10% subject to the \$1,000 limitation regardless of when the claims were filed.

C. Estimated Claims

Unless otherwise specified in the claiming instructions school districts are not required to provide cost schedules and supporting documents with an estimated claim if the estimated amount does not exceed the previous fiscal year's actual costs by more than 10%. Claimants can simply enter the estimated amount on form FAM-27, line (07).

However, if the estimated claim exceeds the previous fiscal year's actual costs by more than 10%, claimants must complete supplemental claim forms to support their estimated costs as specified for the program to explain the reason for the increased costs. If no explanation supporting the higher estimate is provided with the claim, it will automatically be adjusted to 110% of the previous fiscal year's actual costs. Future estimated claims filed with the SCO must be postmarked by January 15 of the fiscal year in which costs will be incurred. Claims filed timely will be paid before late claims.

Minimum Claim Cost

GC section 17564(a) provides that no claim shall be filed pursuant to Sections 17551 and 17561, unless such claim exceeds one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

Reimbursement of Claims

To be eligible for mandated cost reimbursement for any fiscal year, only actual costs may be claimed. Actual costs are those costs actually incurred to implement the mandated activities. Actual costs must be traceable and supported by source documents that show the validity of such costs, when they were incurred, and their relationship to the reimbursable activities. A source document is a document created at or near the same time the actual cost was incurred for the event or activity in question.

Source documents may include, but are not limited to, employee time records or time logs, sign-in sheets, invoices, and receipts. Evidence corroborating the source documents may include, but is not limited to, worksheets, cost allocation reports (system generated), purchase orders, contracts, agendas, training packets, and declarations. Evidence corroborating the source documents may include data relevant to the reimbursable activities otherwise in compliance with local, state, and federal government requirements. However, corroborating documents cannot be substituted for source documents.

Certification of Claim

In accordance with the provisions of GC section 17561, an authorized representative of the claimant shall be required to provide a certification of claim stating: "I certify, (or declare), under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct," and must further comply with the requirements of the Code of Civil Procedure section 2015.5, for those costs mandated by the State and contained herein.

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 SCO's claiming instructions and 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.

Pursuant to GC section 17558.5, subdivision (a), a reimbursement claim for actual costs filed by a school district pursuant to this chapter is subject to the initiation of an audit by the SCO no later than three years after the date that the actual reimbursement claim is filed or last amended, whichever is later. However, if no funds are appropriated or no payment is made to a claimant for the program for the fiscal year for which the claim is filed, the time for the SCO to initiate an audit shall commence to run from the date of initial payment of the claim.

In any case, an audit shall be completed no later than two years after the date that the audit is commenced. All documents used to support the reimbursable activities must be retained during the period subject to audit. If an audit has been initiated by the SCO during the period subject to audit, the retention period is extended until the ultimate resolution of any audit findings. On-site audits will be conducted by the SCO as deemed necessary.

Retention of Claiming Instructions

The claiming instructions and forms in this package 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.

Questions, or requests for hard copies of these instructions, should be faxed to Angie Lowi-Teng at (916) 323-6527 or e-mailed to LRSDAR@sco.ca.gov. Or, if you wish, you may call the Local Reimbursements Section at (916) 324-5729.

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.shtml.

Address for Filing Claims

Claims should be rounded to the nearest dollar. Submit a signed original and a copy of form FAM-27, Claim for Payment, and all other forms and supporting documents. **(To expedite the payment process, please sign the form in blue ink, and attach a copy of the form FAM-27 to the top of the claim package.)**

Use the following mailing addresses:

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