

# Research Cash Advance Fund Guidelines

## Description of a Research Cash Advance Fund

A Research Cash Advance Fund is a temporary advance of cash to be used to pay human research subjects. For example, a researcher may offer \$20 in cash to each person who completes a survey.

Researchers are required to comply with the following procedures to safeguard the cash advanced and to eliminate the possibility of any misappropriation.

## Prohibitions

A Research Cash Advance Fund cannot be used to pay for any of the following even if they are expenditures associated with the research project:

1. Travel expense reimbursement. These should be processed via a Travel Authorization (TA).
2. Travel advances. All travel activities need to be reported via the Travel Authorization process.
3. Payments to vendors for invoices submitted directly to the department. These should be processed through USU EZ-Buy.
4. Payments to independent contractors or consultants. These should be processed through USU EZ-Buy.
5. Payments to employees for services, awards, bonuses, etc. should be processed through Payroll. (If an employee happens to be involved as a human research subject, payroll taxes will be withheld after the payment is made.)
6. Payments to University auxiliaries (i.e. Campus Store, etc.). A purchasing card should be used.
7. Personal borrowing (IOUs).
8. Cashing checks.

## Obtaining a Research Cash Advance Fund

Only the Controller's Office has the authority to create a Research Cash Advance Fund. Obtain the "Request for Research Cash Advance Fund" form and send the completed and signed form to Shanell Johnson, Manager of Treasury Services, at [shanell.johnson@usu.edu](mailto:shanell.johnson@usu.edu).

The Manager of Treasury Services will submit the request through EZ-Buy. Approvals are tied to the index of the research project and will be required through EZ-Buy.

Processing time for a "Request for Research Cash Advance Fund" usually takes 3-5 business days from when the form is submitted and department approvals are completed. **Please plan accordingly.**

## Operation of a Research Cash Advance Fund

### Cash Custodian

The department head, Principal Investigator (P.I.), or business manager is responsible to appoint an employee to act as cash custodian over the Research Cash Advance Fund.

The cash custodian is responsible for the following:

1. Create and maintain a cash log:
  - a. A cash log states the title of the research project, the name of the P.I., and the index associated with the project. The first entry is the date the cash advance is received and the total amount approved.
  - b. The cash custodian must maintain a log with the signature of each participant receiving the cash.
  - c. At the conclusion of the research, both the research assistant and custodian are responsible to do a "count" together.
    1. This is done by adding the total amount paid out to the participants (supported by original signed informed consent forms) to any left-over cash and comparing the total to the amount originally given to the research assistant.
  - d. If the amounts do not agree, the custodian's supervisor must be contacted immediately. ***If resolution cannot be reached, the supervisor must contact Campus Police and the Manager of Treasury Services to report the loss.***
2. The cash fund must be secured at all times by using a cash box that is stored in a safe or a locking file cabinet.
3. Only the custodian or custodian's supervisor should have access to the cash fund.
4. The custodian is responsible to ensure that the money is used ONLY to pay participants in research.

### Supervisor

The cash custodian's immediate supervisor is responsible for the following:

1. Conduct periodic cash counts with the custodian present to verify the proper use and accounting of funds.

- a. This is done by adding the total amount paid out to the participants (supported by original signed informed consent forms) to any left-over cash and comparing the total to the amount originally given to the research assistant. Both the supervisor and custodian date and sign the log to indicate that a count has been performed.
2. Investigate and resolve cash discrepancies between the log and the original cash given. If the amounts do not agree, ***the supervisor must contact Campus Police and the Manager of Treasury Services to report the loss.***
3. Contact the Controller's Office Accountant immediately if a new cash custodian is assigned to the fund. A cash count must be performed by the supervisor, the original cash custodian, and the new cash custodian. The supervisor, original cash custodian and the new cash custodian must sign and date the log indicating a count has been performed.

## Closing a Research Cash Advance Fund

On a quarterly basis, the Controller's Office Accountant assigned to the award will contact the department about the status of the research project and request that receipts for the quarter be submitted.

When the research project has been completed, the Controller's Office Accountant will work with the cash custodian to make sure that the cash log along with the left-over cash equal the total cash that was received.

If there is remaining cash from the research project, the cash needs to be deposited at the Cashier's Office, TSC 248. To deposit left-over cash at the Cashier's Office:

1. Fill out a departmental deposit slip.  
[http://controllers.usu.edu/files/deposit\\_slip.pdf](http://controllers.usu.edu/files/deposit_slip.pdf)
  - a. In the description write the title of the research project and the Banner Index.
  - b. Use the Banner Index that was assigned to the project when the "Request for Research Cash Advance Fund" form was filled out.
  - c. Use Account Code 101800
  - d. Bring the form and cash to the Cashier's Office, TSC 248, to be deposited.

## Obtaining Additional Funds

If additional cash is needed for the research project, a "Request for Research Cash Advance Fund" form needs to be filled out with the "additional funding" box checked. Return the completed form to Manager of Treasury Services.

Within two (2) business days, a Controller's Office accountant will contact the Department and arrange for a cash count with the cash custodian to verify and account for all funds.

The Manager of Treasury Service will then issue the additional cash.

## Form

[Research Cash Advance Fund](#)

Obtain, operate and close this type of cash advance fund