

**DATE:** March 23, 2020  
**TO:** Workforce Equity Initiative Programs  
**FROM:** Jennifer K. Foster, ICCB Deputy Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** **Workforce Equity Initiative Update**

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The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is monitoring the rapid developments around the coronavirus/COVID-19. The agency is working closely with the Governor's Office, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), the General Assembly, and other stakeholders to assess continually the situation. As we have learned more about the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus and its potential impact, the situation has quickly advanced to a point where mitigation procedures must be implemented at the community level.

The ICCB recognizes that many of your institutions are on tele-work status for staff; and we also recognize that our Workforce Equity Initiative programs are doing your best to adapt to this work method. In addition, we know that many of you are navigating the process of adapting your WEI initiatives to an online format. We strongly encourage you, if you have not, to look at converting to an online delivery mode. We realize that this may vary from institution to institution, but ask that you work with your college to determine what will work best for your program. While your programming may be different than originally proposed, the ICCB is very confident that you will continue to provide excellent services to your students. If we can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out to me, your coaches and to Dawn Koeltzow.

There have been some recent WEI questions asked, and we want to provide you with feedback in order to continue your programming. The questions and answers are listed below:

**1. Can we continue to pay stipends during this time?**

The ICCB supports continuing to pay stipends to students under the WEI grant. If students are unable to attend classes due to COVID-19 and the student and the college have plans to continue the instruction after the end of the closure, the college can continue to pay the student stipend. However, the college must have proposed this stipend under their initial grant proposal. The ICCB will review this policy and will issue additional guidance as needed. For college specific questions, the WEI coordinator should consult with the ICCB staff contact.

**2. What if we don't have enough resources to continue to pay stipends?**

A college may have to re-examine their budgets to determine the amount of resources available to continue stipends. If line item shifts above the threshold are needed, send budget modifications to the ICCB office.

**3. Are your offices open, meaning are you working remotely?**

The ICCB staff is working remotely, as many of you are. However, we are available online to answer any questions as well as to process any requests. Send questions to [Dawn.Koeltznow@icc.edu](mailto:Dawn.Koeltznow@icc.edu) and cc: [Nora.L.Rossman@illinois.gov](mailto:Nora.L.Rossman@illinois.gov).

**4. Will we get budget mods in a one-month turnaround?**

Yes. The ICCB recognizes that through this process you will have to make adjustments to your budgets. Budget Modification are still a one-month or less turnaround.

**5. Are there any updates from ICCB regarding grant deadlines and extensions?**

The ICCB has extended the Q2 Financial and Narrative Reporting deadline to April 30, 2020.

The due date for returning the Intent to Return/Release and the Intent to Request Form(s) has been extended through March 31, 2020. The availability of funding to re-allocate is dependent upon the return of funds from other WEI colleges. The ICCB understands that those colleges who are returning funds will not be able to spend their allocated funding by the end of the grant period. The ICCB does not have additional resources. Please submit these reports to [Nora.l.rossman@illinois.gov](mailto:Nora.l.rossman@illinois.gov) and cc: [Dawn.Koeltzow@icc.edu](mailto:Dawn.Koeltzow@icc.edu).

**6. Will the ICCB restrict any payments of stipends?**

The ICCB supports continuing to pay stipends to students under the WEI grant. If students are unable to attend classes due to COVID-19 and the student and the college have plans to continue the instruction after the end of the closure, the college can continue to pay the student stipend. However, the college must have proposed this stipend under their initial grant proposal. The ICCB will review this policy and will issue additional guidance as needed. For college specific questions, the WEI coordinator should consult with the ICCB staff contact.

In addition, a college will have to re-examine their budgets to determine the amount of resources available to continue. If line item shifts above the threshold are needed, send budget modifications to the ICCB office.

**7. Are there any restrictions regarding WEI staff members receiving their salaries while working remotely?**

Employees should not suffer any hardship by the closing of programs. So given this, **the ICCB is authorizing those WEI staff to continue to compensate staff and instructors during this time, utilizing your current grant funds.** Your institution may require that essential or task performing critical functioning staff to stay connected with the college over this period of time. That is an individual institution's decision.

**8. Can we utilize laptops during this time with students?**

Yes. This is an allowable activity to purchase computers. The College must have a procedure for loaning the computers and other equipment to students, etc. In addition, if computers are not a part of your grant, you must seek approval from the ICCB. Please note that a budget modification may be needed.

**9. Is there a template for the Q3 Report?**

Attached is the template for Q3 Financial and Narrative Report?

**10. Are you hosting webinars or planning to send out any mass communication regarding all ICCB grants, or will they be handled through our Listserv?**

We are planning a webinar/conference call with WEI grantees within the coming weeks to allow grantees the opportunity for you to ask questions.

All other information and updates will be communicated through the listserv.

We ask that if you have additional questions, please feel free to send questions to [Dawn.Koeltzow@icc.edu](mailto:Dawn.Koeltzow@icc.edu).

For information and resources regarding the Coronavirus, refer to the following:

- U.S Department of Education: <https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus>
- Illinois Department of Public Health: <http://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html>