

State of Vermont
Agency of Natural Resources
Department of Environmental Conservation

Process: Granting and Contracting	Effective Date:	7/1/2017
Procedure: On-Site Grant Monitoring Visits	Revision Date: Revision #:	
Prepared / Revised by: DEC Financial Operations	Frequency:	As Needed

Procedure Objectives

The procedure objective is to outline the method that the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) uses to select and conduct an on-site monitoring visit for grantees.

Impacted Departments or Divisions

All programs within DEC that enter into pass through agreements, through a grant, with outside entities to perform programmatic objectives.

Resources Required

Clearance to drive State cars for one Grants Management Specialist (GMS) participating in visit.

Documents to be utilized include:

- SiteVisits – Tracking.xlsx
- Site Visit Initial Correspondence template
- Site Visit Documents Correspondence template
- Financial Management Review sheet – FY18
- Monitoring Visit – FAQs – FY18
- Initial Determination Letter – template

Governing Documents

- DEC Granting Plan (current version)

- VT Agency of Administration Bulletin 5: Policy for Issuance and Monitoring of Grants
- 2 CRF Part 200 (Uniform Guidance)

Time line/Frequency

1. DEC's target site visit frequency is sixteen (16) grants per State fiscal year. GMSs will seek to spread these visits across the twelve-month period, averaging 2-3 visits per month.
2. Review of submitted documents and preparation pre-site visit typically takes 30-45 minutes.
3. The on-site monitoring visit typically takes about one (1) hour, depending on the level of discussion, plus travel to and from.
4. Drafting and sending the initial determination letter typically takes 30-45 minutes.

Selection of Grants/Grantees to Visit

1. On-Site Grant Monitoring Visit selections will be discussed and prioritized at bi-weekly Grants Management Specialist meetings based on the following criteria:
 - a. Risk level (High as priority, then Moderate)
 - b. Federally-funded grants
 - c. Grantees or loan recipients with Single Audit findings
2. Towards the last quarter of the State fiscal year, if there are not enough grantees that fit the above priority criteria to meet the Monitoring Visit goal, grantees located in proximity to selected grantees may also be visited in order to conduct multiple visits in one day and make efficient use of resources.
3. Two GMSs will be assigned the monitoring visit (typically a GMS administering one or more active grants with said grantee) and one GMS will be designated as primary.

Pre-Site Visit Correspondence and Preparation

1. Prior to scheduling, both GMSs will check in with respective Technical Project Managers for active grants being monitored to see if they would like to also attend/have their availability considered in scheduling.
2. The primary GMS will send initial correspondence to the selected grantee notifying that their organization has been selected, the intent of the visit and providing available dates. See *Site Visit Initial Correspondence template* as example.
3. Once a date is selected, the primary GMS will reserve a vehicle and send follow-up correspondence regarding documents the grantee will need to complete and return prior to the visit (Financial Management Review workbook, tabs 1 and 2) as

well as documents the grantee should have on-hand for review at the visit. See *Site Visit Documents Correspondence template* as example.

4. Once the completed grantee documents are submitted to GMS, GMS will save to the Y: drive and review in advance for completeness and to make note of any specific discussion items to research or place focus on during the discussion. The Y: drive location is in the following folder, saved to the appropriate fiscal year subfolder and then a subfolder with the grantees name:
[Y:\DEC_AID\Finance\Grants Management Specialist Resources\Monitoring\Site Visits](#)

Conducting On-Site Visit

1. The visit primarily entails introductions and explanation of the purpose of the on-site monitoring visit followed by a review and discussion of the Monitoring FAQs document.
2. The primary GMS will conduct the visit and the accompanying GMS will bring a laptop to take notes in the Monitoring FAQs word document to record grantee responses.
3. Upon completing the Monitoring FAQs discussion, the primary GMS will review the documents in a particular grant file using the DEC Grantee Grant File checklist. GMS will note any missing documents to grantee.
4. Upon completion of grant file check, GMS will ask the grantee if they have any questions for the State and inform grantee of next steps post-site visit.

Initial Determination Letter and other Visit Documentation

1. Primary GMS will use the notes from the accompanying GMS to draft an initial determination letter (IDL) using the template, adding “recommendations” that emerged written in the Self Assessment of Internal Controls or discussed while reviewing the Monitoring FAQs.
2. Primary GMS will submit draft IDL to the Financial Manager for review prior to sending to grantee. Once reviewed, GMS will email a signed IDL to the grantee and save the document to the grantee’s monitoring reports folder on the Y: drive.
3. Primary GMS will also add appropriate data and recommendation information to the SiteVisits – Tracking spreadsheet.

Resolution of Findings and Follow-up on Recommendations

1. For a *required action*, GMS will request grantee response regarding corrective action within 30 days. GMS will follow-up via email and phone until finding resolved and corrective action implemented.
2. For *recommendations*, GMS will request grantee response regarding any planned action or planned discussions within 30 days. GMS will follow-up at six months to seek information as to any best practices implemented or still in progress. GMS will potentially send second follow-up email at one-year mark if GMS is aware that implementation was still in progress at six months.
3. GMS will add notes regarding corrective action in progress or implemented to the SiteVisits – Tracking spreadsheet and save correspondence and any related documents to the grantee’s monitoring site visit folder on the Y: drive.

Sanctions

1. DEC will withhold new agreements until any required corrective action complete or progressing satisfactorily as a result of an on-site monitoring visit.
2. Outstanding grantee corrective action will be reviewed at bi-weekly GMS meetings.
3. DEC will not withhold payments on existing agreements as a result of outstanding corrective action related to findings at an on-site grant monitoring visit.

On-Site Grant Monitoring Program Evaluation

1. GMSs will annually convene to review data regarding corrective action or best practices implemented as a result of DEC’s On-Site Grant Monitoring program to determine if current practice producing any desired outcomes. The outcome of this evaluation will determine whether to increase number or prioritization of site visits for the subsequent fiscal year.