DEC Invoice Policy Updates — FAQ

Quick answers for grantees

These answers summarize the June 2026 Invoice Policy Guide. For grant-specific questions, follow your executed G-100, funding requirements, and written DEC guidance.

1. Why did DEC update the Invoice Policy Guide?

To improve consistency, transparency, compliance, and timely processing by clarifying what must be invoiced, documented, explained, or approved.

2. What are the most important changes?

Clearer rules for actual expenditures, budget variances, written justification, prior authorization, personnel/fringe documentation, invoice holds/rejections, and supporting documentation.

3. How do the budget variance thresholds work?

≤ $1,000 and ≤10%: no additional approval. > $1,000 and ≤10%: written justification in CMS. >10% or >$10,000 (whichever threshold is lower): prior approval and possibly a budget revision.

4. What is the difference between written justification and prior approval?

Justification explains an expense or variance in CMS. Prior approval is DEC authorization obtained before the applicable cost/change is incurred or invoiced. A justification does not replace required prior approval.

5. If an expense is in my budget, is it automatically approved to spend?

No. Some expenses and programmatic decisions require separate prior authorization even when the cost appears in an approved budget.

6. When should I invoice an expense?

Invoice it in the month the cost was incurred, regardless of when it was paid. Prior-month expenses require Program Officer approval before being added to a later invoice.

7. Can I bill a monthly budget amount or my budgeted fringe rate?

No. Invoices must reflect actual expenditures. Fringe reimbursement must be based on actual employer-paid fringe costs, supported by the calculation and allocation used.

8. What if staffing, FTE, salary, or fringe changes?

Personnel-related changes must remain aligned with the approved budget. Required FTE/rate/fringe changes or cost increases must be reviewed and approved by DEC in advance.

9. What is the difference between an invoice hold and rejection?

A hold temporarily pauses processing while missing documentation, reports, compliance issues, or variances are resolved. A rejection returns the invoice for correction and resubmission.

10. Do I need a new accounting system or a new way to submit invoices?

No. Continue using your accounting system and submit invoices through the designated DEC Contract Management System (CMS). Keep records that support the amount charged to DEC. Questions should go to your assigned Program Officer.

Remember: Budgeted does not automatically mean authorized. When you are unsure whether an expense, variance, or change needs approval, contact your Program Officer before proceeding.