

To: All PI's and Business Managers Who Have Active Subcontracts

From: The Controller's Office Research Accounting Team

Subject: Adobe EchoSign Electronic Signature Process-Subrecipient Invoices

You are receiving this memo because you are a Business Manager or Principal Investigator (PI) who has an active subcontract.

The Controller's Office is implementing an electronic signature process to expedite the processing of subrecipient invoices effective 7/13/15. The electronic signature service that UMass Amherst currently uses is Adobe EchoSign (EchoSign). By using EchoSign, we will eliminate paper and greatly reduce the amount of time it takes to process these invoices.

OMB Uniform Guidance (UG), effective 12/26/14, requires the payment of federally sponsored subrecipient invoices within 30 days, unless the invoice is improper. While UG applies to federally sponsored subcontracts, it is our goal to ensure timely payment of all subrecipient invoices, regardless of funding source. Echosign will help our University track these documents and ensure timely payment.

An electronic signature -also known as an "e-signature" - is a simple and legally recognized way to approve a digital document. EchoSign automatically generates an audit trail that tracks every step in the signature process-from initial document preparation through signing and archiving. This comprehensive audit trail is stored securely and can be used to know who signed a document and when a document is signed.

How this works: An email is sent to you by the EchoSign administrator in the Controller's Office who received the invoice in rainvoices@admin.umass.edu. The email will let you know that a document is ready for your signature. You click where indicated and follow the simple instructions. With a few clicks, you can open, review, and sign. OIT has provided a guide which shows an example email and steps for e-signing a document at <https://www.it.umass.edu/support/software/sign-a-document-adobe-echosign>. This can be done from any web browser or mobile device, no special software is required. There is no need for you to establish an EchoSign account.

Along with the invoice, you will receive a standard memo (see below) which provides instructions for department administrators and PI's as to the steps which must be taken in respect to preparing and approving subrecipient invoices as an important step in our subrecipient monitoring process. The invoice will be set up for review and signature by a department administrator, PI, and Accounts Payable.

Please contact Denise Storm at dstorm@admin.umass.edu or 5-7011 if delegation of signing authority is necessary for subrecipient invoice(s). A delegation specific to subrecipient invoice approval will be required and maintained. In this case, the Controller's Office will have the subrecipient invoices routed to the delegated individual rather than the PI.

All signers will receive a final signed copy of the invoice by EchoSign.

University policy requires all subrecipient invoices to be received in rainvoices@admin.umass.edu and going forward these invoices must be approved with this new E-sign process.

The Controller's Office thanks you for your support with this new process

New OMB Uniform Guidance (200.305) effective 12/26/14 requires our University to pay subrecipient invoices within 30 days of receiving the invoice unless the request is improper. Adobe Echo Sign is being used to allow department administrators and the Principal Investigator (PI) to properly review, prepare, and authorize subrecipient invoices with an electronic signature. By using this system, we will be able to pay invoices more quickly, track invoices, document reasons for payment delay, and reduce the use of paper.

Invoice review is a key step in subrecipient monitoring. Do not E-Sign or authorize an invoice for payment if there are discrepancies or concerns about the invoice or work performed. If this invoice cannot be signed, choose the alternative action "I will not E-Sign" and enter a reason for decline. **All documents must either be e-signed or declined/canceled.** Research Accounting will review the reason for decline and follow up with you if necessary.

Before authorizing this invoice with a signature, please review and complete the following steps:

- 1.) The **Business Manager / Administrator** must be sure that the invoice is ready for payment. For an invoice to be paid without delay, it is necessary to ensure the following:
 - a. The complete purchase order number is typed in the required text field on the invoice. The PI will not be able to authorize the invoice if the PO is not typed in the required field.
 - b. The purchase order is in open status and has a balance sufficient to pay the current amount due.
 - c. The blanket order box is selected so that multiple payments can be made using the purchase order. If the blanket order box is not selected contact Procurement.
 - d. Attach a wire transfer form or additional paperwork (if necessary)
 - e. Once the invoice is ready for payment the Business Manager can sign the document so that it is sent to the PI for authorization. When the PI is not available and wishes to delegate this responsibility, contact Denise Storm at 5-7011 or dstorm@admin.umass.edu to establish a process for sending the invoices to a delegate. A delegation specific to signing subrecipient invoices/ monitoring must be on file.

****Please note:** This document can be forwarded to a different departmental administrator other than the business manager to accommodate business process; however the PI or PI's delegate must sign the invoice. Documents can be reassigned by choosing alternative action "somebody else should sign." Also, in the body of the email sent by EchoSign, you will see an option to forward the document to a different party.

- 2.) The **Principal Investigator** must sign the invoice to authorize this payment. Authorization of payment is a certification by the PI that all required programmatic and financial reports have been received from the subrecipient. The PI is responsible for monitoring the activities of the subrecipient as necessary to ensure the following:
 - a. The subaward is being used for authorized purposes, in compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and terms and conditions of the subaward. The subaward performance goals are achieved.
 - b. The expenses are appropriate. Expenditures are allowable, reasonable, and allocable.
 - c. Technical progress is in line with spending trends.
 - d. Technical and progress reports due to the University have been received and accepted.

Once the PI has signed the invoice it will be directed to Accounts Payable (AP) for signature. When AP has signed for the invoice, a final signed version will be sent by Echo Sign to Research Accounting, AP, the PI, and Business Manager/Administrator who signed the document. If the invoice is waiting for signature for an extended period of time, a follow up will be conducted by Research Accounting. Research Accounting will reach out to the individual who is holding the document.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your Research Accountant or Jane Polo.

David Bennett	545-1421	bennett@umass.edu
Lori A Dwyer	545-3658	ladwyer@umass.edu
David Gazzillo	545-1412	gazzillo@admin.umass.edu
Martin Konowitch	545-1417	mkonowit@admin.umass.edu
Liz Ortiz	545-1416	lortiz@admin.umass.edu
Greg Rodak	545-1405	grodak@admin.umass.edu
Lloyd Thomas	545-1414	lthomas@admin.umass.edu
Jane Polo	545-1407	polo@admin.umass.edu

New OMB Uniform Guidance (200.305) effective 12/26/14 requires our University to pay subrecipient invoices within 30 days of receiving the invoice unless the request is improper. Adobe Echo Sign is being used to allow department administrators and the Principal Investigator (PI) to properly review, prepare, and authorize Inter-UMass Campus subrecipient invoices with an electronic signature. By using this system, we will be able to pay invoices more quickly, track invoices, document reasons for payment delay, and reduce the use of paper.

Invoice review is a key step in subrecipient monitoring. Do not E-Sign or authorize an invoice for payment if there are discrepancies or concerns about the invoice or work performed. If this invoice cannot be signed, choose the alternative action "I will not E-Sign" and enter a reason for decline. **All documents must either be e-signed or declined/canceled.** Research Accounting will review the reason for decline and follow up with you if necessary.

Before authorizing this invoice with a signature, please review and complete the following steps:

- 1.) The **Business Manager / Administrator** must be sure that the invoice is ready for payment. For an invoice to be paid without delay, it is necessary to ensure the following:
 - a. The complete speed type, project grant, and account code is typed in the required text field on the invoice. Account code 757275 needs to be used for any amount up to \$25,000 and 757270 for any amount over \$25,000 to ensure that F&A is processed correctly. The PI will not be able to authorize the invoice until the required fields are completed.
 - b. Once the invoice is ready for payment the Business Manager can sign the document so that it is sent to the PI for authorization. When the PI is not available and wishes to delegate this responsibility, contact Denise Storm at 5-7011 or dstorm@admin.umass.edu to establish a process for sending the invoices to a delegate. A delegation specific to signing subrecipient invoices/ monitoring must be on file.
 - c. Attach any additional paperwork as backup to the invoice (if necessary)

****Please note:** This document can be forwarded to a different departmental administrator other than the business manager to accommodate business process; however the PI or PI's delegate must sign the invoice. Documents can be reassigned by choosing alternative action "somebody else should sign." Also, in the body of the email sent by EchoSign, you will see an option to forward the document to a different party.

- 2.) The **Principal Investigator** must sign the invoice to authorize this payment. Authorization of payment is a certification by the PI that all required programmatic and financial reports have been received from the subrecipient. The PI is responsible for monitoring the activities of the subrecipient as necessary to ensure the following:
 - a. The subaward is being used for authorized purposes, in compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and terms and conditions of the subaward. The subaward performance goals are achieved.
 - b. The expenses are appropriate. Expenditures are allowable, reasonable, and allocable.
 - c. Technical progress is in line with spending trends.
 - d. Technical and progress reports due to the University have been received and accepted.

Once the PI has signed the invoice it will be directed to Jane Polo for signature. When Jane has signed for the invoice, a final signed version will be sent by Echo Sign to the Business Manager, PI and Jane Polo who signed the document.

If the invoice is waiting for signature for an extended period of time, a follow up will be conducted by Research Accounting. Research Accounting will reach out to the individual who is holding the document.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your Research Accountant or Jane Polo.

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