

Frequently Asked Questions

Payment Request Justification

Is the justification simply restating the purpose of the grant?

No, the payment request justification must describe the exact reason for the payment request and must include the name of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) program, the main budget item(s) or expense category(ies), along with an amount for each that sums up to the total payment request, and the date range associated with the costs included in the payment request.

If we use a blanket statement that is repetitious will that set off alarms? Or cause further investigation due to the justification not being unique?

The payment request justification must be specific to the payment amount. ETA would not expect the justification to be the same for all payment requests.

What format should be used to submit the justification?

The Payment Management System (PMS) payment request screen provides a mandatory field for the payment request justification. The payment request justification maximum length is 1,000 characters. Please see Attachment I of the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) for payment request justification examples.

Is ETA requiring supporting documentation as an attachment to the payment request?

ETA currently does not require any supporting documents/attachments for payment request justifications.

Can we submit multiple requests in one day per sub-account?

Yes, a recipient can send multiple payment requests/justifications in one day per sub-account.

If we have a payment request with multiple sub-accounts, will questions on the payment justification for one sub-account delay the entire payment request?

Yes, if a recipient submits one payment request for multiple sub-accounts and clarification is needed on the justification for one of the sub-accounts, the entire payment request will be on hold until the clarification is submitted and approved. ETA strongly recommends sending separate payment requests per PMS sub-account to avoid potential delays.

Do the amounts in the justification for each category need to align with the amount being requested for drawdown?

Yes, the justification for each category in the payment request justification should add up to the total payment request.

What if we are submitting payment requests for many different expenses (such as payroll, supplies, consultants, etc.); how detailed do we have to be?

Recipients should be as detailed as possible when submitting payment request justifications to inform why the funds are being requested and to facilitate ETA's approval. Please see Attachment I of the TEGl for payment request justification examples.

Should the payment justification dates be based on actual expenditure dates or dates we paid our subrecipients?

Payment requests must be based on the actual expenditure dates. Please include the dates in the payment request justification.

Is there a limit on the time difference allowed between incurring the expenses and submitting a payment request?

No, but recipients must ensure the period for the expenses incurred is included in the justification. For example, "to pay a subrecipient invoice for the period April 1, 2025 to May 30, 2025."

Approvals and Timing

Who is reviewing the payment justifications?

ETA staff are reviewing and approving the payment request justifications in the Defend the Spend (DTS) system.

Is the DTS system set up to send auto-replies for clarification or are messages sent after someone reviews the payment request?

If additional information is needed regarding the payment request justification, the ETA reviewer will issue a clarification request through the DTS system. A notification link will be sent to the recipient (payment requester) through the DTS system to respond to the clarification. Recipients should save DTS in their email contacts to ensure DTS emails are not identified as spam and can be acted upon quickly.

Once the recipient responds to the clarification request via an updated payment request justification, it will re-enter the review and approval cycle. Recipients should respond to requests for clarification on payment request justifications as soon as possible and ensure that all the elements in the clarification request are addressed in the updated payment request justification, as the payment request will be in a hold status until the clarification request is responded to and accepted by ETA.

What is the expected turnaround for ETA review and approval?

ETA staff have three business days to review and act on payment request justifications. Funds for payments approved by 4:00 pm EST will generally be available for drawdown that same day.

What happens if the DTS system displays “error 404, not found”?

Please reach out to your ETA contact or your Federal Project Officer.

Will the name of the organization, payment request and payment justification be posted online for the public to review?

Yes, the name of the organization, the payment amount, and the justifications from both the recipient and ETA will appear on the Department of Government Efficiency’s (DOGE) official website, www.doge.gov/payments. Recipients must not include protected or non-sensitive personally identifiable information in payment request justifications.

Payment Management System

In PMS, you can only see about 50 characters in the input fields on the payment screen. Are there any planned development changes to expand the input fields on the payment request screen to see the full details of what you can type in?

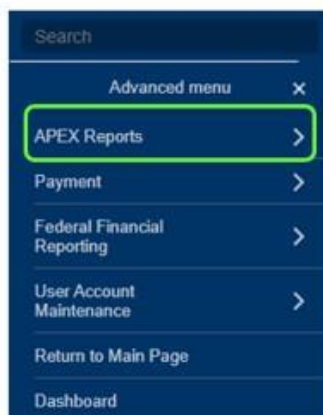
PMS does not have any plans to expand the justification comment box at this time.

Is it possible to get a list of payments previously submitted and processed for the entire Payee Account Number?

To see payment history, recipients can access the Apex Reports – Grantee Inquiry – Financial Transactions.

HOW TO ACCESS THE APEX REPORTS *(from the Dashboard)*

1. Select Menu (top left)
2. APEX Reports
3. Grantee Inquiry



Utilizing the APEX Report will allow you download data to an Excel Spreadsheet