



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

THE DIRECTOR

August 9, 2023

M-23-19

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: Shalanda D. Young 
SUBJECT: Establishment of the Council on Federal Financial Assistance

The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to ensuring that Federal agencies have the tools they need to deliver Federal financial assistance¹ programs in an efficient, effective, and equitable manner, while also reducing administrative burdens on Federal financial assistance applicants and recipients. To accomplish these goals, this Memorandum establishes the Council on Federal Financial Assistance (COFFA), an interagency forum to improve coordination, transparency, and accountability for the award and management of Federal funding.

The goals, structure, roles, and responsibilities of the COFFA build upon the lessons learned from the implementation of the other executive councils. Over the past thirty-five years, the Federal Government has established various interagency forums for the purpose of identifying emerging issues, sharing best practices, and developing solutions to common problems facing their communities. For example, the Chief Financial Officers Council (CFOC) was first established in 1990 to improve financial management leadership across the Federal Government. Similarly, the Chief Acquisition Officers Council (CAOC) was established in 1999 to provide a senior level forum for monitoring and improving the Federal acquisition system.

The objective of establishing the COFFA is to create a similar leadership body in the Federal Government for oversight and management of Federal financial assistance. The COFFA will create a partnership among Federal grant-making agencies, providing a single forum to inform Federal financial assistance policy, oversight, and technology activities. The COFFA will be responsible for providing strategic direction, policy recommendations, and priority-setting for other Government-wide grant-related activities (*e.g.*, Financial Assistance Committee for E-Government (FACE), Grants Management Quality Service Management Office (QSMO)). In providing leadership and promoting government-wide adoption of promising practices, the COFFA will reduce administrative burdens for both Federal agencies and recipients of Federal financial assistance, particularly those that may be under-resourced or underserved. This will also

¹ As used in this memorandum, Federal financial assistance has the same meaning as in section 200.1 of title 2, Code of Federal Regulations. However, in practice the Council on Federal Financial Assistance may tend to be most engaged in matters related to grants and cooperative agreements.

further the Administration's priorities to improve customer experience with delivery of services, improve equity, and leverage Federal financial assistance as a catalyst to build back better.

The COFFA will be comprised of the 24 Federal agencies identified in the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990, Pub. L. 101-576, as amended (31 U.S.C. § 901), and a representative from the Small Agency Council. Each COFFA agency's Deputy Secretary will designate a Senior Financial Assistance Officer (SFAO) to serve as a representative to the COFFA, which should be a senior policy official with primary responsibility for agency-wide Federal financial assistance policy, management, strategic planning, and implementation.

The COFFA will be chaired by the OMB Deputy Director for Management who may assign responsibility to the Controller. An agency SFAO will serve as co-chair for a two-year term, and, at the Council's discretion, may serve two consecutive terms. The first co-chair will be the SFAO of the Department of Health and Human Services. The successor co-chairs will be selected by the Council members.

The SFAO should be empowered to speak on behalf of the agency, influence agency decisions regarding the administration of Federal financial assistance programs, and possess detailed knowledge of Federal financial assistance. Agencies will send the name and contact information of the SFAO to MBX.OMB.OFFM.Grants@OMB.eop.gov no later than thirty days after the issuance of this memo. Any questions regarding this memorandum can be directed to MBX.OMB.OFFM.Grants@OMB.eop.gov.