

COVID Related Accounting Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Last Updated: April 13, 2020

Contact sfssetup@busssvc.wisc.edu if follow-up clarifying questions

Account Codes Established listed on Page 3 of this FAQ

General:

Question: Why were separate COVID account codes created?

- The COVID-19 account codes were created to identify COVID activity for various reporting requirements including those from the EOC (Emergency Operations Center, UWSA Finance Response Team, FEMA, and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, as well as for internal information.

Question: Should I transfer expenses and/or refunds posted prior to the codes being available on 4.1.20?

- Yes, any non-refunded costs or customer/student refunds related to COVID-19 should be transferred to the new COVID-19 expense account codes for accurate reporting and tracking. The rest of the funding string should remain the same. Please note that Accounting Services is reviewing Refund of Receipts (RORS) for accurate account code usage related to COVID refunds, so please double check coding in WISDM/WISER before processing transfers.

Question: Should I transfer expenses related to conferences or other events that were cancelled due to COVID-19, but then were ultimately refunded?

- No, if you received a vendor refund for cancelled events due to COVID, do not move the original expense. Vendor refunds should be applied to the original expense account to adjust for any F&A previously incurred.

Research:

Question: How should expenses on COVID-related research projects be handled? Should expenses be posted to the new COVID Account Codes?

- If the project is doing COVID-related research, the regular accounts (salary, equipment, supplies, etc.) codes should be used.
- Since the UW is also interested in knowing how much COVID-research activity is happening, RSP is capturing that information through information in the project titles entered into SFS and WISPER. That lets RSP pull not only award and proposal data, but also budget and expenditure data from SFS.
- The new SFS Covid-19 account codes are to capture expenses that the UW would not have experienced prior to the pandemic. Some of these codes may end up on sponsored projects. For example, suppose a researcher is still able to work in her lab. She would have her normal research-related expenses (salaries, supplies, etc.). Now suppose that this researcher's grad student tests positive and can no longer work in the lab. It's quite likely that before anyone else could return to the lab, that it would need deep cleaning. Those unanticipated COVID cleaning expenses could be charged to the sponsored project on account code 3117 (Cleaning/Sanitation Costs-COVID).

Question: How should we code per diem costs incurred for animal care and facilities as researchers are currently unable to use these resources in experiments? Technically, these costs are caused by the COVID-19 delays as it extends the length of days because research is delayed.

- The monthly internal service charges (generally coded to account code 2650) to the sponsored project would not change. Likewise, the code for the revenue collected by the animal care unit would not change. Delays in research progress are common; even outside of the current COVID remote operations of the UW.
- The unit taking care of the animals may use the new account codes for additional COVID-related expenses directly related to animal care and the well-being of the staff.

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UW-Sponsored Conference Refunds:

Question: There are two contra refund accounts related to conference refunds 9213 - *Conference & Event Refunds* – COVID and 9216 - *Other Refunds* – COVID that mentions continuing education refunds – how should I use them?

- It's helpful to break these apart as Conference and Event Space (9213) and Registration Fees (9216). Some examples of situations with the correct codes below:
 - Refunds for internal UW participant registrations – use account 9055
 - Refunds for events held as continuing education with non-UW participant registration – use account 9216
 - Refunds for space rental – use 9213

Question: If an event was run through Extension, are they are responsible for coding the refund to the correct COVID-19 code?

- Yes, Accounting Services has been working with Extension to get the correct codes applied to the refunds.

Student Income Continuation:

Question: Are all student income continuation payments posted to account 5717 -*Income Continuation* – Scholarship – COVID?

- No, expenses paid via payroll were paid using regular payroll processes, accounts, and funding strings. The payments made by scholarship (thru SIS) will be posted using the 5717 - account code.

Travel:

How should we code canceled travel related to COVID?

- If the traveler or the travel arranger cancelled the flight, there is an unused ticket for future business use. The value of the cancelled and unused ticket is not a loss if used in the future – no immediate action needs to take place.
- There are situations where we will experience costs related to the cancelled travel and for those costs, they can be coded to the COVID account created for *Other Expenses-COVID* – 3115. Examples of these costs include:
 - The ticket is not used by the traveler due to a COVID reason such as a conference was cancelled and never rescheduled; or, rescheduled for a day/time the traveler cannot attend
 - The ticket is used for future travel, but now the cost of travel to the same event previously cancelled due to COVID now costs more than the original ticket.
 - The traveler uses the unused ticket toward the purchase of future travel that is less cost than the unused ticket and the airline requires a forfeiture of the balance.
 - Deposits for hotels, meetings or events, which is non-refundable, and the event didn't occur as a result of COVID-19.
 - Repatriation costs for students/employees (flights back to US, hotel stay near airport).

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Tracking COVID-19 in SFS

Expense Codes

- New expense codes have been created in SFS for tracking expenses specifically related to COVID -19.
- Please process cost transfers for COVID related expenses posted prior to 4/1/20.
- **3118 - Telecommuting Costs**, is intended for UW costs only.
- **3115 – Other Expenses**, Should be used for Sunk Costs related to Travel – See FAQs for specific examples

Code	Type	Short Description	Long Description
3115	Expense	Other Expenses – COVID	OTHER EXPENSES – COVID. COVID-19 expenses not identified by specific expense type. Examples include research equipment (under \$5,000), DoIT bandwidth software purchases, online learning costs, lab testing equipment (under \$5,000), food for essential employees.
3116	Expense	Housing - Quarantine and Isolation Costs - COVID	HOUSING - QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION COSTS - COVID. COVID-19 costs of operating facilities housing isolated residents, including food costs, cleaning supplies, and purchases of new mattresses.
3117	Expense	Cleaning/Sanitation Costs - COVID	CLEANING/SANITATION COSTS - COVID. Cleaning and sanitation costs specifically related to COVID.
3118	Expense	Telecommuting Costs - COVID	TELECOMMUTING COSTS - COVID. COVID-19 telecommuting costs, including laptops and accessories purchased specifically and only for COVID-19 related activities.
3119	Expense	PPE & Safety Supplies – COVID	PPE & SAFETY SUPPLIES - COVID. COVID-19 personal protective equipment and safety supplies (under \$5,000). Examples: masks, face shields, gowns, and gloves.
4606	Expense	Equipment – COVID	Equipment that has a unit cost of \$5,000 or more and a useful life of more than one year purchased specifically and only for COVID-19 related activities.
5717	Expense	Income Continuation - Scholarship - COVID	INCOME CONTINUATION - SCHOLARSHIP - COVID. COVID-19 income continuation payments posted to student accounts as a scholarship. Must use Program Code 9

Tracking COVID-19 in SFS

Revenue Codes

- **Contra** revenue codes have been set up in SFS for tracking refunds related to revenue already collected.
- Please process revenue transfers for COVID related refunds posted prior to 4/1/20.

Code	Type	Short Description	Long Description
9105	Sales Credit	Internal Sales Credit Refunds - COVID	INTERNAL SALES CREDIT REFUNDS - COVID. Used to record internal refunds for cancelled conferences, and/or events or services due to COVID-19.
9211	Revenue	Housing Refunds - COVID	HOUSING REFUNDS - COVID. Used to record housing room refunds due to COVID-19.
9212	Revenue	Meal Plan Refunds - COVID	MEAL PLAN REFUNDS - COVID. Used to record meal plan refunds due to COVID-19.
9215	Revenue	Conference & Event Refunds - COVID	CONFERENCE & EVENT REFUNDS - COVID. Used to record refunds for conferences and other events, such as weddings and career fairs, that will not be held due to COVID-19.
9214	Revenue	Parking Fee Refunds - COVID	PARKING FEE REFUNDS - COVID. Used to record refunds of parking fees due to COVID-19.
9215	Revenue	Program Fee Refunds - COVID	PROGRAM FEE REFUNDS - COVID. Used to record refunds from programs canceled due to COVID-19. Examples include study abroad fees and short course fees.
9216	Revenue	Other Refunds - COVID	OTHER REFUNDS - COVID. Used to record refunds of campus card balances, continuing refunds and retail/merchandise refund.
9217	Revenue	Service Fee Refunds - COVID	Used to record refunds of service fees due to COVID-19.