

**SAM – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(California Technology Agency)**

PROJECT APPROVAL AUTHORITY
(Revised 03/11)

4819.34

Authority for approval of information technology projects lies with the Technology Agency, but it is the intention of the State's Chief Information Officer to delegate approval authority to agency directors to the maximum extent practicable. When an agency's proposed expenditures on information technology are consistent with established policies and when the agency has consistently adhered to those policies and successfully implemented information technology projects, the Technology Agency will consider delegating authority for the approval of resources to agency directors, as defined below.

The Technology Agency will establish an agency-specific cost delegation level, i.e., the project cost level above which the agency must obtain the Technology Agency's approval of an FSR or Feasibility Study Report - Reporting Exemption Request (FSR-RER) (see SAM Section 4819.37) before the agency is authorized to initiate the project.

The Technology Agency's delegations fall into one of three general groups:

Group 1 – Desktop and Mobile Computing Delegations – Agencies that have established and currently maintain an acceptable Operational Recovery Plan and plan for the appropriate application of desktop and mobile computing will be delegated authority for the acquisition of equipment and software to support their desktop and mobile computing activities. See SAM Section 4989.2.

Group 2 – Agency Delegation for Non-Reportable Projects – Approval authority for projects which are not classified as reportable is delegated to the agency director. Agencies undertaking delegated projects are expected to employ appropriate project review, approval, and reporting procedures as specified in SAM Sections 4819.35 and 4819.36. See SAM Sections 4819.37 and 4819.39 for a list of reportable project criteria and a definition of delegated cost threshold.

Group 3 - Requested Delegation for Reportable Projects – An agency with an acceptable Disaster Recovery Plan and an Agency Information Management Strategy that has been approved by the Technology Agency may submit a Feasibility Study Report - Reporting Exemption Request (see SAM Section 4819.38) to the Technology Agency prior to the encumbrance or expenditure of funds, including the use of staff resources, on the project beyond the feasibility study stage. The Technology Agency will review the form and notify the agency whether it has been delegated approval authority for the proposed project. If delegation is not granted, the agency must submit the project FSR to the Technology Agency for approval.

1. Among the factors considered by the Technology Agency in determining whether a project should be delegated are:
 - a. The apparent adequacy of the agency's planning process;
 - b. The cost, scope, and complexity of the project;
 - c. The size and composition of project staff;
 - d. The agency executive staff's project management experience;
 - e. The level of complexity and completeness of prior FSRs prepared by the agency;
 - f. The number and complexity of previous information technology projects attempted by the agency;
 - g. The demonstrated ability of agency project management staff to successfully monitor, control, and report progress during a complex undertaking; and
 - h. The agency's past success in applying information technology to attain goals on time and within budget and to realize expected objectives.

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(California Technology Agency)

(Continued)

PROJECT APPROVAL AUTHORITY
(Revised 12/08)

4819.34 (Cont. 1)

Delegation of approval authority will NOT normally be given for projects which:

- a. Have significant statewide, interdepartmental, or intergovernmental impact;
 - b. Involve the establishment or use of nonstandard or extensive communication facilities;
 - c. Propose software or equipment acquisition expenditures that are large in relation to the agency's information technology budget;
 - d. Have the potential for involving new or unfamiliar technology;
 - e. Produce revenue for the state, such as licensing fees, tax collection, etc.;
 - f. Have a high potential risk associated with the security and confidentiality of the information being processed; or
 - g. Depend upon decisions to be made during the development or enactment of the Governor's Budget, such as approval of a Budget Change Proposal or Budget Revision.
2. Splitting a project into smaller projects to avoid either fiscal or procedural controls is prohibited.
 3. Agencies undertaking delegated projects are expected to employ appropriate project review, approval, and reporting procedures as specified in SAM Sections 4819.35 (Feasibility Study Report) and 4819.36 (Project Reporting/Oversight) below.
 4. All information technology projects are subject to audit. Documentation supporting project decisions must be kept by the agency for a minimum of two years following approval of the Post-Implementation Evaluation Report (PIER). See SAM Sections 4947-4947.2.
 5. The Technology Agency, at its discretion, may rescind previously delegated approval authority for individual projects or for all information technology activities in progress or proposed by an agency. The Technology Agency may require that project planning, design or implementation be halted or redirected.

The decision to rescind delegation will typically be based on review (audit) of the agency's information management practices; review of a specific project; redefinition of the project; significant increases in project cost projections; major cost overruns; specific control language placed on expenditures through legislation (i.e., the Budget Act); identification of significant unresolved technical issues; or a change in the direction of state policy.