How to Register Financial Authority

PHASE 1 – Electronic Signing Authority Management

Financial Authority in relation to the following funds is included in PHASE 1:

- 11 Operating
- 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47 Ancillary Services
- 61/24/23(4xxxx) Endowments
1. INTRODUCTION
This document is intended for SFU employees that need to register or change financial authority in the Signing Authority Database. It covers the process of reviewing and changing existing authority in the database and establishing authority for new responsibility centres.

2. BEFORE YOU BEGIN
This rest of this document assumes that the reader has basic knowledge of the Financial Authority System and the roles described in the Overview of Financial Authority Guidelines – Phase 1.

3. REVIEW EXISTING AUTHORITY
As of January 10, 2015 the Signing Authority Database (the database) has been populated for responsibility centres in Fund 1- Operating, Funds 4x- Ancillary Services and Funds 61/24/23(4xxxx)- Endowments based on data collected and approved by VP’s, Deans, other university unit leaders and Fund administrators.

In order to exercise authority within the guidelines of the program, SFU staff should know and understand the authority attached to their positions.

You can request any one of the following reports by emailing your request to xxx@sfu.ca:

1. AUTHORITY REGISTERED FOR A SPECIFIC POSITION
2. AUTHORITY REGISTERED FOR A NAMED PERSON
3. AUTHORITY REGISTERED FOR A SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITY CENTRE
   The responsibility centre can be defined as:
   * A single department, group of departments, or B-rollup
   * A single project or group of projects

4. POSITION BASED AUTHORITY
Since financial authority is primarily position based, a person’s authority is automatically revoked when they leave a position and is automatically granted to the new incumbent.

5. CHANGE AN ACCOUNT HOLDER
An Oversight Officer can change an Account Holder at any time by completing the ACCOUNT HOLDER section of the FINANCIAL AUTHORITY REQUEST FORM and submitting it to the SAM Database Administrator.
In some cases the Account Holder is identified based on a legal document or funding agreement which would limit the ability of the Oversight Officer to make changes.

Additional information to assist with selecting an appropriate Account Holder can be found in Appendix A.

6. DELEGATE AUTHORITY & PRE-REGISTER A PROXY ACCOUNT HOLDER
An Account Holder can add/revoke a delegate or pre-registered Proxy Account Holder at any time by completing the appropriate section of the FINANCIAL AUTHORITY REQUEST FORM and submitting it to the SAM Database Administrator.

Additional information to assist with selecting an appropriate delegate or proxy can be found in Appendix A.

Registering a proxy or number of proxies ahead of time will make the process of activating a proxy for an absence or vacation quicker and more efficient.

7. INVOKE A PROXY ACCOUNT HOLDER
An Account Holder (or their Oversight Officer) can invoke a Proxy Account Holder by completing the INVOKE PROXY ACCOUNT HOLDER form and submitting it to the SAM Database Administrator.

An Account Holder can expect the process to take up to 3 working days from the time received by the SAM Database Administrator.

8. RE-ORGANIZE A PORTFOLIO
In the case of a reorganization of departments, B-rollups and Oversight Officers in a university portfolio or major changes by position, please contact the SAM Database Administrator to discuss the most efficient and effective method for making changes in the database.

9. INACTIVATE A DEPARTMENT OR PROJECT
If a department or project is inactivated no action is required in the database. Financial authority is not valid against inactive responsibility centres.
10. ESTABLISH AUTHORITY FOR A NEW RESPONSIBILITY CENTRE

The process to establish authority for a new responsibility centre (ie. typically a new project or new department) is linked closely to the REQUEST for a new department or project and the Fund Administrator processing the request.

Step 1

Complete and submit your request for a NEW department or project to the appropriate Fund Administrator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Department/Project Request Forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fund 11</td>
<td>Sally Huang</td>
<td>[Budget Forms - Fund 11/12 Dept/Project Request Form]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund 41,42,43,44,45,46,47</td>
<td>Kamal Dhiman</td>
<td>to be determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund 61/24/23(4xxxxx)</td>
<td>Kamal Gill</td>
<td>Terms of Reference prepared by University Advancement signed by an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>external donor.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Some forms and processes have been updated to collect additional information including:

- Account Holder name and position number
- A department number or B-rollup associated with the department or project
- Approval of one-up or Oversight Officer (based on the department number or B-rollup identified - typically a Chair, Dean or Director)

SFU employees requesting a new project are encouraged to contact Fund Administrators to initiate a review of the request details prior to completing any forms to determine which fund the project will be created in.

Additional information to assist with selecting an appropriate Account Holder can be found here [APPENDIX A](#).

Step 2

The Fund Administrator will review the Account Holder, department number and Oversight Officer request and forward the information to the Database Administrator for entry into the database.

Step 3

Account Holders identified in Step 1 can complete and submit the FINANCIAL AUTHORITY REQUEST FORM to add a delegate and to pre-register Proxy Account Holders.

Additional information to assist with selecting an appropriate delegate or proxy can be found here [APPENDIX A](#).
Step 4

The Database Administrator will provide email confirmation of the financial authority that was entered into the database.

*The decision to assign financial authority belongs to those identified in university policies and these guidelines; however, these assignments are subject to the review of the SAM Database Administrator, professional officers, and compliance reviewers including Fund Administrators.*

11. SUPPORT/CONTACT

SAM Database Administrator (excluding Funds 25, 31, 32, 36)
3000 Strand Hall
Telephone: (778)782-7370
Email: finauthl@sfu.ca
APPENDIX A

HOW TO SELECT AN ACCOUNT HOLDER

Assigning financial authority to an Account Holder is the process of identifying the position or person who will hold primary responsibility for the program or project and its financial results. The Account Holder will have the responsibility and accountability of ensuring funds are spent in compliance with University policies and procedures and guidelines.

Account Holders are generally identified by:

1. Receipt of an operating budget allocation for which they are responsible
2. Principal investigators or SFU staff named in a grant document
3. President, Vice-President, Dean, Chair, or other named in an endowment term of reference document signed by an external donor.

Account Holders must have the knowledge and authority to manage a program and its financial aspects.

Account Holders are assigned authority by their one-up as defined in the responsibility centre structure (their Oversight Officer).

Only one Account Holder can be named for a responsibility centre. A position/person may be named the Account Holder for many different responsibility centres.

Assigning an Account Holder to a responsibility centre “triggers” oversight and management responsibilities up the financial authority hierarchy to Oversight Officers.

If an Account Holder position is vacant, the one-up or Oversight Officer is accountable for the activities of the applicable responsibility centre and can exercise financial authority over active responsibility centres.

The Account Holder can be deleted or changed at any time by the Oversight Officer in the financial authority hierarchy.

Account Holder assignments should be reviewed on an annual basis for completeness, accuracy and appropriateness by Oversight Officers.

HOW TO SELECT A PROXY ACCOUNT HOLDER

An Account Holder may temporarily transfer their financial authority and oversight responsibilities to another individual (i.e., a proxy) if they will be absent from the University.
In selecting the Proxy Account Holder the Account Holder should consider:

1. The position/person has a one-up, one-down or peer relationship with the Account Holder.
2. The position/person selected is in an appropriate position to assume the authority, responsibility and accountability of the Account Holder.

The Account Holder is encouraged to pre-register all possible Proxy Account Holders into the database ahead of time in order to make the process of activating a Proxy during an absence more efficient.

**HOW TO SELECT A PROVISIONAL DELEGATE**

Assigning financial authority to a Provisional Delegate is done by the Account Holder. The Account Holder will retain the responsibility and accountability of all authority exercised by the Provisional Delegate.

In selecting the Provisional Delegate the Account Holder should consider:

1. The position/person has a reporting relationship with the Account Holder.
2. The assignment of authority will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of operations without risking the integrity of internal controls.
3. The position/person has the authority themselves to efficiently and effectively perform the role.
4. The position/person has sufficient expertise and knowledge of university policies, procedures and guidelines to use the authority appropriately.

The Account Holder is responsible for the training and oversight of the Provisional Delegate.

**HOW TO SELECT A SMALL TRANSACTION DELEGATE**

Assigning financial authority to a Small Transaction Delegate is done by the Account Holder. The Account Holder will retain the responsibility and accountability of all authority exercised by the Small Transaction Delegate.

In selecting the Small Transaction Delegate the Account Holder should consider:

5. The position/person has a reporting relationship with the Account Holder
6. The assignment of authority will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of operations without risking the integrity of internal controls
7. The position/person has the authority themselves to efficiently and effectively perform the role.
8. The position/person has sufficient expertise and knowledge of university policies, procedures and guidelines to use the authority appropriately.

The Account Holder is responsible for the training and oversight of the Small Transaction Delegate.

The Small Transaction Delegate will receive authority to process all transactions as defined in the Financial Authority Levels Table.

HOW TO SELECT AN ENDOWMENT DELEGATE

Assigning financial authority to an Endowment Delegate is done by the Account Holder with the approval of the Endowment Fund Administrator. The Account Holder will retain the responsibility and accountability of all authority exercised by the delegate.

In selecting the Endowment Delegate the Account Holder should consider:

1. The position/person has a reporting relationship with the Account Holder
2. The assignment of authority will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of operations without risking the integrity of internal controls
3. The position/person has the authority themselves to efficiently and effectively perform the role.
4. The position/person has the expertise and knowledge of university policies, procedures and guidelines to use the authority appropriately
5. The position/person should have knowledge of the University’s endowment program and practices, have an understanding of endowment capital, spending accounts, recapitalization and CPI concepts.
6. The position/person has knowledge of specific restrictions described in the Terms of Reference.

The Endowment Fund Administrator will work with the Account Holder to identify the appropriate delegate.