The following approach has been developed to address the RPPR/Progress report requirement, per NIH’s FAQ/guidance {IV. Financial and Performance Reporting (RPPR)}.

Recognizing the fact that Progress reports are traditionally the purview of the researcher rather than the administrators who do not review them prior to submission to the sponsor, our revised process aims to ensure that the RPPR aligns with what is reflected in our systems and/or minimizes future risk related to requesting supplements and/or supporting an audit.

To that end, we developed 1) a “Standard paragraph” that faculty may insert into their RPPR and 2) some “Principles” for faculty to guide them in their RPPR submission.

There are two sections in the RPPR in which we should address the COVID impacts, Section 6.5 – Impacts and Section 6.6 – Changes.

1) Standard paragraph [for or applicable to] Section 6.5 – Impacts)

a. Overview: Per applicable guidance, I am including a general update on the status of research activities at Harvard University that are being impacted by COVID-19 and its impact on this specific project. Harvard University is similar to most other research universities in that there have been significant disruptions of all campus activities including on-campus research. In order to minimize community interaction, effective 03/18/2020, PI’s were directed, with a few exemptions, to move to remote work for our scholarly activities which included research activities. As the PI of this project, in conjunction with University research administration staff, I am evaluating the status of our research activities over the past months and the implications on financial ability and adequacy of time to complete the aims. As you would expect, during this time of public health emergency, the variables are changing quickly, and it is difficult to assess the specific impact on my project. I will continue to keep you informed as we assess the detailed impact, including coordination with sub awardees and contractors as applicable, as we evaluate the implications of COVID-19 on the progress of my project.

b. Include as part of section 6.6 – Changes: Idle Time since March 18th, my project has experienced a combination of both idle time (research is on pause as a result of all operations on campus suspended and work moving remote) and modified time (some part of the research is suspended but some part of the research can be done remote):

i. Specifics:
   1. Idle and Remote work
      a. Access to labs, equipment, etc.
   2. Timeline
   3. Ability to accomplish goals
   4. Concerns: available funding for graduate students and other project specific costs as a result of COVID-19
   5. Impacts of hiring
2) Principles
   a. As we are in a constantly changing and uncertain environment, we suggest faculty be cautious when specifically addressing COVID-19’s impact on the time, money, and aims of their project as much is still unknown
   b. We aim to ensure that the Progress Report aligns with what you have previously conveyed to the PO or explain any differences
   c. It is permissible to convey that productivity has been impacted during these last several months; this should be included in section 6.5 (Impacts) and 6.6 (Changes)
      i. Note: idle time is different than modified time
   d. Please ensure that you differentiate progress performance prior to March 18th from progress performance post March 18th (only if there are impacts post March 18th)
   e. Please remember that we must be able to connect the dots at a later date and time. See graphic below to illustrate impacts: