Performance Reporting Data Management Resource

The term *data management* refers to the storage, organization, and manipulation of data. In order to meet federal performance reporting requirements, non-state grantees[1] must have a strategy for collecting performance data, storing that data, and then converting it into a participant data file to upload to the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS).

This resource outlines four options for setting up a system for managing performance data, each of which is described below. The second page of this resource contains a framework aimed at helping grantees decide which option is best suited to their needs. The final page contains background information about the role of data management in performance reporting.

PERFORMANCE REPORTING DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS			
OPTION 1	**OPTION 2**	**OPTION 3**	**OPTION 4**
Modify Existing Database or Customer Relation Management (CRM) Tool	**Purchase a Data Management System Designed for Federal Reporting**	**Purchase a General Data Management System (Not Designed for Federal Reporting)**	**Use Spreadsheet Software to Manage Data**
Grantees that already have data management software and processes in place may be able to adapt their systems to meet the performance reporting requirements. This might entail modifying data collection processes to capture data for all required elements, and/or updating the way data is stored so that it exports in alignment with formatting requirements.	Data management systems that are designed specifically for federal reporting may come pre-loaded with federal reporting schema (including the Demonstration Schema required for WORC grants). These systems include data storage fields that align to the federal data elements and can generate reports in the format required for WIPS upload. Some grantees choose to work with a vendor to build a fully customized system that includes additional functionality (for example, finance/accounting capabilities).	General data management products may provide a fully integrated platform for data collection, data storage, and data file production. However, unlike Option 2, grantees set up the platform and make any technical adjustments necessary for aligning the product with the reporting requirements.	Grantees that do not have a CRM tool or database may use spreadsheet software to store, organize, and manipulate data. During data collection, grantees may link the spreadsheet software they use to store data with survey or form software that they use to gather data. This approach typically requires some amount of manual data entry.

[1] Non-state entities include local workforce development boards, community-based organizations and nonprofits, educational institutions, and tribal grantees. In addition to the options presented in this resource, some non-state grantees may have the opportunity to report with a state workforce agency partner.

DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM SELECTION FRAMEWORK

	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3	OPTION 4
	Modify Existing Data Management System	**Purchase a Data Management System Designed for Federal Reporting**	**Purchase a General Data Management System (Not Designed for Federal Reporting)**	**Use Spreadsheet Software to Manage Data**
For Grantees Looking to…	…satisfy reporting requirements without making broader investments in data management. Preferred option for grantees with a CRM system or database.	…make a broader investment in data management or data-driven decision-making, and/or prepare for future grants that require performance reporting.	…make a broader investment in data management or data-driven decision-making, and prepare for future grants that require performance reporting.	…satisfy reporting requirements without making broader investments in data management.
Technical Expertise	Requires grantee to have technical capacity to modify the CRM/database as needed to align with reporting requirements. May leverage contractors or partners.	Requires the least amount of technical expertise. Vendors provide the expertise required to set up and maintain the platform. Vendors also provide technical support during data file preparation.	Requires more in-house technical expertise to set up and maintain than Option 2. May leverage contractors or partners.	Requires basic spreadsheet skills. Grantees with advanced technical skills may automate processes; less sophisticated users enter data manually. May leverage contractors or partners.
Cost	Costs incurred via staff time. Lowest cost option.	Costs incurred through purchase/annual licensing and staff training. Higher cost than Options 1 and 4. Cost varies when compared to Option 3.	Costs incurred through purchase, setup, maintenance, and staff training. Higher cost than Options 1 and 4. Cost varies when compared to Option 2.	Costs incurred through staff time. Time investment may be significant if doing manual data entry.
Additional Considerations	CRM systems are best suited for performance reporting, but other types of databases may work as well. Existing systems should be modified to (1) include fields for all required data elements, and (2) store data in a format that aligns with data file requirements.	Some products come pre-loaded with various federal reporting schemas. Grantees may also contract with a vendor to design a customized, cross-functional software system for performance reporting, participant tracking, financial management, and/or file storage.	Relatively high cost and technical expertise requirements make this option best suited for grantees who expect to report on multiple grants and who require a medium- or long-term upgrade in their data management infrastructure.	Spreadsheet system may be used in conjunction with free-to-use or low-cost digital form/survey software to link data collection with data storage. Creating linked or automated processes reduces transfer error.

The Role of Data Management in Performance Reporting

Collecting Data. Dislocated Worker Demonstration (DW Demo) grantees are required to collect the data elements enumerated in the Demonstration Grant Schema. A complete list of required data elements with definitions and instructions can be found in the DW Demo Participant Data File Tool on WorkforceGPS. Dislocated Worker Grants (DWG) use the DWG Participant Data File Tool.
Data Management Considerations: *Grantees should align data collection tools (e.g., intake forms, follow-up protocols, etc.) not only to capture data for the required elements, but also to structure the data in alignment with formatting requirements (where able).*

Storing Data. Grantees must have a way to store the data that they collect during intake, program operation, and post-program follow-up. Data storage systems may take the form of a Customer Relation Management (CRM) tool, a database, or a spreadsheet.
Data Management Considerations: *A high-functioning system integrates data storage with data collection processes (e.g., intake forms), and structures data such that it is easily transformed into a participant data file. This entails formatting data to align with the participant data file requirements. Participant data needs to be stored securely (See TEGL 39-11 for more information).*

Creating the Participant Data File. Each quarter, grantees are required to create and upload a participant data file to the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS). See the Demonstration Grant Participant Data File Tool for content and formatting requirements. For more information on how to use the Participant Data File Tool see the tutorial video (part of the Performance Reporting Video Series) and Demonstration Grant Quarterly Reporting Reference Guide.
Data Management Considerations: *Depending on the type of data management system a grantee uses, creating a participant data file may entail exporting data from a CRM or database, or pulling data from a spreadsheet. Store data in a structure and format that aligns to the participant data file requirements to reduce time spent creating the data file.*

Generating a Quarterly Performance Report (QPR). After upload, WIPS passes the data file through a series of edit checks to confirm that it meets the formatting requirements. WIPS will produce an error report for files that do not pass the edit check. Grantees are required to fix all errors and resubmit the file. After the data file passes the edit checks WIPS generates a QPR for the grantee to review and certify. To submit the data file, at least one member of your team will need to set up a WIPS account.
Data Management Considerations: *Store data in the format that is required for the participant data file to reduce the number of errors that surface during the edit check. Ideally, the person submitting the participant data file is also the person responsible for developing it (so they can make necessary edits if errors arise during the edit check).*

Grantees should support their data management plan with additional grants management best practices, as described in the Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Grant Management (OGM) SMART Training. Please note that Uniform Guidance 2 C.F.R Part 200 establishes uniform administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements for Federal grants.