

Day 1, Session 1: Welcome and Updates from ARC and Chamberlin/Dunn

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

Good morning and welcome to the WORC Grantee Convening. We are so appreciative to the United States Department of Labor for collaborating with ARC on this great initiative. We're excited to see so many approved work projects in the ARC region and of course look forward to continuing this partnership on workforce developments in the future. I also want to welcome our Delta Regional Authority counterparts and congratulate you on all the great work that you were doing for the people in your region. So welcome for joining us today.

([00:45](#)):

Some of us here at ARC recently attended the Workshop Development Conference of the American Association of Community Colleges. And I had the pleasure at that meeting to meet and share time with John Ladd in the office of apprenticeship of the DOL and while he addressed obviously across the United States in general, we definitely recognize that we share things in common when it comes to education, training and career support throughout rural Appalachia.

([01:28](#)):

In fact, more than ever the ARC is working to expand and strengthen community systems through partnerships with other federal agencies just like the DOL. And we look at opportunities in education, healthcare, housing, childcare, those things that will help Appalachians advance along a financially sustaining career pathway. Because when we talk about workforce development, we know that we're really talking about people and those people's personal successes will impact the future of our entire region.

([02:11](#)):

At ARC we believe we know that the foundation of economic vitality for our entire country starts with investing in people in their education and training. As a lifelong educator, I'm heartened to see that our education-based programs like the ones represented here today are really gaining traction throughout our region and I'm especially excited to see the amount of work grants this year that focus on training and advanced technologies. This was certainly highlighted and showcased at the National Workforce Development meeting as well. In Appalachia, many of our workforce needs now center around these advanced technologies and one of them is cyber security. It certainly is merging as a critical training process and not just to the safety of our Appalachian region, but also to our nation and the fact that our educational systems are truly stepping up to meet this need is very important.

([03:27](#)):

I was on a recent trip to Alabama and saw amazing things going on there from Wallace State Community College's electric vehicle manufacturing and training program to the robotics program at the City of Coleman's grade school and middle school areas. And then the programs that are presented here today. It's evident that in Appalachia we are becoming poised to grow a stronger, more diverse regional workforce, which is exactly what we need to be doing. ARC stays committed to working with all of our work recipients to help build the future of Appalachia. I congratulate you on your hard work and your accomplishments and look forward to what we will continue to do as we can accomplish more together in the future. Now I'd like to pass the mic to ARC's Congressional Liaison Guy Land who can give you a more in-depth look at the Appalachia Regional Commission and the work that we do. Guy, it's all yours.

Speaker 2 ([06:03](#)):

Okay, it wasn't giving me the option there for a minute ago. Sorry. So I apologize for the delay there. I think everybody hears me now, but let me know in the chat if you do not and we'll begin with a general overview of ARC, which is probably old hat for many of you. A number of you have had multiple ARC grants, but for a few of you, this may be the first time to get a little sense of what is ARC about and how does the work program fit into our larger agenda. And for those of you to remind you that ARC focuses on the Appalachian region, which is a 13 state region ranging from the southern tier of New York down to northeast Mississippi, all of the state of West Virginia and parts of 12 other states, 423 counties, which are named by Congress in law and 74 local development districts.

[\(07:04\)](#):

Next. The region is also the home to a number of work grantees, including those that were in rounds one and two, then those that are in round three and now the 13 of you who are in round four and join a group that, as you see, reaches broadly across the ARC region. Next please. The purpose of the Appalachian Regional Commission is to help Appalachia achieve socioeconomic parity with the nation so that we are net contributors to the national economy. And to give you a sense, next slide, of how the region has moved forward. This is a comparison of high poverty counties in 1960, before we were created to the most recent data on high poverty counties in the region. High poverty counties are those which have one and a half times the national poverty rate. And you will see that that number has dropped from 297 to 117, not all entirely because of ARC, I don't mean to suggest that, but we've had an important role in helping move those counties out of the high poverty status.

[\(08:14\)](#):

Next slide. ARC is a federal state partnership consisting of a federal official, the federal co-chair whom from whom you just heard, appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate and the governors of the 13 states that we serve. Each year, the governors could select one of their number to be the state's co-chair for that year to match up with the federal co-chair. This year that governor is Andy Beshear of Kentucky. Last year it was Larry Hogan of Maryland.

[\(08:43\)](#):

Next slide. And the things that ARC does are driven by the five goal areas of our strategic plan, which include strengthening businesses and entrepreneurs and creating jobs, helping develop a competitive workforce in the region, building basic critical infrastructure for communities, water and sewer systems, industrial parks, roads, and these days broadband, investing in the region's cultural heritage and natural assets and fostering local leadership and community capacity so that communities can better shape their future and take charge of their futures.

[\(09:23\)](#):

And now from that we move on to some of the major things that we've got going on this spring that we thought you might be interested in. And I'll move to the first of those, which is Power, next slide, which is our special program for coal-impacted communities. Many of you on this call are very familiar with power. In fact, when I looked at the list of the 13 work grantees, I saw that nine of you are either grantees or partners and grantees with grantees and Power grants. We have \$65 million available for Power this year. Grants of up to one and a half million or two and a half million for broadband projects. It is our hope that we will be able to issue the RFP within the next two weeks. So be on the lookout for that. We will require letters of intent before we will accept a full application. And we are expecting that the application deadline will probably be around mid to late April. We will be doing some pre-application workshops, both in person and virtual. So there's the link if you want to know more about Power.

[\(10:34\)](#):

Moving from Power to our next special program is our Inspire program, which is focused on building and strengthening a local recovery ecosystem for those with substance use disorders. And we have 13 million available for that for this year. That one, the RFP was released earlier this month. Letters of intent are due on the 21st of February with the application deadline being March 17. We're doing a virtual pre-application workshop in the middle of February and a virtual grant writing workshop in March. I think we're joined on this call by Lauren Wood who coordinates this program for us. If you want to know more about it, there's the link.

[\(11:17\)](#):

I would note that two of the 13 work grantees in this latest round are prior year Inspire grantees. I know Erica with Land of Sky in North Carolina and the Randolph County Housing Authority in West Virginia. I would note though, and I know that a number of you who've had work grants have a strong SUD component to those. I would note however, that in the current RFP, you cannot have open Inspire SUD grants and a work SUD grant at the same time, as our goal is to sort of spread the number of organizations and build a greater network of people who are actually carrying out the SUD work. And our goal is to move people from recovery into the workforce so that they become once again productive members of the Appalachian economy.

[\(12:12\)](#):

Our next big program, which is was announced last fall, is our particular emphasis on multi-state projects that we call Arise. It's been a priority of federal co-chair Gayle Manchin. These are the largest grants that ARC has made for non-highway work in its history with grants up to 10 million for our implementation and 500,000 for planning. The key thing is that they must be done on a multi-state basis with activities and partners in more than one state, at least two. And most of the discussions that we're having with people involve more than two states. You must submit a four page concept paper and then be invited to submit a full application. There again, you see the link if you or have a desire for further information.

[\(13:03\)](#):

One of the other new things that we launched last year was our technical systems workshops are coming up. We did launch those last year. We're returning them after having done them in person before COVID. They will focus on Inspire, on Power and Arise, particularly the first one. By the time we get to the last one in Pittsburgh on the March the second, we're coming kind of late in the Inspire process. So it probably will not be as big a focus as it will be in the one coming up in the 23rd in Tupelo and then one on the 28th in Knoxville.

[\(13:44\)](#):

Moving from that to one of our new activities, which is our effort to build community capacity across the region, recognizing that it's important that communities have the ability to take good advantage of the additional federal resources that have been flowing to them over the past couple of years. Bettina Jones, who I believe is on this call today, coordinates that program which we are calling Ready Appalachia and it focuses on four key economic development pillars, nonprofits, the local development districts, community foundations and local governments. And the organizing principle of this is that the participants are engaged in small group virtual training, which then follows with grant dollars that do not have a match requirement to implement projects that take advantage of the training that they have just gotten in the small groups. And as you can see, a couple of those are under development. One is currently open for the LDDs and one with nonprofits. They are well underway as they started that back in the fall.

[\(14:54\)](#):

And our next thing I want to flag for this group because you are engaged in the education sphere, are our academies and institutes programs. There are two of them that have deadlines coming up next week and they are our STEM academy at Oak Ridge for both middle school and high school students and our entrepreneurship academy at Appalachian State, which is for high school students. We encourage you to spread the word among students who might be interested in either of these and look at their website to find more of information about those.

[\(15:29\)](#):

And I will just flag in the end of this slide our Appalachian Leadership Institute, which is a collection of 40 leaders from across our 13 states each year that go through a nine month leadership training program. I note that Brian Gupton of Kentucky DataSeam who is one of the 13 work grantees this year, went through that program last year. We will be putting the invitation for applications on the street later the spring, with June one deadline. We encourage you to take a look at that if you want to build your leadership skills and help be a part of the cohort of leaders across the region that are comparing notes and learning from each other and moving the region forward.

[\(16:18\)](#):

I will just mention since you're all about the work program, that we are very pleased with our partnership with the Department of Labor here. I want to thank Jeff Ryan and the rest of the DOL staff who are on the call this morning. You've been great partners. We are delighted to continue this partnership and to welcome as Gayle did, the folks from the Delta Regional Authority area and then coming up with the next round, we will be including the Northern Border Regional Commission geography in the work program.

[\(16:49\)](#):

I should also note that a key component for us in this program is Chamberlain Dunn, which have been doing great work for ARC for five or six years now. Those of you who have Power grants are familiar with them because they were and are still are our power evaluator and we've also leaned on them to provide the technical assistance to those of you in the work program. Molly Chamberlain and Nicole Dunn are terrific to work with and we are pleased that they are continuing to be a partner in the work program with you.

[\(17:25\)](#):

And that takes us to what we see as sort of the key attributes of activities that can move Appalachia forward, capitalizing on our region's assets, building strong partnerships, which is what many of you are about, crafting a transformational vision, creating a message of hope and resilience and cultivating strong leaders. Those are the keys for moving Appalachia forward. Those are key elements that are in each of your work grants. It's part of why you were selected and we appreciate your efforts in helping accomplish our mission of moving Appalachia in the socioeconomic parity with the nation. With that, I am prepared to turn this over to Kinsey Walker, but just a little bit to who coordinates our work program for ARC.

[\(18:16\)](#):

Kinsey has been at ARC for about two years. We snarfed her her way from her native West Virginia to join with us. Kinsey's career early, began with classroom teaching work in Mississippi and Tennessee. She's coupled that with some higher ed activities and some state level policy work. So she's particularly well positioned to be our lead on the work activities. And I will just note since Generation West Virginia is one of the work grantees in this particular cohort that at one point Kinsey led their fellowship program as well. So she's got experience with one of the work grantees. I should also note that the other

workforce person on our staff for that pros, particularly on apprenticeship work is Megan Robinson. But let me turn this over to Kinsey who likes to say that her passion is to create supportive pathways from cradle to career, particularly focused on rural communities. So Kinsey, it's all yours.

Speaker 3 ([19:43](#)):

Hi everyone. Hope you can hear me all right. Thanks for the brief pause while I fix my audio. If you can't hear me, please flag that in the chat and thanks for flagging when you're having issues in the chat. Just a housekeeping really quickly. Thanks for the thumbs up, whoever sent that. The Appalachian Regional Commission icon that you see is our backend support, so we'll do our best to address those as they come in the chat. And you also have a facing problems button down at the bottom to the left of the chat window. So thanks for already being participatory and flagging those errors for us. When we get there, I'm going to do a brief introduction and then hand it over to the star of the show and my partner in crime, Nicole Dunn with Chamberlain and Dunn.

([20:25](#)):

So first I am really happy to be here. I have worked on projects with a lot of people in this space and work also enables me to facilitate programs across the Delta Regional Authority, Appalachian Regional Commission, Department of Labor, and then our new partner, the Northern Border Region that will be in work five. So I'm really grateful to work with colleagues in rural communities across the country directly connected to work grants, but also in my home of Appalachia. I know a lot of you have Power projects, Inspire projects or have been connected to us at some point and this relationship is a little different.

([21:01](#)):

So the Department of Labor also has federal program officers that will be a part of our sessions today. You will still be doing reporting and all of that stays the same regarding your relationship with DOL and your FPOs and we're really glad to have them with us today. Nicole and I are your backup, technical assistance, on demand when you have questions, when you run into issues, when you want to share your success stories. Anything and all of the above, we are here for you and she is your first point of contact and I serve as the connector between ARC and DOL and our other regional partners. So I'm looking forward to the rest of the day. I'll be jumping in and out of sessions and I'm going to take this opportunity to introduce Nicole Dunn with whom I could not do this without. So take it away Nicole.

Speaker 4 ([21:46](#)):

Hello everyone. We are really happy to be here with you again in a lot of cases for the round one through three and for the first convening for round four. Welcome. I see we have some DOL federal project officers who've joined us, especially for the next session, but I know some of them will be sticking around over the next couple of days, well today and tomorrow, as we go through these sessions. Kinsey, did a really good job introducing our TA role, but just as a recap for everyone, I know this is old hat for a lot of you, but we will help facilitate some of these topic-specific webinars, virtual workshops, discussions, things that arise for this year.

([22:22](#)):

We are also launching the Higher Logic platform, which I know those of you in one through three, many of you attended the introduction to that in the fall. We'll have a session tomorrow specifically about that for those of you who couldn't attend or are in round four and are new to Higher Logic. We can be your thought partner for problem solving, for grant modifications as you're thinking about those for any implementation issues that arise. We can also be your thought partner for policies and processes and

grant management, your experts on your organizations of course, but we're there to be a sounding board for you or help point you to some of the regulations or things like that as you're developing those.

(22:55):

And we sometimes actually serve as a quarterly report reviewer. We have several grantees who just like to run them by us as another set of eyes. We're always happy to do that. None of this is required. We're here to be helpful to you. So participate as things are helpful. It is great, as Kinsey said, to hear some of your success stories and your challenges because others run into similar things and it is very helpful for us to know when those become patterns and trends and we can reach out in a broader way.

(23:23):

So just a really quick run through, I know we've got about five minutes left together, but in case you're curious, who else is part of the work initiative. I know Guy gave you that map there. So in round one we still have seven of you who did no cost extensions, so you'll be wrapping up this fall. SUNY Cobleskill, University of North Alabama and Community Action Council did close out at the end of the last federal fiscal year, but seven of you are still going. We have several in round two. Partly we provide this to you because we will be sending you these slides so if you want to reference this later, see who's in which round. We have quite a few in round three. And then here's our round four crowds. So again, welcome to you, new to work.

(24:06):

We do have, as Guy mentioned, several of you are working with SUD affected populations. We do also have several projects that are focused on youth. So if you are a youth-serving project or organization, you have peers in this group and if you're working with those who are justice system involved, you have peers in the group as well. And then of course the three main populations who are eligible for service are your dislocated workers, your incumbent workers, and your new entrants. Everyone is serving those to some degree. But then these are some of the more targeted populations.

(24:35):

And then I did think it would also be useful just to see this list. This is not all inclusive, but we have projects here in the Appalachian Region under work that are working with jobs and industries in manufacturing, healthcare, construction, transportation and logistics, agriculture, hospitality, entrepreneurship, early childhood, IT and energy. So probably if you are working on a project here, you have a peer who's working in a similar industry or occupation space, which, again, is something that we can serve kind of as a peer-to-peer connector. If you have questions or you run into challenges that might be industry or occupation cluster specific, you probably have a peer in the region that's working in a similar space.

(25:14):

Couple of just housekeeping things, kind of what to know. So I wanted to make you all aware, you may already know this in case you reviewed the round four RFP, if you're an earlier round or if you are around four grantee, there is a different performance reporting system and I wanted to mention that because you will probably see resources come out related to the old performance, the round one through three Wagner-Peyser co-enrollment process. If you're in round four that does not apply to you. And the round four performance reporting process related to WIPS, which there's a specific session on that this afternoon that we're excited to have the Department of Labor team here to present that.

(25:46):

So round one through three, you don't have to worry about that Round four, you don't have to worry about Wagner-Peyser. So there is that performance reporting split and I know I've already gotten some

questions about that because it is a little bit confusing. So if you have further questions, obviously feel free to contact me if you're ever curious about that. But I just wanted to me take the time while we have everybody to mention that here.

[\(26:05\)](#):

If you're in round four, I mean one of the things that I think we've heard quite often, refamiliarize yourself with your FOA, your round four FOA and your approved scope and budget. Anytime you have questions, we're always happy to do that. That's almost the first place I look with almost any question I get from a grantee saying, hey, can I serve somebody that meets these criteria, can I spend money on this thing? Can I serve someone in this service area? A lot of that is going to be defined of course first, not first, but primarily by the FOA, but your scope of work and how you wrote that. Once again, I'm always happy to help you review your scope of work and try to answer that question and figure that out for you. But that's something that just kind of a blanket piece of advice that wanted to offer through the round four.

[\(26:46\)](#):

And then I also wanted to mention, in case you haven't seen it come through, WorkforceGPS, Department of Labor is offering a Smart 4.0 grant management training for its grantees. So you go through WorkforceGPS through the link that you see here and then you will also go through a separate registration because it is limited to grantees. So if you have not been through this training before, or even if you have and you'd like a refresher, wanted to make a plug for that, it's coming up in a couple of weeks and would be a really valuable thing to sit in on. They'll go in depth through kind of, I hate the phrase cradle to grave, but that's sort of what it is with grants and so can encourage you to attend that.

[\(27:24\)](#):

Real quick through the agenda. You can see this if you go to the view schedule button at the top. So I won't spend a ton of time here, but I did want to clarify that round four performance reporting, we'll have grantees from DRA, the Delta Region, joining us for that. And that is just round four. So if you're earlier than round four, you don't need to attend that session. That won't be relevant to you unless you really are interested in WIPS, in which case you're welcome to sit in. And then for tomorrow we have quite a few sessions with some grantee panelists and so we're excited to welcome you tomorrow for those.

[\(27:53\)](#):

You will use the same registration link for all sessions. So you can come in and out throughout the day today and tomorrow it'll be the exact same link that you registered with. We will record these general sessions. We can't record the FPO round tables that are coming up next. I mentioned that DRA will be joining us and we're also really glad to have some of the federal project officers who I know will be popping in and out of sessions also today and tomorrow.

[\(28:15\)](#):

So as we head into the next session, this next one is the only one that's structured this way, so I wanted to explain it just a little bit. We will be using the Airmeet networking tables for these purposes. So you can see the map here in case you don't remember which region you're a part of. These are the ETA regions, so region one and region five will be at table one. It should be labeled. Region two will be at table two and region three will be at table three. And so your FPOs will be joining you.

[\(28:41\)](#):

We'll also have a TA team facilitator in there just in case the conversation lulls. We have some questions that we know we get a lot of times, so we have some questions to prompt you with. Then those same

networking tables, you don't have to join those by region throughout the day, but those will be open during lunch and they'll be open in between other sessions. So feel free to hop into those if you feel like networking with others. Our team will be around the ARC TA team again will be around. So we welcome you. Thank you. We're very excited to have you and hope you find the next two days to be really useful.

[\(29:12\)](#):

So with that, if there are no questions, we're going to end this session. So what you'll see is there'll be a brief pause as this session ends, the networking tables will populate and then you'll have to actually click on a seat do, depending on your region to go into either table one, regions one and five, table two, region two, or table three, region three. And then we will see you back here this afternoon for round four performance reporting. And then the session after that is going to be the monitoring session that several of you have seen in the past two but we've gotten great feedback and so we wanted to offer it again. So thank you so much. And again, we'll be around throughout the day.

Day 1, Session 2: Round 4 Performance Reporting

Randy Painter ([00:17](#)):

Good afternoon everybody. Thanks for joining us this afternoon. Looking forward to presenting to you today. Welcome to Managing Performance: The Ins and Outs of Reporting. The training is for the Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities round 4 grants.

([00:43](#)):

My name is Randy Painter. I am a supervisory workforce analyst at the US Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. I'm responsible for several of our programs here at the department, including our adult and dislocated worker programs, our Wagner-Peyser employment service, and our Dislocated Worker Grants that are funded on the Dislocated Worker National Reserve, which includes the Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities grants.

([01:15](#)):

So I'm happy to be here with a few other folks, and I want to just kind of talk briefly about the relationship that the department has with our other agencies. The WORC Initiative, which you're a part of, is operated by the Department of Labor. We have subagencies within the department, which includes ETA, or the Employment and Training Administration. We have a couple of folks, including myself, here from ETA's Office of Workforce Investment, which oversees the WORC Initiative.

([01:48](#)):

The WORC Initiative is a partnership between the Department of Labor, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the Delta Regional Authority. We work very closely with them. DOL's primarily responsible for the fiscal accountability and performance oversight, which is why we're here today. And the ARC and DRA are providing technical assistance and working with you on operations of the WORC grants. The partnership between us three entities supports the success of this project.

([02:27](#)):

By the end... Today's training is going to be going to be several things that you should understand, and we're hoping this will be helpful to you. Our goal for today is primarily to prepare you to complete the Quarterly... excuse me, the Quarterly Performance Report, or you'll hear us refer to it throughout as the QPR. The QPR is one of the primary ways that we receive information about our grant programs like WORC and to understand the outcomes that the program is attaining. By the end of the hour, our hope is that you understand the big picture when it comes to the QPR, understand the data collection requirements, understand what a participant data file is and how to submit it, understand how to access resources on WorkforceGPS, which is our page where we provide technical assistance to the grantee community, and understand how to request additional technical assistance if needed.

([03:23](#)):

I'll take this opportunity to introduce a few colleagues. I have Kim Powell. Kim is a member of my team here at ETA at the Office of Workforce Investment. She leads our efforts to support performance recording for the Dislocated Worker Grants and other initiatives such as WORC. And we also have Jeff Ryan, who's our colleague in OWI. He develops policy and technical assistance for Dislocated Worker Grant initiatives. He also coordinates business engagement and rapid response efforts at the national level, connecting workforce and economic development activities and developing strategic partnerships to engage businesses. Both Kim and Jeff are on the line today and will be available to answer questions during the Q&A period of the session.

[\(04:11\)](#):

Our presenters today are going to be Jessie Oettinger and Ben Mahrer from Social Policy Research Associates, or SPR. SPR is under contract with the Department of Labor to support performance reporting and provide technical assistance, and they will be taking us through much of the content that we share today. And with that, I'm going to go ahead and hand it off to Jessie. Jessie?

Jessie Oettinger [\(04:35\)](#):

Right, thank you. Can everybody hear me? All right. Great. So, thanks, Randy. I just wanted to go over the agenda real quick, and then we'll just dive into it. We only have got an hour. If you were on our last presentation, we really like to talk about performance reporting. Okay, so the first item we're going to do is review the reporting requirements. And the purpose of that is to locate what we'll be talking about today within the larger quarterly reporting picture. We'll then do an overview of the QPR, because that's the focus of today's training. And after that overview of the process, we'll walk through each step involved in creating a QPR, and we'll do an explanation of the... And explanation of that process will be captured by those middle two items on today's agenda, the first of which will introduce the participant data file, and it'll go into the data you have to collect.

[\(05:27\)](#):

The second part of the training will cover how to actually build the participant data file and submit that to WIPS so you can generate a QPR. By the time we get through to that fourth line of the agenda, we will have reviewed the whole QPR process start to finish, and we'll close out by looking at where to find all of the resources we'll introduce today on the WorkforceGPS site that Randy just mentioned, and we'll also talk through how to get technical assistance if you are having trouble with your performance reporting.

[\(06:00\)](#):

Next slide. So let's get started with a quick review of the performance reporting basics. This visual appears in many places throughout our reporting handbook and our slides. So this is an overview, and we want to make sure you understand the very basics of the performance reporting system. So, next slide, "Grantees are responsible for submitting two reports every quarter: a Quarterly Narrative Report, or QNR, and a Quarterly Performance Report."

[\(06:34\)](#):

Next slide. The circle here at the bottom represents WIPS, which is the submission platform that you use to submit both of your performance reports to the Department of Labor. WIPS stands for Workforce Integrated Performance System, and it's the online platform where ETA accepts performance reporting from multiple grant programs. And this is where you're going to do your quarterly reporting.

[\(07:02\)](#):

Next slide. Some of you may recall that we already hosted a performance training for WORC grantees. That took place back in October. And in that training, we walked through how to set up a WIPS account and how to submit your Quarterly Narrative Report. The arrows on this slide are pointing to the content we've already covered. No worries if you missed that first training, you don't need to have attended that training to participate fully in today's session. But if you did miss it, link is available on WorkforceGPS. And I already see in the chat people have inquired about the slide deck. Yes, we will share it. Yes, there are links throughout the slide deck that will take you to WorkforceGPS, and we'll cover how to get there on your own as well.

[\(07:47\)](#):

So, next slide. And this is where I... One thing I do want to emphasize from that first training is that if you don't already have a WIPS account and you are in charge of submitting either a QPR or a QNR for your grant, setting that up is a priority. As many of you've probably experienced, it can take between a day and a week to get that request fulfilled, depending on how busy the WIPS development team is. But please make sure if you need a WIPS account you're setting one up before February 14th, or the day before your grant report is due, because it does take us some time to process those requests.

[\(08:27\)](#):

Back to that performance training from October, there are step-by-step instructions on how to do that. And when you do submit that, the person who gets those requests are myself and Ben, and we're looking out for them, and we want to process them as quickly as possible, but please make sure you take care of that.

[\(08:43\)](#):

All right, next slide. So, returning to our overview of the quarterly reporting requirements, in this training, we are focusing, where the arrow is now, on the Quarterly Performance Report. So we sequence the trainings in this way intentionally to align with the timeline of most of your projects. You have to submit a Quarterly Narrative Report every quarter, so getting set up in WIPS and explaining how to submit the QNR was the first thing we wanted everybody to understand back in October. You only need to submit a QPR once you've enrolled participants, because you won't have participant data until you have participants. And so, for some of you, that might mean that you'll submit a QPR at the next submission date here in February. And for others, if you don't have participants yet, you might not have to worry about this quite yet, but you should always be thinking about it.

[\(09:34\)](#):

All right, next slide. This slide shows the reporting due dates each quarter. So the previous quarter, it ended September 30th, right after you guys got awarded your grants. And at that point, no one had any participants, so we didn't have any QPRs, and we just got everyone to set up their accounts and submit their QNRs, and good job doing that. Thank you. The next quarter here is highlighted in yellow. So that took us from October 1st to the end of the year, to December 31st. And so, any of the information from that quarter, that's going to be due by February 15th. So, again, the window that you'd be... If your final QPR this February, it's because you enrolled participants sometime between October 1st and December 31st. Again, if you don't have participants or you enrolled them in 2023, you don't have to submit a QPR this quarter. You do have to submit a QNR, but there's about a 45-day window for you to pull your reports together before they're due.

[\(10:40\)](#):

All right, next slide. So before we do get real deep into the QPRs, which we're about to, we did want to ask how many of you plan to submit a QPR by February 15th. So if you enrolled any participants between October 1st and December 31st, this is your first time to submit a QPR. So how many folks are planning to do that?

[\(11:12\)](#):

And then Kevin, when it looks like the results are in, it'd be great to see those. I don't know if we can broadcast them. You should be able to see if that was... So I maybe have my state up... Here we go. Is this it? Nope, I am only able to vote. Okay. Well, regardless, thank you for answering the survey, and it's good information for us. And I'm going to transition here to Ben, who's going to talk through an introduction to the QPR.

Ben Mahrer ([12:10](#)):

All right, great. Thank you Jessie. So, let's see. All right, next section. So now that we've oriented ourselves in terms of the basic reporting requirements, we can get into the main content that we plan on covering today. So we'll be focusing on the Quarterly Performance Reports, as Jessie has said, and we'll start with an overview of the whole QPR process and then walk through each stage in more detail. And I will also just reiterate at this point that these slides will be available for you to view and download after the presentation, and there will also be a recording of this session. So, of course, feel free to take notes, but no need to despair if you miss a detail. You'll be able to review everything afterwards. And I can also see that we do have the data in from that previous poll, and it is approximately 50/50. It's really 45/55 split between folks that have participants and plan on submitting a QPR in the upcoming quarter by February 15th and folks that did not have participants during the October through December quarter. So, yeah.

([13:27](#)):

So all of you will be doing this process, whether it's this quarter or possibly the next quarter, but it's good to kind of see where we're at. All right, so, moving into the QPR overview. So we'll start by first describing what a QPR is at the most basic level. And really, the QPR is a data report. It has quantitative information about participants, services, and program outcomes. And it's based on a data file which is called the participant data file that grantees create and upload to WIPS. And WIPS then takes the information in that participant data file and turns it into the QPR. So, the QPR is different from the participant data file that you upload, because the QPR is aggregated information at the program level, while the data file that you submit contains information at the individual level.

([14:34](#)):

So, this slide here highlights those distinctions between the participant data file and the QPR. And just to reiterate those distinctions, the participant data file is uploaded by you, the grantee, and contains individual level information, while the QPR is generated within WIPS, and it uses information from that participant data file. It aggregates it up to the program level.

([14:59](#)):

Okay, so continuing our overview of the QPRs, this graphic here illustrates the basic steps that go into producing the QPR. So first, grantees will have to collect data. That data then goes into the participant data file, which is then uploaded to WIPS, and WIPS then will turn the participant data file into the QPR.

([15:36](#)):

In today's session, we'll walk through all four of these stages, but before we begin that walkthrough, we're going to start by explaining a little more about the participant data file referenced in the second step here. And it's important to understand what the participant data file is and what information it contains, because it's what you're building towards in the first stage when you're collecting data. So once we've described that participant data file, we'll move back to the first stage of the process, which is data collection, and we'll talk through what data to collect and how to set up processes, and we'll continue covering each stage from there. And so by the end of this session, you should have a clear picture of the entire process and what it entails. All right, so I'll pass it back over to you, Jessie, for the participant data file-

Jessie Oettinger ([16:29](#)):

Thank-

Ben Mahrer ([16:29](#)):

... and data collection.

Jessie Oettinger ([16:30](#)):

All right. Yep. So now we're going to talk about the participant data file. Let's get started. And so we're first going to describe what it is, and then we'll talk about the data collection. Oops, let me get back to my notes. All right. So, what is actually in the participant data file that you're responsible for creating? We've said it has data on individuals. That's true. But to spell it out a bit further, there are several categories of information related to the individuals that come into contact with your program.

([17:00](#)):

So there's individual information, so demographic information that characterizes individuals at the time of their enrollment. There's program participant information, or program participation information, so when they start the program, when they leave the program, if they're co-enrolled in other programs, that sort of thing. There's a services and activities category, and so that would be the types of services that an individual receives, like training and when those training dates started. And then a program outcomes information section. And this is the information that D O L uses to calculate exit-based performance indicators. But some of the things you might measure as an outcome would be if somebody got a credential or had a measurable skills gain. And then the employment and earnings piece, we'll talk about later. But that can happen after you've uploaded the file.

([17:58](#)):

So next slide. So of course, this raises the question, "How do I know what to put in the file?" And then another dimension is, "What order do I put that information in?" But Ben'll cover that in a minute. But the best place to get a complete list of all the required elements is our Participant Data File Tool. The Participant Data File Tool, which for the sake of brevity, we call the PDFT, is a technical assistance resource, and it's available on WorkforceGPS. The PDFT will show up many times throughout this presentation as we explain how to collect data and build a participant data file. We'll also do a in-depth explanation of how to access it and the other TA resources here at the end of the session. But for now, the takeaway here is the PDFT, this is your best source, your go-to for figuring out what goes in a participant data file, and it will be your friend as you develop data collection processes.

([18:56](#)):

Next slide. So, this is a visual depiction of the relationship between the PDFT, the participant data file, and the QPR. So we've discussed each of these things individually, so now we'll talk about how they fit together. So the PDFT, the tool, it delineates all of the required data elements, all the things you have to collect data on and the format they should be in. The data that you collect, it then goes into a participant data file, as represented by the second box. And this is where formatting and ordering of the data really comes into play. So you're taking the data you're collecting. You're arranging it in a participant data file such that when you upload it to WIPS, which, what you'll do with your participant data file, WIPS can then read that file, because all the data's in the right place, and then WIPS will generate a QPR, or that aggregated report that Ben was talking about. And at that point, you get to certify the report, and your QPR is done for the quarter.

([20:03](#)):

Next slide. Okay, so that was our overview of the participant data file, and now we'll talk about how it might pertain to the overall process. And we'll move on to data collection. So, again, we'll start with an overview of data collection, and then dive into the specifics. So, for context, data collection is the very

first stage of the QPR process. So we can't talk about the QPR until we talk about data collection, so we'll start with data collection and then move on to other stages. The purpose behind collecting the data is to include it in the participant data file. And, at least for the purposes of this training, there are lots of great reasons to collect participant data, but in this case, we're talking about in the context of collecting it so you can create a participant data file, which will then eventually become your QPR. The goal then would be to align your data collection requirements with the requirements of the participant data file. So that means the PDFT is going to play a critical role in telling you what you need to collect data on.

[\(21:10\)](#):

Next slide. And so I've already talked about what goes into the file, and those are the same things you're going to collect data on, so that means you're going to want to collect information like demographics, what kind of services you're providing, when they were provided, and that's going to make up the bulk of your file. The PDFT will also tell you what the valid answers are for each element that you're collecting data on. And that's something Ben will talk about more as we dive into the tool.

[\(21:37\)](#):

So, as you set up your data collection process, you'll want to ensure not just that you're collecting all the data that goes into the participant data file, but also that the options or answers that you're giving to your staff or your participants are aligned with those that are specified in the PDFT. And one more important thing to note is that even though outcomes information are listed in the PDFT, they're in data elements 1600 through 1813, several of those data elements are going to be added within WIPS after you upload the participant data file. And again, we'll talk more about that process later in the training. But right now, in the context of data collection, the key takeaway is you're collecting information on the data elements, and those are all specified in the PDFT to give you the specific things that you're going to need to collect data on.

[\(22:29\)](#):

Next slide. So this slide summarizes the takeaway I just mentioned. Your task is to collect data. That's going to go into the participant data file as it's delineated by the PDFT. And there's a lot of information to collect. This is the other thing. I know we keep... We're taking a long time to explain this, and it's because there's actually quite a lot of data you need to collect. There are hundreds of categories, and it doesn't mean that you need to collect data on hundreds of things, but that you need to set yourself up to be ready to report on a lot of different things. So this file is a pretty big deal, and we don't want folks to underestimate how much time it's going to take or how much effort or the infrastructure investment that you'll probably need to make to produce one of these files.

[\(23:21\)](#):

So, next slide. Ah. And then, this is the perfect segue. So given that this is a pretty big data collection task, you're going to need to devise a way to store and organize the data that you collect. Your options for doing this include using your existing management information system or case management system, something you might already have in use. That could work. However, if you go with this option, you'll probably need to do some modification to export a file that will align to the specifications that are laid out in the PDFT. But if you already have a case management system and you have somebody who's pretty good at working with it, they might be able to use the PDFT to bring those things together such that you can export a file you could upload into WIPS.

[\(24:08\)](#):

Alternatively, you could contract with a third-party vendor to provide this service. There are a few vendors that have a off-the-shelf type of data collection interface that will produce files that are

compatible with WIPS, so that's an option. You could, I say you could, because anything is possible, you could build a participant data file in Excel. That would be an option. That would be a lot of work. Or you could build a database that somehow, again, did an export that worked well.

[\(24:42\)](#):

And there are probably an infinite number of other software solutions. I would say the most common would be working with a vendor or utilizing existing MIS if you already have one that has a lot of capabilities. And again, the upshot here is really just, don't underestimate how big a task this could be, and so, really make sure you're checking in with your IT team or however you do data collection to see that everybody is thinking about the actual process of building the file.

[\(25:11\)](#):

So next slide. And then, this is also really important. And, again, if you already have an MIS or you already have a third-party vendor that you're working with, make sure that your data storage system and the processes that you're engaging in in terms of training your staff to collect data... There are two things about this that are really important. One is security, so making sure that your staff are really clear about how to protect people's personally identifiable information. And so that applies both to paper applications, so making sure those are being stored and handled correctly. And then also that whatever platform that you're using or whatever system that you're using is also going to protect people's information. And so, there's limited login capability, but you're really thinking about protecting people's data, so that's really important.

[\(26:07\)](#):

The other piece that you're not going to want to lose track of is that any forms or tools that you're developing right now to collect participant information, and I alluded to this earlier, they should list valid answer options for each data element. So essentially, you need to take care to ensure that the data collection methods align to the requirements. So it's capturing all the data that you're going to need to report on and then understanding what answers WIPS will accept. Is this a yes/no question? What are the different race or ethnicity categories? Making sure that whatever you're collecting aligns with what options you can report on in WIPS.

[\(26:47\)](#):

Next question, or next slide. So now that we've described data collection, let's talk very briefly about who to collect data on. Essentially, you should collect information on all the individuals that come into contact with your program. Of course, this would include people that receive services, folks who enroll in your program and get some training, get some help finding a job. But it would also include people who just fill out paperwork, but then don't ultimately end up participating. So aim to collect data on everyone who engages with your program, and be prepared to report on that.

[\(27:26\)](#):

Next slide. If you'd like to read more about some official... There are definitions about who's a reportable individual, who's a participant, and so, if you want to read up on that, we're not going to take a lot of time to talk about it today, there is official definitions found in guidance for DWG reporting, which is covered in TEGL 14-18. This information is also in the reporting reference guide that we'll cover at the end when we talk about resources on WorkforceGPS. And if you wanted to read either the TEGL or the reference guide, again, it's linked here on the slides, and when you get the deck, you can go directly there.

[\(28:04\)](#):

Next slide. All right, so we've covered a lot of information, and we're going to do a quick review of the big picture, the participant data file, and data collection to summarize this section of the training. Yeah. So here's that visual that we love so much, the super high-level reporting requirements graphic. So, we're locating that we talked about the QPR today. We did it. And then, again, that training from October covered the QNR and the getting an account set up in WIPS. And if you want to view that training, it is on WorkforceGPS.

[\(28:39\)](#):

Next slide. All right, so, then, after locating the QPR within the broader quarterly reporting environment, we did an overview of the QPR process. That overview showed us that first, you collect data, then the data you collect goes into a participant data file, and then ultimately, you're going to upload that participant data file into WIPS, where the system will generate a QPR.

[\(29:02\)](#):

Next slide. With that process in mind, we talked about what a participant data file is, what information it contains, why it's important, and how to set it up for data collection. The participant data file contains information about people who come into contact with your program. That includes participants, but it also includes reportable individuals. The PDFT lists all of the data elements that go into a participant data file.

[\(29:34\)](#):

Then, knowing that you're working towards building a participant data file, the actual step in this process is to set up your data collection processes and tracking systems. You'll want to make sure that your processes align with the data element requirements that are laid out in the Participant Data File Tool. And when you're ready, you'll collect data on all the individuals that come into contact with your program, even if they don't wind up receiving services. And that is a summary of what we just talked about. And I'm going to transition things to Ben, and we're going to go deep into another topic, which is the file itself. So over to you, Ben.

Ben Mahrer [\(30:11\)](#):

Great. Thanks Jessie. So yeah, like Jessie said, we're now ready to move on to the next section. And in that next section, we will talk about how to actually prepare the participant data file, and we'll cover the process of uploading the data file to WIPS and how the data file is converted to the QPR. So, each of those three topics I just mentioned correspond to the second, third, and fourth stages of the QPR process. And we'll move through each of these three steps one at a time, and we'll start with the creation of the participant data file.

[\(30:58\)](#):

So, WIPS requires that you use a very specific format called a schema when you build the participant data file. So we'll explain the key steps to building a file that meets those formatting requirements and uses that schema. So the first of the steps is to set up a spreadsheet with the required columns. There's going to be one column for each of the required data elements, and the rows will correspond to individuals, and that will create a grid that's ready to be filled in with information about the people who have come into contact with your program.

[\(31:38\)](#):

The second step is to actually populate the spreadsheet with data. And for those of you using an MIS or case management system, you'll likely do this by exporting the relevant data, but populating the spreadsheet with data can also be done manually. The third step is to make sure that the data are

formatted properly. WIPS has some very rigorous formatting specifications for the participant data file, and files that don't meet the specifications will be rejected, so it's important to pay attention to how data for each element should be entered.

(32:21):

And because we recognize that this can be a tricky process, we've created a special tool designed specifically to guide you through each of these steps. It's called the Participant Data File Tool or PDFT, and we highly recommend using it as you build your participant data file. And yes, this is the same resource that we've referred to earlier when talking about finding the required data elements to actually collect data on. But this PDFT does even more than just list the required data elements. It also contains information that's relevant to actually building and formatting the participant data file itself. So, as we've mentioned before, the PDFT is located on WorkforceGPS, and we'll show you exactly how to find it, as well as other resources, at the end of today's session. But right now, we just want to emphasize that the PDFT is the best resource for this stage of the QPR process where you're actually building the participant data file.

(33:26):

So, going back to those three steps that we just talked about, I want to quickly highlight how the PDFT can help throughout the process. So, in the first step, the PDFT shows exactly which columns or data elements to include in the file. So, this is an image taken from the Participant Data File Tool, and you'll notice that the tool has several tabs along the bottom. This demo sample file section is the one that is most relevant to building the participant data file. And as you can see across the top of the screen, it shows which columns to include in the file. The numbers correspond to data elements, and the text underneath is the title of each element.

(34:16):

And yes, I see in the chat there are some requests to show exactly where to find this tool. We definitely will. There's going to be lots of tools that we reference throughout the presentation, and so, at the end, we'll show you where to find all of them, because we definitely want to make sure you know exactly where they are and how to locate them. But yes, the next step in building your participant data file is filling the spreadsheet in with data. And the PDFT helps with this step by showing which columns actually require data. So we were-

Jessie Oettinger (34:51):

Hey Ben? I'm sorry. I'm just going to-

Ben Mahrer (34:52):

Oh. Yeah? Yeah.

Jessie Oettinger (34:53):

I think maybe we should turn off our cameras. A lot of folks are having issue with the... I think there's a streaming issue, and the slides aren't showing up well, so maybe if you turn your camera off, folks will be able to see the text better.

Ben Mahrer (35:06):

Okay, yeah. [inaudible 00:35:07].

Jessie Oettinger ([35:06](#)):

But yes, I'm having the same issue, everybody, and we will make the deck available. I apologize. I think it's a bandwidth issue. But, all right, sorry Ben, I didn't mean to interrupt. I just want to see if we can-

Ben Mahrer ([35:17](#)):

Yeah, no problem.

Jessie Oettinger ([35:18](#)):

... correct midstream.

Ben Mahrer ([35:21](#)):

Yeah, good interruption, camera off. Hopefully that helps the slides show up better. But yes, you can, again, download the slides and view the recording afterwards and kind of look at the slides on your own screen or on a local file in conjunction with the audio from the recording. But yes, we apologize that the slides aren't showing up properly.

[\(35:47\)](#):

Yeah, so here, this image, again, is returning to the PDFT that we were just looking at, and it's illustrating how it can help you with the second step to building a participant data file, which is actually populating the file with data. And so, there's actually a little bit more nuance than simply filling in every single column. You'll notice that some of the column headers are orange and others are yellow. Headers that are orange pertain to demo grants like WORC, and so, these should be filled in. Headers that are yellow are not specific to demo grants, but must be included in the participant data file, and you do not need to fill those in. And again, this is explained in the actual Participant Data File Tool itself as well. But, regardless, this is definitely something to pay attention to, because, like I've said, WHIPS is very particular about file formatting, so it's important to build the file to these exact specifications.

[\(36:52\)](#):

And then the last step to building the participant data file is formatting the data itself. And there are lots of details to pay attention to when it comes to how the actual data is formatted, things like whether to include leading zeros or how to format dates. We won't get into all of the specifics here, but suffice it to say that the Participant Data File Tool is once again enormously helpful with this step. It contains specifications for every single data element that you're required to include.

[\(37:26\)](#):

So, returning to the image of the PDFT, you'll notice that there's some text in the tan box in the upper right-hand portion of the screen, and these are data entry specifications. And we've included them for every single column in the file. And so you can view those entry specifications for each data element by clicking into the header cells. They'll automatically pop up. And you'll notice that there are a few other tabs in this tool as well, kind of across the bottom there. And we'll cover those in more detail in the next training. But there's also a video tutorial on WorkforceGPS that explains the PDFT's contents in their entirety. So we'll show you how to navigate to this tool and the accompanying video at the end of this training when we cover WorkforceGPS resources, but there's also a direct link at the bottom of this slide right here. So, again, at this point, just remember that the PDFT is your go-to resource when it comes to building a participant data file, and we'll show you exactly how to find this and all the other resources on WorkforceGPS in the next section.

[\(38:38\)](#):

Okay, so we've now covered the key steps to building a participant data file, but it's worth noting that this process might look slightly different depending on the exact system that you're using to collect data and your choice regarding the file format of the participant data file. So the file formats that WIPS accepts are .csv, .txt, and .zip, and some grantees may be using a case management system that makes it easier to produce, for example, a .txt file than a spreadsheet or .csv file. And if that's the case, feel free to go ahead and produce a .txt file. But if you do go this route, the steps may look a little different than what we just outlined, but the upshot is still exactly the same. No matter what, your file is going to need to have the appropriate data elements, contain the required participant information, and everything, including the actual data, must be formatted correctly.

[\(39:45\)](#):

And so, you might wind up working through these steps in a slightly different order or in a slightly different manner than what we just showed. For example, you might not need to format a spreadsheet prior to populating it with data. Maybe you'll export the data first and format the file second. But there are too many ways of going about building the participant data file for us to show every alternative. But our hope is that you'll be able to take these key steps that are the same no matter what and then recontextualize them in whatever data management system you're actually using. And the PDFT should be helpful no matter how you go about this. So, those are the key steps to building a participant data file.

[\(40:34\)](#):

And once you're satisfied with yours, the next step will be to upload it to WIPS. And uploading the data file to WIPS, as you might remember, is the next bubble in this graphic, so we'll talk about that step now. All right, so the actual mechanics of uploading the participant data file to WIPS are really quite simple, and the process is fully documented in the performance reporting guide. The guide has step-by-step instructions and screenshots that are located in the appendices. So, given the relative simplicity and full documentation that exists, we're not going to go into the actual process right here. Instead, we just want to make sure that you know this resource exists. And at the end of the training, we'll show you exactly where to find it on WorkforceGPS. I'd also like to point out that with a few small exceptions, WORC grantees follow the DWG performance reporting requirements, so don't be put off by the DWG in the title.

[\(41:39\)](#):

Okay, so uploading the participant data file will initiate a process called an edit check, and this is a stage of the upload process that contains a little bit more complexity. And so we'll talk about that in a little bit more detail here. And once you've submitted your participant data file to WIPS, the system will automatically run a series of checks to make sure that the file and the data it contains are formatted properly and in a way that WIPS can read.

[\(42:17\)](#):

Resolving errors that are identified in the edit check process and resubmitting the data file is an iterative process, and it's common to have to resubmit the data file multiple times. But once you upload a data file and it passes through the edit check with zero errors, the QPR will be generated by the WIPS system for you to certify. But, of course, fixing those errors that the edit check identifies can be a little tricky, and so we've created another resource that provides tips for how to navigate the edit checks. And as with all of the resources we've mentioned today, this is located on WorkforceGPS, and we'll point out exactly where to find it at the end of the training. So as I said earlier, there's going to be a lot of resources that come up, and we'll show you exactly where they are at the end.

[\(43:17\)](#):

But once you've successfully uploaded an error-free data file to WIPS and it has passed the edit check, you'll arrive at the last step in the process, which is the generation of the QPR in WIPS. So one important thing to note for this final QPR generation stage has to do with outcomes data. In the participant data file that you upload to WIPS, data elements 1600 to 1813 pertain to program outcomes. This includes employment outcomes, earning outcomes, skill gains, and more. Collecting these types of outcomes data requires following up with participants after they exit the program or using supplemental sources to collect the relevant information. We encourage you to do this follow-up data collection and to include as much of the information as you can.

[\(44:10\)](#):

However, there is also a process within WIPS that's set up to retrieve employment and earnings information for a select set of data elements. Specifically, WIPS will retrieve information for the six data elements shown on this slide. And it looks like some of those might be a little hard to read. We'll make sure that you have access to these slides at the end of the presentation. But this means that you may submit a participant data file to WIPS that does not include information for these six data elements, as long as you include the participant's Social Security number as well. So, there is an option for leaving these columns blank.

[\(44:53\)](#):

The system that WIPS uses to retrieve employment and earnings data engages a third party to match a participant's Social Security number with their wage and employment status as listed in the state's unemployment records. This system is fully secure, and DOL requires this level of rigor to verify employment. But once the employment status is confirmed, WIPS will populate your grant's QPR with the correct data for these fields. This process takes place after you submit the participant data file and certify the QPR. The important thing to note here is that WIPS is only able to retrieve employment and earnings information for individuals that have a Social Security number listed in the participant data file. Without a Social Security number, there is no way to match the participant with the state's records. This is why Social Security numbers are listed in the PDFT as a data element. Please collect Social Security numbers and include them in the participant data file so that WIPS can retrieve employment and earnings data. That being said, participants do not have to provide their Social Security number in order to receive services.

[\(46:13\)](#):

To summarize, I just described a process whereby WIPS will retrieve employment and earnings information for individuals who have Social Security numbers recorded in the data file. WIPS will only retrieve this information for a few data elements in the outcome section of the data file. These data elements may be left blank if you have included Social Security numbers in the file. The PDFT actually does not currently highlight the exact six data elements that WIPS retrieves information for, but we're working on an update to the PDFT right now, and we'll include this information in the next version. So, while WIPS will add these employment and earnings data to your QPR, we still encourage you to collect all of the outcomes information you're able to on your own.

[\(47:01\)](#):

So having explained that note about employment and earnings info being added during the QPR generation stage, let's now take a look at the whole process for converting a participant data file into a QPR. Most of this should be familiar at this point, but first, you upload the participant data file to WIPS. WIPS will then run its edit checks, and you may have to fix some errors and re-upload the file. But once the data file passes the edit checks, WIPS will generate the QPR. It will also begin retrieving outcomes information, but that process typically takes a few weeks. So you will certify the QPR before the

outcomes information is added. You can then log back in and view the complete QPR with outcomes information once it's been added, if you wish.

(47:49):

Okay, that was a lot of information that I just covered. So let's do a quick review of what we just went over in this last section. Our first review got us up through data collection, so we'll start with creating a participant data file. So to review, you'll either be exporting data from your case management system or building a data file manually. Either way, you're going to have to spend some time making sure that the file is set up properly and all the data is formatted correctly. The main thing to remember here is that the PDFT is your go-to support resource for this step in the process.

(48:32):

You'll then upload the participant data file to WIPS. Your go-to resource for this is the Reporting Reference Guide, which contains screenshots and step-by-step upload instructions. You'll also have to contend with the edit checks and fix any errors that it finds in your data file. We have another resource that will help you navigate that process, and, unsurprisingly, it's called the Edit Check Resource, and we showed that one as well. And, again, we'll point you to exactly where to find all of these in the next section here. And then, once the data file is error-free, WIPS will use it to produce the QPR, and that takes us through the end of the process. And now I'll turn things over to Jessie, and she can walk you through where to find all these resources on WorkforceGPS.

Jessie Oettinger (49:22):

Yes, and I appreciate how many folks in the chat were asking where to find these resources. We're excited that you're interested and that you want to know where they are. So yes, we'd love to tell you where to find them. They're on our community of practice. So, WorkforceGPS is a platform with lots of communities of practice for DOL programs, for lots of different ones, and so, all of the WORC resources, or the WORC 4 resources can be found with the National Dislocated Worker Grant resources. So the way you would get there is you could go to WorkforceGPS.org, and then in the communities tab at the top of the page, you would select Dislocated Worker Grants, or, if you visit the site very frequently, as I have been known to do, you can go straight there. The direct link is dwg.workforcegps.org. Once you get to the page, and we do have some screenshots coming, you would navigate to featured content and then to the DWG Performance Reporting Resources section.

(50:25):

So next slide. Here is a screenshot. It is tiny, but hopefully it's illustrating two important things. One is that we are at dwg.workforcegps.org, and two is that the DWG Performance Reporting Resources are in the featured content box, which is blue. Right now, it's in the middle. So we don't have a lot of control over this page, but one thing we know is that the performance reporting resources are going to stay in this blue featured content box. And the visual associated with our reporting resources link is a road going through a maze, so look for those two critical pieces of information once you get to our community of practice.

(51:11):

Next slide. Once you navigate there, there are four different categories of reporting resource. The ones that matter to you will be one and three. One is DWG General Reporting Resources, and then number three is a bunch of special resources we made just for you, the WORC 4 Performance Reporting Resources.

(51:36):

We'll start at the WORC 4 page. So if you navigated to WORC 4, the first thing that I want to point out is that it has a link to that previous training everybody's been asking about. Yes, this is a place to watch that live, and that took place in October. So again, if you missed that, if you want to create a WIPS account, look there. And, yeah, the WIPS account, make sure you get that set up.

(52:01):

All right, next slide. The other thing I want to point out is the way this page is organized. So, for instance, here's the participant data file. So we have the PDFT for demonstration grants. You'll see it, but there's no blue link like there is for the GPS webinar, and that's because it's in this related content on the left-hand panel. And so, again, this is a weird page organization thing, but if you see something that looks interesting and it's not blue-linked, it will be on the left-hand panel under related content.

(52:39):

Next slide. All right, so I'm taking us back out of the WORC 4, back to the main Performance Reporting Resources section, and we're going to call out some things in the general performance reporting resources. So, next page, if you navigated there, it would look like this. And there's a PDFT on this page as well. I'm pointing it out because, don't use this one. It's slightly different than the demonstration grant PDFT. So, again, if you're looking at the tool for the file specifications, pull the one from the WORC 4 resources.

(53:22):

However, if you wanted to watch a video tutorial of the PDFT, which it takes like... It's like Ben's screenshot presentation, but 20 minutes long, so it really dives deep into all of what's there. There is a video tutorial. You could watch that, same information, same structure to the tool, just slightly different specifications for the actual file. So, that's a cool resource.

(53:49):

Next slide. The other thing we really wanted to call out here is this is where you would find the Reporting Reference Guide. I highly, highly, highly recommend checking this out. It was updated just over the summer, so it's totally current. It walks you through the entire reporting process. It has lots of screenshots that I think should be current, the way WIPS is set up, so it's a great way to see how each step of the WIPS process is completed. Next page, or next slide. Yep, and here's a visual of what that Reporting Reference Guide looks like. And again, when you get the slide deck, this link, this white link is live, and that will take you right to the Reference Guide as well, or the Reporting Handbook as well.

(54:37):

Next slide, want to make sure we have time for questions. The other things on this page that we talked about that you might want to look at are the Edit Check Resource. So that's an important thing that's there as well. Next slide, and the QNR template, so again, if you were like, "I'd love to work on my QNR outside of WIPS and work on it in a Word document and copy and paste," you can download a copy of the QNR and prepare those answers outside of WIPS. All right. And now, over to Ben to do a brief overview of how to get technical assistance, and then we'll try to take as many questions as we can.

Ben Mahrer (55:18):

Great. Thanks, Jessie. Yeah, so we'll just wrap things up here with a quick word about TA. So, all the resources we just looked at on WorkforceGPS are a good first place to go if you have questions. But if you're looking for additional support, please don't hesitate to reach out to your federal project officer or FPO. And if your FPO isn't able to answer your question themselves, they're perfectly positioned to

connect you to someone that can, whether that's a regional performance specialist or someone on our support team.

(55:53):

Also, if you're having a WIPS issue, including access for new staff, for example, you can file a TA request through WIPS. So you just click this link in the top right corner of this screen to open the TA request form, which looks like this. And you can see the form is fairly simple. Select DWG for program from the check boxes, and that will ensure the ticket is routed correctly, and then just describe your issue, and the WIPS support team will follow up.

(56:24):

And so that's all our content. We're basically at the hour, but we have just a few short minutes to take questions. Yeah, Kim and Jessie, are there any key ones that have come in from the chat that we should address?

Jessie Oettinger (56:46):

I was just scrolling. It looks like Kim answered a lot... Kim and Randy were pretty active. But folks, if you feel like you still have remaining questions, make sure to drop them in the chat, or I don't know if people can unmute and ask us live questions. We covered the resources that are going to be available. Looks like Randy addressed the questions about co-enrollment. We can't talk about specific vendors for MIS, but that's a great way... A great option would be to maybe reach out to the grant community of practice and see if folks have experience working with some of those vendors. If you have a relationship with other grants who have had to do DOL reporting, you could see what they have done.

(57:58):

All right. Well, we are standing by to take questions over email and through the WIPS system. But Randy, do you maybe want to close us out here with one minute left to go?

Randy Painter (58:11):

Sure. Thanks, Jessie. Yeah, I would just say to all of you, I know this is a lot of information, and it will be available afterwards to review, and we're always here to provide more assistance and... Just make sure you review the materials, and if you still have questions, reach out to us. I know this can take a while to really implement [inaudible 00:58:35] it's new for. And we will have a third part of the training sometime in the future. It's not currently scheduled, but we definitely want to be there for you as we walk through this process. So, anybody else from the team want to add anything? Otherwise, I think we're good. Thanks so much, everybody.

Day 1, Session 3: Monitoring Readiness

Mason Bishop ([00:00:01](#)):

Hi everybody. We're up for our next session, title Preparing for US Department of Labor Monitoring Review. I'll just introduce myself real quickly. And then we have a second individual who's here to share, who's an actual grantee who we worked with after last year's session, Stacy Cangelosi. Real quickly, my background, I own a company called WorkEd Consulting. I am partnered with Nicole Dunn. And we've been providing technical assistance to WORC grantees now for a little over a year. I've been involved in workforce development and higher education for about 27 years. Actually served at the US Department of Labor as the Deputy Assistant Secretary from 2001 to 2007. I was a vice president of Salt Lake Community College for three years, from 2008 to '10. And I've been in consulting now for over 10 years. I'm also going to, at the end of this presentation, give you a little tidbit of a second business I'm starting too, that's related to all things grants. And we'll talk about that later. But let me introduce Stacy and let her introduce herself before we get started into the materials.

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:01:08](#)):

Thanks, Mason. My name is Stacy Cangelosi. I'm the education and prevention director at Alcohol and Drug Council in Tompkins County, New York, near Ithaca. We are the recipients of a work grant focusing on workforce and trying to get folks in recovery into workplaces. We have three partners right now that we are working with to provide a variety of services, including resume help, mock interview help, technology help, and OJT grants. We do that through our partners. Currently we had a three year grant. We applied for a no-cost extension. We are now in our last year. So we're continuing to do the work but also starting to think about wrapping up and finding ways to continue the work, which has been really valuable and helpful these past few years.

Mason Bishop ([00:02:07](#)):

Great.

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:02:08](#)):

Thanks for having me, Mason.

Mason Bishop ([00:02:09](#)):

Yeah, absolutely, Stacy. We were chatting right when we went live that it's good to see each other. We haven't seen each other for a couple of months, so it's fun to see Stacy again.

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:02:18](#)):

Yeah, for sure.

Mason Bishop ([00:02:19](#)):

There was a time there where we were working almost weekly.

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:02:22](#)):

It was pretty intense.

Mason Bishop ([00:02:24](#)):

So it's kind of a reunion of sorts for us, so it's kind of fun. Let me say before we get started in the materials, we absolutely have the chat here. I'm a big believer in trying to make these things conversational. So if you have a burning question or issue that you want to put in the chat, if it makes sense to pause and discuss that question or address it, by all means, feel free to put your questions, comments in the chat. We want this to be worthwhile for you. So I may have to be switching back and forth here between screens as I flip slides here. So I'm going to do that. So the first icebreaker real quick, and so if you could put some of information in the chat, we'd like to involve all of you right up front, is this your first experiencing managing a grant project? I would love to know in the chat how many of you just say yes, if it is. Secondly, did you receive any training or mentoring to prepare you for managing your WORC project?

([00:03:31](#)):

I see I have a typo there already. That's not good. Says you work project, should say your work project. Sorry about that. So we've got some nos, yes, yes and no. Yes, the first year of our grant. No. Has some experience with HRSA grants. Good, there's some yeses. Thank you. So number three, have you gone through through the USDOL monitoring process previously? Let's see how many nos we have. If you have not gone through a USDOL monitoring, can you make sure you say no so we know how many. No, no, no. Lots of nos. First time with WORC. Hi, Christine. That's right, you went through it. No. Yes, as federal grantee. No and no. Yeah. Good, Carol, thank you for that.

([00:04:48](#)):

Okay, and then real quick in the chat, if there's one item in this particular topic area you want to make sure we discuss today, can you please put that in the chat? I want to make sure that we try to address as many sort of upfront issues. What do you really want to learn out of this presentation? Or what would you want to make sure we talk about or discuss? Anything burning? Just feel free to put that in the chat as well. Good, monitor checklist. You're going to like one of my slides later on. Perfect. Okay, good. Work smarter, not harder. Yes, good. Five key things. Okay. I'm making notes to myself while I read this too, by the way. Checklist. Everything we need to know. Okay, gotcha. We'll try to cover that here in the next hour.

([00:05:49](#)):

Okay, well we'll go ahead and get started then. So thank you for all of that. Let me mention that one of the things I have found, I have in my consulting business, frankly, have written grants now for lots of years. I hate calling it grant because it's more project development. TAACCCT grants, lots of DOL grants over the years. And I started to find ... I used to joke when I was at Salt Lake Community College that, "Yay, we won the grant," and then I'd say, "Oh no, we won the grant." And I would say a couple of emerging issues I'm really experiencing a lot in my consulting business, I've worked with grantees.

([00:06:31](#)):

One is those who write the grants and those who implement the grants are usually two different people. And there's a gap that exists between those two processes that often stymies and stifles people from moving forward and implementing in a way that then helps you meet the results. As a result of those delays in implementation, you struggle with your outcomes. DOL comes in, monitors you, you have findings. And then it can become a negative experience instead of the positive experience we all hope and want it to be. That's something that I see a lot. Secondly, I would say that I am also seeing, there really is no, I would say, comprehensive resource or training for individuals who say, like Stacy, "Hey, guess what, Stacy, we're hiring you to manage this new WORC grant we got." And Stacy really has ... I'll use her as an example, but it can be anybody. Doesn't go through any training, doesn't really have

professional development, doesn't get experience. And so therefore I see a lot of grant managers struggling.

[\(00:07:39\)](#):

And so what we have been able to do, starting with frankly the WORC grantees in this process ... But really this is branching out and becoming much bigger. And we'll talk more about that later. But let me just tell you a couple recent success stories. As a result of last year's engagement, Stacy being one, Christine Ta from North Georgia Tech being another, as an example. We helped two WORC projects. Nicole Dunn and I. Helped two WORC project prepare for monitoring and receive no major findings. Neither one of these. Stacy's going to talk more about her experience later. I have helped WROC and non-WORC, a number of USDOL ETA grantees get off an at-risk designation.

[\(00:08:19\)](#):

And frankly, that's why I want to start having more of these types of conversations about, what can you prepare for upfront? Because I'm getting called in a lot now, to be honest, to come in and fix problems after they've manifest themselves after a couple of years. One particular at-risk grantee just got off at-risk in December that I've been working with for a year. And in less than one year, just to tell you how impactful this work can be through the mentoring and training and other kinds of knowledge assistance. I have one grantee, it was not a WORC grantee, by the way, but it was a USDOL grantee, who had 72 participants this time a year ago. And in less than one year is now on their December 31st, 2022 report's going to be 515 participants. So this kind of work and these kinds of discussions and this kind of peer-to-peer exchange can be really, really important and helpful to those of you who are new to this process. So this is really part of what we hope to accomplish today, is help kick that off.

[\(00:09:20\)](#):

So let's talk about monitoring, what it is and what it isn't. I believe monitoring is an opportunity to proactively engage with your federal project officer at USDOL. And now you know I was part of a round table where in fact that seems to be occurring, with the federal project officer and the grantees that I witnessed in my morning round table that we had. It is a chance to review your program milestones, progress toward outcomes and policies and procedures and making sure those are in place. It is a review of program compliance and effectiveness. And it absolutely is something to be prepared for. I don't believe monitoring is something to fear. I don't believe it's something used to get you in trouble. I don't believe that's the reason for it. Is it completely painful, painless, and stress free? No, it can be slightly stressful and can be a little bit frustrating.

[\(00:10:18\)](#):

And is it always consistently applied? My department of Labor FPO friends may not necessarily agree or appreciate this. But I have seen that, no, it's not always consistently applied, that certain federal project officers may emphasize certain parts of the monitoring guide more than others. I would say there are some absolute ... And we'll talk about a few of those elements that are critically important that you must have in place. And I will give you some examples of things I consistently see that aren't in place that get tagged on a finding. But federal project officers are human beings just like all of us, and some of them may apply certain parts or focus on certain parts of monitoring and others may not. Others may be a little more compliance oriented and others may not be as compliance oriented.

[\(00:11:11\)](#):

So let's talk about the absolute important resources. And I believe you were talking about some of those in prior discussions today. Your executed grant agreement. For those of you who have gotten a DOL grant for the first time, that execute a grant agreement which includes all the materials that were part

of your application, for instance, your project narrative is now your statement of work. The budget narrative is your budget narrative. And the SF 424A is your contract, essentially, with the federal government. That executed grant agreement in its entirety is your contract. I would say the SF 424A, make sure you understand that, because that document is essentially your financial part of your contract that says, "Here's how we're going to spend our money, in these ways under these direct cost categories or indirect expenses."

[\(00:12:04\)](#):

That executed grant agreement is really important. It's important to know, again, what your statement of work and budget are. But it's also important to know, are there any conditions in there? Are there any particular circumstances? For instance, you have budget transfer authority of up to 10% without needing a modification. There's those kinds of elements within that executed grant agreement that are important to understand. And again, if you have questions, you can go to your FPO or to a technical assistance consultant like Nicole for in the case of these grants. ETA has a grantee handbook that they provide everybody right up front when you receive a DOL grant. ETA means the Employment and Training Administration, which is the agency within the Department of Labor that actually is putting the funds out, has appropriated the money from Congress. That ETA grantee handbook has a number of tips and other kinds of things that are important to know.

[\(00:13:03\)](#):

ETA, the Employment Training Administration, again, I believe you were talking about some of this earlier, has a new SMART training that they're putting out there. You can go on what's called the WorkforceGPS. If you don't know what that is, you should. You can Google WorkforceGPS. It's ETA's essential repository of all things grants and information and training and a whole host of stuff. But you can find, I went and looked this weekend, for instance, at what the latest SMART training modules, there's PowerPoints, there's signups for upcoming training, et cetera, et cetera. And then finally, regulatory provisions, which can be very, very challenging to decipher. But it is sort of good to kind of understand what the relationship of the regulatory provisions are. And many of those regulatory provisions are outlined in your executed grant agreement, that are important to understand. But probably the most important ones are things around financial management kinds of issues. And we'll talk about those.

[\(00:14:04\)](#):

So it's important to understand the core monitoring guide. And actually when I was at DOL, when we put out the very first one, and this was updated here a couple years ago, is the main tool the ETA uses to conduct onsite or virtual reviews of grant projects. And there are three core activity areas to particularly understand. One is service design and delivery. Secondly is grant operations. And third is financial management. And then there's a couple of things that are important to understand, generally speaking, about the way the core monitoring guide is broken up. And they describe what these are within the core monitoring guide. One is understanding compliance versus effectiveness, or the letter C versus the letter E. And objectives and indicators, and what's the difference between objectives and indicators. So let's talk about some of that.

[\(00:15:05\)](#):

So core activity, how the core monitoring groups [inaudible 00:15:11]. They have a core activity, they have an indicator telling them what's the measurement of that core activity. And then they have what are called the four Cs, condition, cause, criteria, and corrective actions, those four Cs. And when you get your monitoring review report, you will see this is exactly how DOL, the Employment Training Administration outlines within their core monitoring report to you after they do core monitoring. If

there are any issues that they highlight, they will be organized according to this manner. The condition is, what is the specific problem or issue or violation? Violation sounds harsh, but it's basically what's the issue. What is causing the condition?

[\(00:15:59\)](#):

And sometimes that's known and not known. It may be that the cause, they may say unknown. But if they can identify the cause, they will. Criteria, what is the standard or requirement that's being used to evaluate the condition. This is really where the regulatory provision piece comes in. There'll be a lot of looking at the CFR, which is the code of federal regulations, and where in that OMB uniform guidance. Which is something you probably have all heard of, that can be slightly intimidating. But it'll probably be something within that OMB uniform guidance that they will be citing. And then what action is required? What is ETA asking you to do to fix the condition that they've identified that's out of compliance?

[\(00:16:48\)](#):

So let me give you an example, and this is actually a real life example of a grant. It was a US Department of Labor America's Promise grant that I actually served as a consortium manager for a community college that had two sub-awards. And this gives you just kind of a nice example of what it looks like. The finding was non-compliance with statement of work. I mean, that's the finding. So, A, what was the issue? No established partnership between the local workforce investment board. So this was a community college and they did not have an established partnership. The indicator, I mentioned indicators, was the indicators within the core monitoring guide they identified was partnerships and sector strategies. And then now you see the four Cs. Here's what the condition is. Per the funding opportunity announcement ... And I should add now, make sure you understand your FOA. That's another tool, including your executed grant agreement, in the grantee handbook that you need to understand. Because the allowable activities, for instance, that are outlined in that FOA are what you're allowed to do under your grant.

[\(00:17:58\)](#):

But under this particular funding opportunity announcement, which was 12-16, regional workforce partnerships were required. There were two local workforce development boards within the community colleges service region. And in the monitoring we did not have formal signed agreements, although the college was working with the two. So the cause, again here they say unknown. Criteria is the statement of work. And then also the FOA. So we weren't in compliance with our own statement of work is what they're saying here, or the FOA. And corrective action was this community college must provide a strategy of details, how it will comply with the statement of work specifically related to above reference areas. So what we had to do, frankly, was to meet this and get this finding cleared up, is we went to our two local workforce development board partners, got signed MOUs in place as to how they were contributing and helping with the project. We provided that evidence to the FPO. And this finding was closed pretty quickly. So this is an example. You can see this is exactly how monitoring works with USDOL, according to the criteria I've shown you.

[\(00:19:13\)](#):

So how to prepare, let's talk about this, because I've done a lot of work over the years on how to prepare. First of all, communicating with your FPO, make sure that you have a good relationship with your FPO. I would also say one big way to prepare for monitoring visit from the very start of your projects is your quarterly narrative reporting process. I tell everybody, don't think of those quarterly narrative reports as something, "Oh, I got to get this done by February 15th, and I don't really want to do it. And I got to just go in there and kind of throw a few things into the boxes and send it on its way and make sure I get it in on time." Think of quarterly narrative reporting as journaling. And your FPOs

will review these quarterly narrative reports. It's your opportunity to say what's working as well as what you're being challenged with. Are there places where you're having to make certain strategic decisions about how you're moving forward with your project, and what's the rationale?

(00:20:18):

It really sets up a way to journal your project over time. So by the time you get to the monitoring visit, your FPO will have a really good sense of where you're at, where some of your struggles may be, some of the decisions you've made, a number of the successes you're having, and kind of where's your project at that point. So part of the communicating with your FPO isn't just the weekly, or every other week or however often you're touching base with your FPO or emailing, but it's also using the tools, like quarterly narrative reporting, to be accurately portraying what is going on in your project.

(00:20:56):

And I would just say, don't be afraid to say if you're having an issue. Stacy, we'll talk a little bit more about this. But I'll give you one example, if I may use Stacy, that when I first started working with Stacy she was having struggle with a sub-award who wasn't performing. And basically it said, "We're not really interested in being part of this anymore." And so again, one of the things we worked with with Stacy is working with your FPO, alerting the FPO. And then being proactive about it and saying, "Here's the issue we're facing. Here's how we're going to handle it. We have another sub-award," I believe it was actually the local workforce development board, "who wants to work with us. And we're going to have a different arrangement with that local workforce board."

Stacy Cangelosi (00:21:41):

And Mason, by the way, just to support what you were saying about the quarterly report, that wasn't a surprise to our FPO because I had been putting it into the quarterly report before that, that we have been struggling and this came up. So when we were having conversations about fixing it, or a plan, he already knew it because I had been putting it into our quarterly report.

Mason Bishop (00:22:03):

Yeah, thank you, Stacy. I'm glad you brought that up. It's really important. The other thing, again, Stacy, you can speak to this one too, so feel free, which is offer to prepare the agenda for the visit. And I know again, Christine Ta, who is also here, we recommended this with her and she did a very similar thing. I think most FPOs would find they actually really welcome ... Because you got to remember, they're monitoring and responsible for a large number of grants, and if you make the FPO's life easier, then they'll be really happy with you too. So I always recommend just offer to give an overall agenda as well as recommend and arrange for the people to be interviewed. The more you can help sort of craft what the monitoring visit should look like, working with your FPO, in collaboration with your FPO, that will make your monitoring visit much more productive as well. Stacy, I don't know if you want to comment about that. I know yours was a virtual, ended up being virtual.

Stacy Cangelosi (00:23:00):

Ours was virtual. And we did have everybody prepared ... Because the other thing is, you want to make sure that ... We wanted to give our FPO a sense of the work that we're doing, which is best heard through our partners. So we wanted to make sure they had enough notice and they had it on their calendar so that the partners could be there when Trevor was there. So if you're able to set that up ahead of time, it is ... I mean, it's background work, so it's a little stressful to get everybody on the same page. But it definitely helps set the stage when the monitoring visit is happening.

Mason Bishop ([00:23:37](#)):

Yes. And then also the thing that I always say is, remember this, is the prime grantee is the focus of the review. If any of you have sub-awardees, you as the prime grantee are responsible for monitoring your sub-awardees. This is something that changed with OMB uniform guidance implementation a few years ago. But you need to be also doing the same kind of monitoring with your sub-awardees that the prime is doing, or that DOL is doing with you. Again, Stacy, you went through this as well, right? I mean, can you just touch on this real quick?

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:24:19](#)):

Yep. For some aspect of what we ended up doing was using the checklist. A lot of the documents that we needed for our monitoring applied to the partners too. So what we ended up doing was going through and saying, "Okay, we have all these documents for the partners." And then what beyond that that we needed from the partners, we generated a separate list and worked individually with each partner. So for instance, we had our mission, vision, and value statement in for our monitoring, but we needed to gather those from our partners. So we just had a separate list of the things that we needed from our partners. And we gathered those separately and have them all filed away as well.

Mason Bishop ([00:25:09](#)):

Yeah. So what Stacy did is really great. It's a great, I think, best practice, which is utilizing her own preparation for monitoring as a way to also then have a seamless way to not reinvent the wheel, but also then monitor her sub-awardees, which I think was a really great best practice that she created. So this next slide, again, how to prepare is, when it comes to your agenda, again, look at the core activities and indicators. And then I'm going to talk to you a little bit here in a second about the compliance indicators or the C. Start now developing a filing system with backup materials based on the core activities and indicators. Now, this can be either a paper file or electronic files, but you have to ... And also the filing includes your participant records as well. You have to have a clear delineation and secure storage of participant files. Stacy, I saw you nodding your head. Do you want to talk about filing and how you [inaudible 00:26:25]-

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:26:25](#)):

Yeah. So we use Dropbox, because we also have a project manager locally that we have been working with, so she was able to help us. So we use Dropbox. And as we gather ... It went right with the core monitoring guide, we had a folder with the title and anything that went in it and anything that pertained to that, we just dropped it right in the file. There were duplicates in files, but each monitoring objective had its own file and we just dropped documents into Dropbox that we could then share the invitation to view. Which, you'll probably get to this, but we shared that whole Dropbox with our FPO for the monitoring visit, so he could look through all of our documents as well. And that takes a while. So yes, start it now. That's why I was not [inaudible 00:27:22]-

Mason Bishop ([00:27:21](#)):

Yeah, start it now. Right, that's the message. I mean, your process was pretty much a six month process, wasn't it?

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:27:28](#)):

It was, but I think it could have been ... Because it was like, instead of studying for a test over the whole period of time, we crammed. So I think if we had been doing that throughout the whole grant, it would've just been something we worked on. And if you're asked later, I know it's a Q&A, but that's one thing I would highly recommend to folks, is do this as you're going through your work. This should be on every agenda that you're meeting, that you work on something with the monitoring so that you're doing it the whole way through, as opposed to just cramming it all into a small time period. That's what I wish we had done.

Mason Bishop ([00:28:09](#)):

Yeah, good. That's great. Thanks, Stacy. Use your executed grant agreement conditions, if you had any, to guide the types of questions FPO will review. I'm going to tell you right now real quick, I'm going to give you some quick tips on the kinds of things that you must need to have in place right up front. One is policies and procedures. There are certain policies and procedures you're going to want to make sure you have. And one of the mistakes I see organizations make, let me give you one example, is procurement. You need to make sure you have a grant compliant procurement policy in place. And a lot of organizations say, "Well, my organization has a policy on procurement." That may or may not be compliant with the federal grant requirements. I see this all the time, that people sort of rely on the ... My organization has some policies on this. And then they come in and get monitored and the FPO looks at the organization's policies and says, "Well, you're lacking in this particular component which you must address under the OMB uniform guidance, or that."

([00:29:14](#)):

Let me give you one simple example that every one of you should have as a core policy and procedure is, how are you evaluating whether costs are allowable and justifiable? You should make sure every single grant ... I always recommend putting a grants manual together. I know some of you've done this. I know Northeast State, if you're listening in on this session, I know they developed the grants manual. And once you develop a grants manual, it usually is good for most of your projects going forward, even non-DOL type of projects. But for sure for Department of Labor there are certain core policies and procedures you're going to want to have in place tied to your grant that you're going to want to make sure you have in place. I see that all the time, where there's findings because either it's eligibility, it's defining intake.

([00:30:10](#)):

If you have supportive services provided, what's your policies and procedures on how you're issuing those supportive services. And how you're monitoring those supportive services, whether it's some kind of transportation assistance or even gift card assistance I've seen in some grants, et cetera, et cetera. It's really important that you have those kinds of policies and procedures in place. And then also address any potential deficiencies you have prior to review. Again, it's better to be upfront about it. I see where Coretta put in here, who's an FPO, those kinds of technical assistance questions and requests can be made as part of the Q&R, can be made independently of the FBO. And actually, again, for WORC grantees can be made to Nicole Dunn as well. But be open to yourselves about, "We're really concerned, we have a deficiency here. How are we going to address this prior to your review?" I know Stacy could probably talk for hours about how she worked through some of those processes. And we work through them with her then.

([00:31:22](#)):

Okay, so this gets to the question about, do we have a tool? The answer is yes, we do have a tool. And I just pulled one page from this tool, I think it's about eight pages long. But we have actually taken the

core monitoring guide and outlined a quick sort of reference tool for how you could ... And I may need to make that bigger. Let me see if I can make that bigger. I can't really make it bigger on my screen. I apologize if the print's a little small. But you can see here I mentioned, here's core activity one, design and governance, objective 1A, planning and program design. You can see the objectives there. And then you can see the indicators under those objectives, 1A, 1-1, A2, et cetera. See how there's a C and a E after them. CE means it can be a compliance or an effectiveness thing. If it has a C only, like you'll see here, 1BD under implementation, where it says timely equipment purchases C, that means you must address that. Those compliance indicators are very critical that those are being addressed.

(00:32:34):

So you'll see here, let's take 1B5 of establishing contracts and sub-award, C. What this means is they're going to look and say, "Were your contracts and sub-awards executed? And do they have the proper conditions, et cetera?" Let me give you one example. I had a finding that I worked with, where on the sub-awards they did not include ... This is where your executed grant agreements ... If you go to your executed grant agreement, you have what are called policy requirements and other financial requirements. Those should all be part of as an appendix or something within your sub-award agreements. Because those policy and other requirements in your executed grant agreement with the ETA are the sub-awardees. Also they have to comply with those same conditions. So those should all be part of your sub-awards.

(00:33:33):

So that's the kind of thing they're going to look at. So what are the documents to be reviewed? It's going to be the FPO may say, "Hey, I want to see copies of your contracts and your sub-award agreements. And again, making sure you understand what is the difference between a sub-award and a contract. That's another whole issue we won't get into today. But we do have a checklist like this where we took the core monitoring guide and we outlined all of the activities objectives. And then what we did is we pulled together the kinds of documents you're going to want to review. Stacy, I believe we worked on this with you, didn't we, actually.

Stacy Cangelosi (00:34:12):

Mason, I have about 10 versions of this checklist. This was my holy grail for months and months and months, to make sure we had everything. The other thing we did, what we were able to do was to add columns. And we added a column, so whatever we put in Dropbox to go with that objective, we put it in that column. And then if we needed something, we had it color coded too, so if we needed something it was a different color. And once it was in there, it change ... So it was this whole big process using ... I swear by this checklist. It kept us organized. It let us know everything we needed. It helped us know what we needed from our partners. So it was actually just such a core of what we did when we were going through this process.

Mason Bishop (00:35:04):

So again, I only pulled one page of it here to give you an example, but we do have this. So we literally have taken that core monitoring guide and narrowed it down into this kind of thing where you can go through and look at the kinds of documents you feel need to be reviewed. Again, it gives you just the quick, here's what the objective is, the indicator is, the description of the indicator. And then you can look at, what are the kinds of documents that I need? We gave some initial suggestions. Again, you've heard from Stacy, she kind of modified it to meet her needs. But we do have this available for work grantees.

(00:35:46):

So now we're going to hear directly from Stacy. We've had a chance. Before, Stacy, we get into it, are there any questions that anybody has up to this point before we hear more directly from Stacy? Or if you have a question for Stacy directly, now would be a great time to ask it too, if you want to hear something from her, based on her experience. Anything? There we go. Is the complete checklist available to us? Yes, we can make it available to you. Where can we get the core monitoring guide in complete ... The full core monitoring guide, we can make that available to you too, but you can find it online. But I can work with Nicole to see how we can get the complete core monitoring guide and the checklist out to everybody who would like it. So I'll work with Nicole on that. Other questions? Thank you.

(00:36:50):

Okay, why don't we go ahead and hear from Stacy real quick. I just put up here a couple bullet points of some things that Nicole and I worked with Stacy on. Again, it was ... I'm going to use the word fun, Stacy. But probably it was more fun for us than maybe it was for you. But Stacy was really, for me as a consultant, one of the really fun kinds of projects to work on, because it's somebody who's trying to do the right thing, wants to do the right thing, has a very important mission within her grant project, but due to some things that really are no fault of hers, for instance, were having a little bit of struggles.

(00:37:32):

So we were able to meet with Stacy and help with things like letter templates and help with any modification or statement of work kinds of things, helped with monitoring preparation and those sorts of things. So I've got some questions I can ask Stacy. It looks like we have Hannah Gibbs just ask you one. Stacy, do you have any advice for helping to monitor sub-awardees who may have technology challenges or less experience with the level of detail needed for data?

Stacy Cangelosi (00:38:05):

Yeah, so I think to some extent we are providing a similar role to Mason to our sub-awardees as well. So one of ours was ... They were ready to go. They had everything, we just needed to compile it. We do have one that was a smaller agency, so didn't have the same sort of HR capabilities that we had asked for. Again, just like our monitoring was a conversation, we were having a conversation with them. We were saying, "Do you have this policy?" "No, we don't." Okay, so then do we need to develop it? And if so, where can we get templates for it? So again, I would get a template from Mason, we need a policy for whatever.

(00:38:54):

So we would help them if they didn't have it, develop the policy that was needed to go with whatever objective it was. I'm not sure if that helped or answered the question. But again, we tried to make the process for monitoring our sub-awardees just as much of a conversation as it was with us, that this was not same. We don't want our sub-awardees in trouble. We want to make sure we have everything in place. So we were there as more of a resource than as a punishment. I hope that helped.

Mason Bishop (00:39:27):

Yeah, that's great, Stacy. I think too, what I hear Stacy vouching for is the idea that what's really important for those of you who are prime awardees of DOL grants who have sub-awards, it becomes really important that you invest some time in understanding, monitoring, and requirements and these kinds of things. Because you, again, have to fulfill that role with your sub-awardees. You're in the place

of the FPO, so to speak, with your sub-awardees. That's the kind of relationship you have. So it does become important that you can be seen as a resource where you can help your sub-awardees.

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:40:05](#)):

Yeah, and let me add this too. Because a part of what Mason was saying was that when DOL wants to know we are having an issue, how are we working on it? And we had already recognized that this partner that's underperforming, we needed to do something. So what we developed with each of our partners was an action plan. And that action plan was something that we bring with every time we have a meeting with them, we have this action plan that has the things that we talk about. And while we were monitoring, we had a monitoring agenda, it was on the agenda, was the monitoring piece. So every time we were meeting with partners and looking at this action plan, monitoring was on there. Like I said, it was part of every agenda. We had a set time and space to talk about it with our partners. So that I think was key too, is making it part of everything, every meeting that we were doing and talking about.

Mason Bishop ([00:41:02](#)):

Great. Any other questions for Stacy, or for me for that matter? By the way, let me add too, because I think we've got a little bit of time, if you have any questions that you feel are burning that may not be related to monitoring you feel like, throw those in there too. We'll provide any advice we can on any other things that you may be struggling with or have questions on. I'd be more than willing to address those kinds of issues too. So Stacy, I'll be honest, some of the prepared questions we have, we've already kind of been talking about as we've gone through, so we don't need to revisit some of those. But you've already answered the first four on my list that I have here, so that's great. But let's talk about the visit itself. You had a virtual visit. How did it work out? Talk about the days leading up. And I know part of it, wasn't it originally supposed to be an in-person visit and it got changed to a virtual?

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:42:09](#)):

No, no, it was always a virtual, as far as I know, because it was during COVID. So everything was already planned to be virtual. It was supposed to be three days. So we had blocked off the three days. We knew about it enough. For the key folks that needed to know we had it blocked off in people's calendars. And then again, back to that setting the agenda. That way we were able to say ... I mean, as you all know, you can block off calendar. I had days in my executive director's calendar blocked off, but of course meetings fill up. So the other benefit to setting the agenda is that I could tailor it to what I knew was happening here. So if I knew that I wanted her to be involved in the meeting, so on the agenda, we set those times according to her schedule.

([00:42:58](#)):

So it was really helpful to have that stuff ready to go and then block off more specifically as time came up. Same with the partners. I told them the dates, but then I was able to say, "Okay, on the second day, we want to have all the partners gather to answer questions." It was always supposed to be virtual. The problem was my RFPO got sick at the last minute, so it ended up being a shortened version of the visit. And I will say this, I'm not presuming to speak on any FPO's behalf, but I believe, and if Trevor's on the call he can support me, but I believe that the work, the upfront work that we did in organizing all those files and putting everything in Dropbox according to monitoring guide, I hope that it made his job easier so that he could sort of ... And everything was laid out, he could see everything that he needed to see. And if questions came, we were obviously willing to answer those.

([00:44:04](#)):

But the more you can have things organized and ready for your FPO to look at it, like Mason said, it makes their jobs a lot easier. So even though my poor FPO was ill, I hope that our work did help in some way to make that process easier for him as well. The actual visit itself was more abbreviated than we had anticipated, but obviously that was okay with us. But I think we left time for questions and we gave him enough information that he could get what he needed from the information that we gave him.

(00:44:42):

And I will also say this as far as the opportunity for education, that really was the case here as well. Trevor gave us some really great resources. Because of course, like we said, there were things that we were struggling with. There were things that we didn't know we needed. And Trevor was able to send us to some really great websites and give us some information to help on some of the things that we were struggling with. So it really was nice to have that time with him to hear responses to things that we were struggling with. It was definitely not adversarial. It was really nice to have the part to see, that it really is a partnership and know that he's just as invested as we are. So those are probably the big things that came out of that visit for us, was the resources and the conversations with Trevor.

Mason Bishop (00:45:39):

Great. And then Stacy, let me ask you this, going into the monitoring visit, we were talking about acknowledge some of your ... Or maybe it's even much before the actual monitoring visit. In the few months that you worked on this, what were some of the areas where you had to spend some specific focus? What were some of your, I'll call them weaknesses for lack of a better word, or gaps that you had to address in preparation for your monitoring visit? What are some examples that you could [inaudible 00:46:12]-

Stacy Cangelosi (00:46:13):

Like you said, the biggest section was the ... It wasn't a gap, but the financial stuff, gathering all of the financial stuff that was asked for was something we hadn't done. As a project, we had already developed policies and procedures. We had forms, we had marketing materials, we had eligibility stuff. Some of that stuff, like that stuff was easy. We just slotted that right in. But some of the other stuff, it took a little bit of work to gather the stuff that we needed. And from the partners as well, right? So some of their stuff. But the financial piece was probably the biggest, because that's not ... I'm not saying that's not something we ... We obviously do the financial piece, but for us, and at least for me, mostly what we're focused on is outcomes and services and making sure clients are getting what they need. The financial piece comes up every once in a while, but it wasn't something we were spending a lot of time on regularly talking about.

(00:47:20):

So I think that was a section that was a bit more work intensive. And again, where we had the finding was our outcomes, that we were behind on outcomes. But we knew that. And as I said, we had already started plans. We had already had conversations. So when I met with our FPO I was able to say, "We know this and this is already what we're doing. We have an action plan. We're talking to our partners about these things, about what they can do." We had questions. OJT grants are one of the things that one of our partners does. And we talked through that process. When the grant was written, things changed. So how much flexibility did we have to change things? So those conversations we had already started having before the visit. So I think anticipating that that was going to be one of the findings was I think key for us to be able to prepare for it.

Mason Bishop ([00:48:23](#)):

Yeah. And let me mention for those, especially the newer grantees, if your outcome ... The thing to always remember about grants in particular, I always try to remind everybody, is activities lead to deliverables or outputs, in a logic model, lead to outcomes. And so if you're lacking outcomes it typically means that there's a problem somewhere in that activities to deliverables chain. So one of the things, again, when I hear Stacy hearkening back to the work we did is, she had a lack of outcomes, but it was because there were some other things that were going on that caused that lack of outcomes. For instance, maybe a sub-awardee's performance, for instance, or something to that effect. So there were those kinds of steps that she had to take in fixing, so to speak, some of those issues to then proactively be able to say to the FPO, "Here's why we're lacking outcomes," as she said. "And here's the corrective actions we've already taken. We're not waiting for you to tell us what corrective action we're taking. We've already taken it."

([00:49:36](#)):

And that to me I think is a really important message when it comes to monitoring it. The other thing, so on some of the financial things, let me touch on some of those, Stacy. And if you could add to this too. Things like, are you keeping consistent time and effort reporting? And having that that you could show the FPO. One thing I always tell everybody, I'm going to tell all of you who are new grantees and new project managers, tracking your grants' expenditures and working with your accounting department is critical. In my opinion, it is not the accounting department's role to ... They're going to do the accounting, they're going to do the invoice processing, all of that. But you need to be partners with whoever does your accounting within your organization to review invoices as a project manager to make sure those are allowable and that they're meeting that thing before they go to the accounting department or issued for payment.

([00:50:41](#)):

Whether it's an Excel spreadsheet ... I have my own tools I've created and used when I've helped manage projects. But you need to be tracking expenditures. And what I mean by that is, you need to have the direct cost personnel, fringe, travel supplies, et cetera, et cetera. And when those kinds of costs are coming in, you need to align those costs so that you know at any point in time ... I've worked on grants where the accountant I worked with ... And I was external to the organization. The accountant and I had exactly to the penny, when she submitted her quarterly 9130, I had to the penny those costs in my expenditure spreadsheet. So I knew exactly where those costs were. And by the way, when we got to closeout, it makes closeout easy as a snap. I mean, when you go to closeout because you have that all done. So these are the kinds of financial things and tools that you need to be doing along. Stacy, are there any other ones in particular when you said took some time that you would recommend that [inaudible 00:51:44] pay attention?

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:51:47](#)):

So same, we actually have a separate program manager, consultant, whatever, that is key to this process too. She's going through each invoice. She's checking to make sure stuff is what it says it's supposed to be. We're checking it with our finance director here, who's also going back and checking things. And again, that was sort of built into how we did it. So I also can say, and I think I alluded to it earlier, is anything you can build in from the beginning is going to be much better than doing it after the fact. So that was actually going on be when I came on. They had already set that up. So if you can build that into your processes, again, making that part of things that you're doing all the time, then I think it'll be easier. But I can't think of anything more specific than that.

Mason Bishop ([00:52:45](#)):

Okay. No, that's fine. We have a couple questions for you, Stacy, in the chat. One is, did you have sub-recipient grantees join the monitoring visit?

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:52:57](#)):

We wanted to, and we had them all lined up. It was tough, but I ... And I can't say enough, I have to shout out to Christine Ta, who I think I saw on here, who was a huge help to us as well. It was either her or you, Mason, who suggested having a participant. And we were able to get a participant on board. But it ended up the timing didn't work for our FPO. So we had them ready to go. We had been preparing them for months, we had them ready to go. We had a time scheduled. I think it would've been great. But because Trevor was sick that didn't work out. But I do highly recommend that.

Mason Bishop ([00:53:38](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. Let me emphasize that we do recommend having a participant or two or three prepared to ... When we were talking about building out that agenda, put some time in that agenda for whether it's a current student, a participant, somebody who's exited and is working as a result of your program or project, those kinds of participants. And if you can actually line up two or three different kinds of people who are situated differently in their life situation or their community, or maybe they're training on a couple of different things. Somebody may be a healthcare participant, somebody may be a manufacturing participant, for instance. But having those kinds of participants be lined up for the FPO. And that gets to part of that agenda development piece. So Stacy, I guess in summation, one final question is, what advice would you have for a grantee who's never been through ETA monitoring before? You've actually been giving some good advice all along, but I'll just go ahead and maybe summarize this.

Stacy Cangelosi ([00:54:44](#)):

So again, one of the things that I wish we had done, as I said, was this is something we should have been doing when we got the grant. So if you are just starting out and you have this luxury, I would make sure that, like I said, it's on every meeting agenda, somebody's looking at it, somebody's talking about it. You're taking your time to do what you need according to all those, the checklist. We did it and it went well, but certainly would have been better, like I said ... I mean, not many of us have hours to spend on this. We technically didn't have hours to spend on this either. We made time to do it. But if we had been able to spread it out over the first half of the grant, I think it would've been smooth sailing .

([00:55:37](#)):

We wouldn't have had to do the intense meetings that we had. That's not to say they weren't helpful, they were extremely helpful. But like I said, if I had been able to spread it out over time, that would've been ideal. So again, anything you can do to start ... It may seem weird, and I would even say the same with closeout, right? We're already now starting to think about it, because we knew how the monitoring went we want to be prepared for closeout too. So anything that you can do to spread it out, to get ready for it as you go. And I'll say this, a lot of us do this work for the clients, for the services, to help people. And DOL has the same intent, but their focus is a bit different. So it is trickier to deal with this piece of it. As we just want to be spending our time helping people and doing all the things for people.

([00:56:35](#)):

But you have to recognize that this is helping too, and really pay it due attention to be able to do what you're doing, as opposed to scrambling and then having to go back and say, "Oh, this isn't working." And

certainly there's going to be issues. I saw somebody was saying about being behind in outcomes. We have issues with outcomes. Just because we did okay on our monitoring visit doesn't mean we are doing ... We're still having issues with outcomes. But the monitoring actually allowed us to talk further to our partners and figure out what really is going on. And be able to say that to DOL too. We had COVID. I'm not saying that was a blanket excuse, but we had COVID and that had its own set of challenges. But even beyond that folks ... So then we had the end of COVID when nobody was wanting to work. So then that was the next, "Okay, now this is what's happening with our outcome."

(00:57:32):

So there's constantly going to be things that you're dealing with. But again, keeping your FPO up to speed on all that. I know I've gotten some really great advice and help from the FPO and from Nicole. So use it as a tool to help better your work, is what I would say, instead of just something that sort of has ... It does. And there is that ... I'm not saying it's not that, but it really helped us on our other objectives, if that makes sense?

Mason Bishop (00:58:03):

Yeah, it does. I would also say one thing this process helps you with too are things like no-cost extensions.

Stacy Cangelosi (00:58:12):

Yes.

Mason Bishop (00:58:13):

Because what DOL won't do is, you say, "Oh, I've got some money, extra money, I need another year." That doesn't fly, right? They need a rationale and justification, particularly tied to outcomes, as to why you need more time to finish up your grant project. So the fact that you're going through this kind of process and putting the documentation together and the journaling through the Q&R process and all that provide you then with the means to say, "Look, we are going to improve on our outcomes and here's why. Because we've implemented A, B, and C. And by some additional time we believe that A, B, and C, you're going to see the impact of that on outcomes if we get some more time with our grant as well." So it has that kind of corollary sort of effect to being able to do that.

(00:59:05):

So real quick, last slide. We could have more discussion. I just wanted to also put up here, my company's WorkED Consulting. I'm also going to be launching in the Grants Clearinghouse. I think it's pretty excited. I won't get into a lot of details here because I don't want to turn this into any kind of ... Interpret it as a sales call or anything. Because I don't want it to be. But if you do need assistance, there are resources. There's Nicole, obviously, who is a technical assistance resource for WORC grantees. And I work with Nicole. I'm going to put my email in the chat as well. And in fact, I mentioned right now we have a little bit of time, if anybody has any questions, whether you feel they're related to monitoring or just general technical assistance, we've got a few minutes if anybody would like to ask a burning question or if we can be of help.

(01:00:11):

Cops I've personally, I'm just going to tell you real quickly, professionally decided about a year ago now, I was dealing with another situation where I just felt like I've seen too many grantees struggle with these projects. And kind of getting to Stacy's point, as you're struggling with your project, what that means is that the employers and workers and job seekers and others who need the assistance may not be getting

the level of assistance they need because you're struggling. And it just really started to bother me a lot actually. So that's why I'm launching this Grants Clearinghouse concept. Because from pre-award, through grant compliance and everything in between, want to be able to offer continuum of services to people to be able to help them really manage their projects effectively. So is there anything, any financial questions, any ... I know there's other things going on tomorrow, but just wanted to provide the opportunity if anybody wants to take it. Going once, going twice.

[\(01:01:19\)](#):

Okay. Well, I guess everybody's ready to move on with their afternoon. Thanks, Liz, that's really sweet of you to say that. Nicole asked me to give a public service announcement before you all hang up. Thank you to everybody for today. Reminder, Arc region grantees 10:30 tomorrow morning for walkthrough of the Higher Logic Community of Practice. So 10:30. You're done for today. Reconvene at 10:30 tomorrow morning for the Higher Logic Community of Practice. Great. Thanks everybody. And anything we can do, let us know. We'll be in touch. Thank you. Have a great afternoon.

Day 2, Session 1: Onboarding for the WORC Community of Practice Platform (Higher Logic)

Kinsey Walker ([00:02](#)):

Good morning, everyone. I hope you can hear me all right. Got the headphones in and getting started a little earlier today, so thanks for your patience as we wait for folks to sign on. I'm really excited to be with Nicole this morning for day two because we're jumping into our community of practice/communication tool in Higher Logic. This is the first time we've had a space for all rounds of WORC grantees to be able to work with each other, share their lessons learned.

([00:29](#)):

If you get lost in WorkforceGPS and you need to find a friend to get you to the resource that you need, or if you just get lost in requesting a change for your project, you want to kind of know more about some things other folks have experienced with wraparound services, anything and everything you would need to ask another grantee that's been through it or other grantees in your cohort of WORC four or rounds one through three, all of that can be done here. I know we're all in different parts of Appalachia, but this gives us a place where we can communicate together that we just couldn't facilitate in person. I'm really excited to roll that out for this year with Nicole.

([01:05](#)):

This is a trial, so we are working on it. If you see things that you really like, let us know. If you see things as you're moving through Higher Logic with your communication with other grantees that is really challenging, let us know. Or if this just flat out doesn't work for you, also let us know. We're in this space with you and we're just trying to do the best we can to create a space for y'all to communicate with each other. That's not to say that this is the end-all, be-all to that solution, but we're excited to work through this for the first time with y'all this year and get your feedback and change and pivot as best we can to really give y'all the tool that you need to communicate with each other.

([01:42](#)):

I'm happy to have my partner in crime with me in this Higher Logic journey so we can also respond to your questions. If you have questions about ARC funding opportunities that maybe aren't related to work, or maybe they are, similar to a Power Workforce project, you can reach out to me there. Any and all the WORC questions, Nicole is probably your go-to on that, so she'll be filtering most of those communications and questions between the two of us, but you can also communicate with us there. Without holding y'all up any longer, I'm going to pass it off to Nicole so she can walk through the homepage. That's what you can see to the left or the right, depending on how you're looking at it of us. That is the homepage to our Higher Logic community. She'll tell you about how to get started.

Nicole Dunn ([02:25](#)):

All right. Thanks, Kinsey. Well, welcome, everybody. Really glad to be here with you today and looking forward to the rest of the day together. Just a couple of points of clarification. If you are from rounds one through three and you sat in on our demo last year, you're very welcome to sit in again. This is the same demo from the fall. We wanted to make sure that round four grantees and anyone else who didn't have a chance to go through this last fall could go through it again today, so this is a repeat session for those of you who've been through, but if you'd like the refresher, glad to have you. Then at 10:30, we'll be starting our next session.

([02:57](#)):

As Kinsey mentioned, we established this site as a place to primarily share resources and to start discussions. Prior to this, do a little history, in the first round, we had 10 grantees. It was very manageable to do most things by email. Starting in the second round, we got to about 23, and it started to get to the point where it was like, "Okay, we're disseminating information." Keeping a contact list updated and an Excel sheet on our hard drive didn't make sense anymore, so over the course of the last few years, we've evolved into using this communication platform.

[\(03:31\)](#):

As Kinsey said, we're really just getting going with it now. We introduced it to the round one through three grantees last fall, as I said, but it's really been kind of a static resource since then. But we're hoping with the addition of round four that we'll have this take off and have this really be a place for you to have resources and information and ask questions if you need them, so yes, without further ado, let me jump into the actual site.

[\(03:54\)](#):

I pasted the link in the chat. If you go to that link, if you've not registered before, it will take you to this homepage. This is the ARC community broadly because it does have a couple of different pages. We're obviously interested in the WORC page here. You would go up here to sign in. Then I have an account already, so it has populated it here. But if you are a new user, if you do not have... Higher Logic, you're going to hear us use that. That's the backend name of this platform. The WORC hub community is what the community is called. Higher Logic is the backend. We use those interchangeably. We try not to, but we do.

[\(04:32\)](#):

You would go into new user, register now. Then you would fill in this information here. Your email address, probably use your organization for your grantee, first name, last name, your organization name, where you're located, your county, your state. This one is really important, the special interest groups dropdown. As you can see, ARC uses, like I said, they use Higher Logic for a few different groups. You want to choose the WORC group. If you don't choose this dropdown, you won't be added specifically to the WORC group, and so you won't be able to access the same resources, you won't get the same alerts, things like that, so you want to go into WORC, add your organization, add your job title. I know that's double, but you're going to do it in both places. Organization name as well as organization down here, job title, create a password, and hit Create Account. Because I already have an account, I'm just going to go ahead and sign in.

[\(05:24\)](#):

I have a little bit of a different view because I'm an admin, so I'm going to go ahead and impersonate a member so you'll see what you see. Here on the homepage, this is going to be the main thing that you see, so you'll see an Explorer button, a Connect button. Down here, you'll see some upcoming events. You'll see quick links and then announcements lists, we have them, that sort of thing.

[\(05:45\)](#):

The biggest thing, let me expand this. Oh, sorry. I meant to go to the WORC community. Give me one quick second. It took me to the main ARC page and not the actual WORC hub page. Okay, this is what I was planning on you seeing. Same kind of buttons here, so you'll see it's a similar platform no matter which page you're on, but the explorer, connect, engage, the upcoming events. This is what I was planning to see. The recent discussions, this is where we've posted some questions.

[\(06:14\)](#):

Like I said, we're very early in getting started, so this content will build as we go. The latest resources, this is our resource library. This we have built out, so we combed the last at this point when we built it, three and a half years of content, things we had been asked for from grantees that we had found through WorkforceGPS and DOL resources, some templates and things that other grantees had shared that they said, "Sure, it's fine to go ahead and share that with others." Some tools, I know the checklist for example, that if you sat in on Mason's presentation yesterday afternoon, he mentioned that checklist, that's in the library. Again, the two main functions for this site are to have discussions and to go to the resource library.

[\(06:54\)](#):

The easiest place to find that is up here on the bar. If you go to resource library, there are a couple different views here. I like the folder view personally because we did organize this in folders to try to make it a little bit easier for you to navigate, so if you click on this little button, you'll see the folders, and over here, you can see that we have organized it into these sub-folders, again just to help you with navigation if you think you're looking for a resource.

[\(07:18\)](#):

I will also say here, while there is search functionality, and we have done our best to do keywords, we've tried to title things so that you can find them easily, we've done tags so you can find them easily, if you're not sure, if something is in here and you don't feel like searching for it, just contact me. I'm happy to point you to it or email it to you. We do obviously want to make this a place if you want to go through it yourself or find resources on your own. That's one of the main goals of having this here, so I'm not the gatekeeper of resources, but I'm also happy to be the navigator of resources for you if you're not sure if something's there, you don't know where to find it.

[\(07:52\)](#):

You can see under each of these folders then there are various things and we've started the title of the posts with what it is. Is it a DOL resource? Is it a TA workshop? These sessions that we were going through yesterday and today, they will be uploaded eventually under TA workshop. This was from last year. Budget management for program managers was a session from last year's convening, so it's in there. We have something on modifications, so the modifications tool from DOL, no-cost extension modification. We have some information on monitoring. We have some details about... In an SUD session from two years ago, one of the grantees shared release of HIPAA information because they were working with employers who were also working with individuals with substance use disorder and so they had created this authorization for a release of information and had been willing to share it, so that's here.

[\(08:48\)](#):

Again, as you'll see, this is we dug deep over the last few years to try to put as much as possible in here. You can see TA templates, TA examples. Again, DOL trainings, DOL resources. One thing I will say, on the DOL trainings and resources, we've pulled in here the things we get asked for the most often. WorkforceGPS is still an excellent resource for you. They'll have the most up-to-date information that they've posted, the most recent trainings, things like that. I've put a little bit of an asterisk here by DOL resource. We try to keep these as current as possible. It's not possible for... We don't have a direct link to WorkforceGPS, obviously, so we don't get the same sort of automatic updates. This would be a good place to start, but when it comes to DOL trainings and resources, WorkforceGPS is still a really, really good site to go to make sure you have the most recent.

[\(09:38\)](#):

We have some information on reporting, sub-recipients, an all else folder, which I'm proud to say is empty right now. We were able to categorize everything. Then we do have the round one through four FOAs. I know we mentioned yesterday that the FOA is... Well, in addition to your grantee handbook and your scope of work, it's your bible to double-check on eligibility and things like that, so if you ever can't find your FOA, it is on this site, too.

[\(10:05\)](#):

That's the resource library. Again, as I mentioned here, you could do something like if you type "resource" in the search library, it's going to pull up, okay, nothing. Nothing. My search is really strong here. Let's try "participant," see if that pulls up anything. Okay, still nothing. Ignore my demo. It's supposed to do it. We'll look at why it's not doing that. But in theory, you're going to be able to search the library for things like keywords, find what you can. In the meantime, this folder view, which again you get through by clicking on the folder there. Otherwise, you'll get the little cards, whatever they're called.

[\(10:43\)](#):

Okay, so the next place is discussions. This is a little bit thin at the moment, but we do plan to add to these. We have a welcome message here and then we had gotten a question about PMs drawdowns. We had asked out there, "Is there peer support for those? Anyone has experience doing that and will be willing to share?" We actually got no replies to that one, so our goal is for slightly stronger engagement in the future. But this is where if you have a question, "Hey, does anybody ...?" I know yesterday, for example, on the round four performance reporting, someone asked about management information systems, or CRMs, customer management systems, and DOL was not willing to give names and vendors out. Understandably so. They don't ever want to be seen as preferring a vendor or recommending a vendor.

[\(11:27\)](#):

But this is a place where if you want to ask your fellow grantees, "Hey, what system do you use? Or what's been your experience with this system?" Or something like that, this would be a good place to do that. You'll see this button here for Post New Message. It's going to go to the WORC community. You won't want to cross-post it to anywhere else. That would be if you have, let's say, in theory, we could cross-post it to the Inspire community, but we don't want to do that here. You just add a subject line, so I'll say, "Test message." Or you know what? I'll say, "CRM software." This message, "Does anyone have experience with various CRMs for performance reporting? Any vendors you'd recommend?" You can either schedule it later if you want, or you can post it.

[\(12:15\)](#):

Again, if you don't feel comfortable doing this yourself for whatever reason, although I would encourage you to do so, you can contact me, and I'm happy to post it on your behalf, but you would go in and post. Then that will show up here in the messages. It's also then going to show up, it should show up on our homepage under recent discussions. Again, if you log into this periodically, then you can see what's here, what people have been talking about or asking about. We will be sharing some resources through that discussion thread periodically, just whitepapers that we find that might be relevant to training, or wraparound services, or employer engagement, just various topics like that. But primarily, like I said, this is a place for if you have questions, it's a good way to be able to reach the entire ARC WORC community without having to, like I said, keep a contact list yourself or figure out who to reach out to. You can go that way.

[\(13:12\)](#):

There is, however, a member directory, so if you talk to somebody, for example in this convening, you've been exchanging messages and you want to figure out how to get ahold of them, we do have those profiles here. Like Liz, for example, I'm going to pick on you since I see you. You can see that she's from McDowell Technical Community College. Where is she county-wise? Where is she state-wise? Then you should be able to search for members, too, back in that member directory. You can search for names, you can search for organizations, you can search for email.

[\(13:46\)](#):

The participate is really the same thing. These are the two functions that I've been showing you, either post a message or share a file. I will say, process-wise for share a file since we're still early, our preference I think is if you do have a resource you want to share, if you develop something, any kind of template, any kind of other form or resource that you think would be valuable to others, if you'd send it to me, then I can make sure that the naming convention and the folder structure and all of that just is maintained in an organized way. We welcome everyone to participate in the posting a message, participating in discussions, but in terms of sharing files and resources at this stage, our flow is still for them to go through me just so we can keep that pretty organized.

[\(14:27\)](#):

The other thing to be aware of in this system is settings, so you're going to want to go into things like, let's see, email notifications, for example. I have a Daily Digest because I don't want 500 emails. I mean, we are planning to post 500 things, but if you have it in real-time, then you're going to be getting everything as it posts, so every resource that I post, or every message, or reply that someone posts, you're going to get in real-time, which is a lot.

[\(14:54\)](#):

There's this middle option, which is to get a Daily Digest. My guess is there will not be a daily email from WORC. Like I said, we're planning to use this, we want to use this as a strong resource, but we also don't want to inundate you with information that's not necessary, so if you choose Daily Digest, I do not think you're going to actually get a daily email. You'll only get as things if something changed that day, if something was posted, or a resource was added, you're going to see that. There is the option to get no email, but you will not get notifications that way, so I would recommend that you stick with Daily Digest there. Yeah, those are the big things.

[\(15:31\)](#):

Then in your profile, you can also add a picture here if you want. You can add all this information. You can change if you change a job title, if you change the county that you're in, anything like that, you can change here pretty easy. You can add social links if you want. I have my LinkedIn here. That's not a bad one, but I know people like to connect through LinkedIn, so if you're comfortable sharing your LinkedIn, you can add that there by these dropdowns here. Link to your profile on LinkedIn or wherever else you care to add in.

[\(16:02\)](#):

You can see then the contacts that you have. I have everyone as a contact, but you can also connect directly to people. Everyone is in that member directory for WORC, but there's also this option to connect directly with people, and I think in that case you can send direct messages to people if you do that way. You can also just find their email address and connect with them through email if you prefer. Like I said, you can send messages then, so if you're connected to people, so I got a message here from Chris, he had requested to add me as a contact, and so then now Chris and I can exchange direct messages.

[\(16:39\)](#):

You can also hear, you can change your email preferences in this place. Same thing. We want to get community emails. Do you want to get participation emails? Do you want to get promotional emails? No is probably the answer there. Yeah, those were the big things. Like I said, we're trying to keep it simple. We're trying to keep it to be as functional as possible without adding a bunch of additional work to you all to have to read things or review things. Trying to keep participation to a minimum. We know people are really busy.

[\(17:09\)](#):

I'm just going to stop there and see are there any questions about registering about the purpose, about the use of the system? I see none on the side. All right, so what we would ask you to do is very, very strongly request, we can't require you to do anything, but we would strongly request that at least one person per grant team signs up for this system. For a little while, we're still going to communicate with you through email just like we did for this convening 'cause we want to make sure no one's missing vital information, so we're going to post events on here. We will still distribute those through email, but knowing that you have staff turnover, you might want to add additional people to this site.

[\(17:54\)](#):

There's no restrictions. You can add partners if you think that there are some really key partners who are going to find value in these resources and this information. It's a closed group in the sense that it's closed to ARC's WORC grantees and projects, but we are making it open to any staff member on your grant or any partner who again, you think would be, if you have a really strong sub-recipient, for example, that's doing a lot of the work, and you want to make sure that they're receiving this information, are able to participate and ask questions, you're welcome to do that.

[\(18:28\)](#):

As part of the follow-up for this convening, we'll send out that link again where you can go, and if you go to that worchub.arc.gov/home, you click on the Sign In button and then add your account and you should be automatically added to the WORC hub and should start receiving this information. But like I said, for a little while, as we have other webinars and things like that, we will still send things through email just to make sure no one is missing anything.

[\(18:55\)](#):

All right, well, Kinsey and I will be around all day. As I mentioned, the next session starts in about eight minutes, so you're welcome to hang out in the networking rooms for a little bit. We'll get going probably right around 10:30, maybe a minute or two later knowing that some people would've skipped the session if they already were part of this last year. I'm going to pause there and we will see you at 10:30.

Day 2, Session 2: Policies & Procedures Checklist

Nicole ([00:00](#)):

Well, good morning everyone. Welcome back to those of you who joined us for the Higher Logic Demo. And welcome, for anyone who this is their first session of the day. We are really glad to be back with you today and excited to share some riveting information about policies and procedures, we know incredibly important information we try to make as not dry as possible but knowing that this is a really important compliance piece.

([00:23](#)):

Today, we're going to go through the Fundamentals of Policies and Procedures. We drew this information almost completely from the Department of Labor ETA, policies and Procedures resource. And we did that on purpose knowing that following what they're telling you is going to be more important than following what we tell you. So we've adapted some things from other places, but primarily, we've taken it from this site here, which give me just a second, I will drop this in the chat as a resource, that way, you can also see this information for yourself.

([00:55](#)):

And if you were on the last Higher Logic Demo, you will see these Policies and procedures information is part of the library, so you can either find it on Workforce GPS, or you can go into Higher Logic and you'll find that information there too. I did not cite every slide because that was going to get tedious, but just know this is my blanket credit to Department of Labor for their information that we're passing along to you today.

([01:19](#)):

Policies and procedures, I think people probably recognize this is important, but just worth saying, it does foster a strong control environment and ensures effective operations. So compliance obviously extremely important, nobody wants to have funds clogged back or worse, but they're also important because they help you do your jobs better. Ideally, they're a communication tool, they help set expectations, they help make sure that things are flowing consistently and they're flowing the way that you want them to.

([01:49](#)):

You are responsible for efficient and effective administration of your award. As a federal grantee, you have agreed you will implement sound management practices and that you will stay in compliance with program objectives and terms and conditions. And so this is something that when you sign your grant agreement, you are committing that you're going to do this, so it's important that you have these in place. But I think one of the trickiest parts is that, there is information about what you have to have, but there's a lot of latitude intentionally to make it applicable to your own combination of staff, facilities, and experience. So if you don't have some of these policies in place, unfortunately there isn't a single template to say, this is the thing, just fill in these blanks, it really is going to have to be uniquely adapted to your situation. But we will share some of the resources where you can find some of the basics.

([02:40](#)):

What is a policy? What is a procedure? Sometimes these things are used interchangeably, but they really are two separate things. A policy is really a guideline that regulates organizational activities. It's the what, it's the why, it's the guiding document that tells you what are you making, the thing about, and why are you doing it and what are the fundamentals of that, what are the rules? The procedure then is your description of how you implement those rules. So procedures are going to change more

often, most likely than the policies themselves, although you want to keep both of them obviously up to date and live for your organization.

[\(03:17\)](#):

Typically, though not always, policies are approved by your governing board or president or executive director in some cases. Usually, that's outlawed in the governing documents of your organization who has the authority to create a policy and or modify a policy. Procedures often are approved at more of a management or supervisory level. Typically, they're going to be reviewed and probably signed off on possibly by the executive director depending on the size of your organization. If it's a very large organization, a procedure might be further down the chain. If it's a small organization, it might be the executive director who's developing it and approving it. Again, your governing documents for your organization should be outlining who has the authority to create a policy, to modify a policy, to create a procedure, to modify a procedure.

[\(04:05\)](#):

The guiding principles of what makes a good policy and procedure are four Cs. We love the easy to remember things, so a policy that is compliant, complies with rules and regulations. It is clear, so is it precise, is it easy to understand, is it unambiguous, is it complete? Does it actually tell you the information that you need to have in there? Are there unanswered questions or gaping holes, and then is it current? Does it continue to apply? So you want to make sure the environment changes, you are necessarily going to have to change your policies and procedures, and that's okay.

[\(04:42\)](#):

An example of a difference between the two, not that this matters that much, it matters more that you have them, but just to keep them to separate how you might think about it. A policy for procurement, a policy might include the rules for having a competitive bid dollar threshold. The types of things you have to have in a big package, the bonus, the principles that you might apply to give bonuses for diverse business inclusion. Do you give a point bonus or do you have goals for that? Is there a Q and A period that has to be allowed in the procurement process? Do you always conduct a vendor risk assessment like that, you have to do that, would be in your policy.

[\(05:20\)](#):

The procedure itself then might include the steps for, how would you go about developing a statement of work? If you are the grant manager here for this part or project manager for your grant, you need to procure something. How do you develop a statement of work? How does that statement of work get approved? What are the steps for that? How do you advertise a bid? What's required to do? It might be in the policy, how you actually do it in the different places you might advertise or the different methods that you use to do that might be in there. What's the process for responding to vendor questions? Who does it? How quickly would you turn it around? In what format? Things like that. How do you actually go through the steps for contract negotiation and approval? Who has the authority to do that? Does it go through successive levels of approval? Things like that.

[\(06:04\)](#):

Again, you'll see that's why there isn't a single template because your organization is going to have to define those things and those steps for yourself based on how many staff members you have, the types of levels you have, your governance structure, things like that will be specific to your organization.

[\(06:22\)](#):

The steps for developing a policy. Later on in this presentation, we're going to talk about the recommended policy list. So one of the good things to do is just do a policy audit. Compare the

recommended policy list against your existing policies. You could also look at your vision, your mission, your values, how do they align with your policies? If for example, one of your values is diversity, do you have a diverse business part of your procurement policy? Things like that. You can check and review against your other policies and procedures and see if you are identifying, maybe you don't have a policy with the title that matches in the checklist, but maybe the content is there in another policy. So do you need one, is there an existing one? Do you need to revise it?

[\(07:06\)](#):

The second then is, you want to pull up the code of federal regulations, 2 CFR 200 if you like to read policy, it's a doozy, but it is really valuable, it includes detailed information about what needs to be included. And we'll have some citations again later in this presentation of where you find that. You have 2 CFR 200 for these different required policies and procedures, so you want to identify the things that must be included at minimum, and then you want to write the rules for what is allowable and not allowable within your organization with those as the fundamentals. But then on top of that, what is it that you as an organization want to allow or not allow as part of this policy?

[\(07:43\)](#):

At this stage, again, remember this is the what and not the how. So you want to consider who else might need to be involved in the writing of this policy. Your leadership team, there might also be specific people in your organization with relevant experience. Maybe they've lived this organically in your organization, and so you want to get them in there to talk about what should be a part of the policy.

[\(08:09\)](#):

Depending on the policy and the scale of the change, is this a brand new really big thing or is this really just a documentation of what you've already have been doing? You may want to develop your procedures in conjunction with your policies in part because they actually may end up informing each other. You may think that you want to rule for something, but when you think about how you actually implement it, maybe actually maybe it's not feasible. And if that rule isn't a required part of 2 CFR, you may need to adjust it. It's one of those things where it's linear on this slide, but it's not really linear in reality because those things tend to be developed in conjunction with each other.

[\(08:48\)](#):

I already talked about this, the approval process may vary by organization. You should have a policy for this if you don't have a policy already in your governing documents about developing policies and a naval gazing policy, if you will, that is something you should have. Your board should probably be involved in that process and just make sure that that exists.

[\(09:05\)](#):

For number five, with communication, I mentioned at the beginning, one of the things policies and procedures really can do in reality beyond just being compliant is, it communicates the values of the organization, the rules and the boundaries as well as how you want things done. And so if you haven't documented it, how are staff to know what's to be done? So communication should happen proactively, it should not just be, we developed this handbook and then it's available on the internet, that's a good way to make sure that it lives as a legacy document. But there should be training, you should make sure you're communicating and promoting, especially if it's new. In some organizations, they do annual sign-offs on certain high priority policies, so that's not a bad idea.

[\(09:49\)](#):

Number six here, implement with support. This means ensuring consistent application, which also means there's someone available to answer questions. So if an employee doesn't understand what the

process actually is supposed to be or they have questions, maybe there is a gap in the policy that if you were a part of writing it, you knew what you meant, but in implementation terms, there is some confusion, it would be a good idea to have a point of contact for that policy. So make sure that it is also aligning with how work typically gets done. And then that leads into number seven, which is that review process.

(10:23):

You're going to write a policy and procedures with the best of intentions. And if you're finding that in reality, actually if people are skirting the policy, maybe that's an issue, but maybe it's an indication that the policy or procedure isn't practical for your organization or needs to be modified or needs to be clear, things like that, so these are living documents and that's okay. One of the practices here when you develop policy is, it is good to build in some flexibility, I know I just said to be clear, but also it's a good idea unless you really mean only or always. Those are strong words, if you're saying you only can do this one way or you always must do it this way, that doesn't really leave a lot of room for exceptions. And so if that's really what you mean, that's okay, but just pay attention to those words.

(11:12):

Also, pay attention to things like will or must versus may. Again, you may mean that, you really may mean will or must, and that's okay, but just pay attention to those little words, things like those all-inclusive lists. It's a good idea sometimes, especially in procedures, such as and then list things, that way you are giving yourself a little bit of flexibility. There are almost always going to be exceptions that need to be made to policies, and so thinking about what are the processes and procedures even for exceptions to policy can be a really powerful thing to consider in the development of these.

(11:50):

A policy component, as you're writing it, like I said, unfortunately there is no single template for this, but you will want to include these things, you'll want to have a title. The rationale or purpose or summary, this can be a sentence, it just explains, what is this policy about? Why do we have this policy? The scope and coverage, who is affected and who is exempt from the policy? When is it effective? Which office or department is responsible for maintaining and enforcing this policy? The policy statements, that's your main, that's the body so what is the policy, the actual content of it that goes there? It is a good idea to have some definitions, you don't have to overthink it necessarily, but if there are any questions about what a specific ...

(12:35):

For example, we've seen policies around participant eligibility. What is a participant? That seems obvious, but that's something that does have to be defined because participant might be different. If you're writing a policy for your specific work grant, a participant means one thing in that context and might mean something else in a different context. So keeping in some of those terms as necessary.

(12:55):

Are there related policies or procedures? If you're writing, policies don't have to be long, and procedures don't necessarily have to be long. They can live one by one by one, but you might have things that connect to each other. For example, you have a procurement policy that involves DEI goals, as I mentioned, well, maybe your organization also has a DEI policy that is complimentary to that, but doesn't necessarily have to be pasted in there. So that's what I mean when talking about relevant policies or related policies and procedures. When was it adopted or endorsed, and when do you plan to do the next review? So those are some good practices. Again, not an all-inclusive list, but some good things to consider if you're writing one from scratch.

(13:39):

The procedure development process is similar, but a little bit different here. You will want a common format or style guide, so those headers that we just went through the last time can be a useful thing to consider including. But just creating a big picture template for your organization can be good. So if someone's writing a policy, they know what should be included in it, the different sections that should be filled in.

(14:01):

Second step then is to think about the goal. Is the goal of this procedure to document what you're already doing? In which case, that's one process you might bring people in who are already doing that work that just hasn't been formalized and have them flow chart out or step by step, what is it that they do? Are you trying to streamline the policy? Are you trying to look for efficiencies in places that the policy can be improved? Or are you trying to create consistency? So there's many different ways people are doing it now and you're trying to come to consensus. You might be doing a couple of these at the same time, and that's okay, but just think about your goal and that's going to change your agenda for how you sit down. Maybe it's going to change who might be involved in the creation of the procedure.

(14:38):

Look at your existing systems, how are people doing it today? What's working about that? What's not working about that? I talked about this, talked to the people responsible for doing and reviewing the work so that you're getting that field perspective so that whatever procedure is created is practical and reasonable for your organization and is least disruptive. You may need some disruption, you may need to make some improvements, but if you can minimize that, that's certainly going to go a long way.

(15:02):

You may look for models in your organization or similar organizations. If you are a higher education institution, there are some databases, I think the Sunny System publishes a lot of their policies and procedures on their website, not all of them, but quite a few of them. So if you may look for a similar type of organization and see if you can find a grant handbook that they've published, or maybe they have a policies and procedures site that's not totally behind a sign-in wall.

(15:28):

Identify the doers of the procedure. So who are you writing it for? Who is the audience that needs to be reading this? Run through those scenarios and clarify content. Like I said before, what are some exceptions you may run into? And are those exceptions going to happen enough that you actually need a procedure for them? Or do you just need a procedure to handle exceptions versus the type of exception if you're anticipating that to happen all the time?

(15:51):

And then go back and double check that whatever procedure you've created is compatible with the policy that you've also written. So this is where I was talking about that give and take a little bit where it's not quite a linear process. And if you're finding that, excuse me, keep interchanging these two, that the procedure that needs to happen is in conflict with your policy, then you need to think about obviously which one of those needs to be changed. And the procedure is probably easier to change, but it may actually be that the policy needs to change.

(16:22):

All right. The required and recommended policies and procedures, I have already said this and must say it again, your organization is unique. So while it's a good idea to look at other organizations as models,

you can't necessarily just adopt what they do, but there are certain policies and procedures you are required to have as a federal recipient. In general, you should have written policies and procedures for anything that deals with accountability, so things like your code of ethics and your conflicts of interest, your internal controls, things like that will get into all of this.

[\(16:53\)](#):

For topics of critical importance to your mission or program, so things like eligibility and supportive services, I mentioned that earlier, having a policy around eligibility and a procedure for determining eligibility is really important for grant management. Anything related to legal liability, so record retention and procurement, incident reporting, equal employment opportunity types of things. Some of these are going to be project specific, but some of these are going to be organization wide and you need both of those to really have an effective grant management.

[\(17:25\)](#):

We're going to take a look at this, I must make the disclaimer, of course, this is not all-inclusive, but it's a really strong place to start. It's a long list, but having that checklist and just making sure you have as many as possible. If you sat in on the monitoring session yesterday, Stacy talked about, they ended up doing a lot of this auditing and shoring up their policies and procedures in the months leading up to a monitoring visit and she wishes they would've started at the beginning. So if you are a round four grantee, you have the benefit of having a little bit more time to make sure all of this is in place.

[\(17:57\)](#):

Here are the nine things you are required to have under OMB uniform Guidance, and then these are the 2 CFR 200 citations that go with them. So you have to have a policy related to payments, procurement, competition, methods for evaluation, and selection of vendors, allowable costs, compensation, fringe benefits, employee relocation costs, and travel costs. So this is the place where, again, we'll make the slide available to you, and it's also available in the materials that I pasted from Department of Labor. I like policy, I was a policy major, so I like reading policy, but I know it can be really tough. But this is a place where you don't want to skip, it's a really important task, even though it can be a dry one and make sure that you either ... so I would check first, do you have the policies? And then the second phase would be, do you have all of the pieces that OMB Uniform Guidance requires you to have? Which you'll find in that 2 CFR.

[\(18:52\)](#):

This is the next list, again, this is long, I'm not going to read all of these to you because no one wants to hear me read this much. But this comes from, in that same link that I gave you, there is a document that I think Mayor and Mayor have created for Department of Labor, and this is where you'll see this information. So if you're looking at your accounting system, you're going to want to look at frequency of comparison of expenditures to budget. You're going to want to look for the process for requesting modifications to your budgets process for prior approval. So when do you require a prior approval for an expense? And when can an employee or a project manager or whatever level, excuse me, go and spend? Who improves various transactions? So accounting entries, or error corrections, journal entries, things like that. And what documentation is maintained and what format for how long, who's responsible? So quite a lot of little details there.

[\(19:49\)](#):

Under audits, one of the big ones that I think is easy to miss if you haven't had a federal grant before, if you have sub recipients on your project, you are required to ensure that sub recipient audits are completed and occur. So you need to have a policy in place for how you'll track policy and procedure for

how you're going to track the sub recipient audits have been completed. Under small purchases, things like who has a credit card, who else might have access to the credit cards? Who approves the number of credit cards that are needed and how one is issued? What can be again, purchased automatically, what would require approval, what's allowable, what documentation must be maintained? All that kind of stuff. And if you do deal with cash in your organization, things like petty cash, and are there surprise counts that occur financially? Just all those little details for cash management.

[\(20:37\)](#):

And again, some of these are organization-wide things, and so this is not work grant specific, but you are, as an organization, required to have these things in place. When you think about draw down, what's your process to minimize the time between receipt and disbursement of funds? What's the frequency? How do you forecast all that good stuff? So the document, again, in that do all link, when you open it up, it's a PDF that lists all these different things out there, and so that's a good one to just use as a checklist.

[\(21:07\)](#):

Here's another section, it goes through complaints and grievances and all the various things you want to make sure you have. And like I said before, these can be distinct policies and procedures, they do not necessarily have to be. So what you do is, you just want to make sure that your policies and procedures account for all of these various things, even if you end up creating separate ones.

[\(21:32\)](#):

Sub recipient monitoring, like I said, this is a big one, and I know this came as a surprise to quite a few organizations that had never had a DLO grant or a big federal grant before. If you have sub recipients, you as the primary grantee are responsible for monitoring them. We talked about the audit in the past, but you want to have a policy and a procedure in here for, how do you schedule the monitoring visit? How do you notify them that it's happening? Who does the scheduling?? Do you let the sub-recipient create the agenda, do you create the agenda? What's the structure? So what and how are you going to be looking for? What's the process and timeframe for reporting back to them? Any findings, how will findings be resolved? What's that process? What are the consequences for non-compliance? So is there an escalation procedure, for example, if they don't respond to a finding within a certain number of days, what happens next? And is there notification that gets sent to them or anything like that? What might be the appeal process?

[\(22:29\)](#):

If you submit a finding as a part of a compliance report to your sub-recipient and they disagree with it, and we've seen this happen with primary grant recipients who are monitored from Department of Labor FPOs and they come back and the FPO says, we have this finding. And we've seen grantees go back and say, no, I disagree with you, here's the reason why, here's the documentation we have to support that, or whatever that might be. So you want to make sure you have a similar process in place for your sub recipients where they can appeal if they need to, and then if there's a hearing involved, for example. And like I said, this link that you see here, which will be in the materials, this is going to take you to that longer PDF that I talked about that you'll be able to reference.

[\(23:15\)](#):

Some common compliance gaps, they are sometimes really simple like a failure to have a policy for sub-recipient monitoring, for example. And so in that case, the required action is going to be really simple also, which is to develop the required policy. In that case, it's serious, you want to make sure you have all those policies, but the remedy and the consequences may be a little bit simpler. Sometimes it's a little bit more complicated and serious like the lack of a procurement policy, so the steps for that are

going to be creating the policy, but it's also possible that there would be a finding that could lead to invalid procurements or disallowed expenses. You may have to re-compete awards, for example, and obviously that's going to be really disruptive to your vendors, to your organization, to your project timeline. So this is why, and I think everyone probably recognizes the seriousness of having this in place, but like I said, in some cases the monitoring findings are going to be easy to fix, and in other cases they're going to be really a lot more significant and could result in disallowed costs.

[\(24:19\)](#):

Disallowed costs can come from other things, so lack of policies for wraparound services, especially around things like accountability and how those funds were spent. We're going to talk about this a little bit more this afternoon in the wraparound service section, but one of the questions we had gotten last year was, if we're offering childcare as a wraparound service, can we include family members as childcare providers? And the answer to that is, potentially, if it is part of your policy, if you have a sound policy for how those are selected and what's allowable within your organization, there's no rule prohibiting having somebody like a family member offer care, but does it fit within your organization's policies?

[\(25:03\)](#):

And secondly, the first one's important, but perhaps more importantly, do you have a procedure in place for validating that payments are going to the intended purpose? If this is four of the wraparound service of childcare and you've provided a payment for that, did the payment actually go to childcare? And so making sure you have steps to validate that, DOL's not going to tell you what those steps are, you have to determine what those steps are for yourself. So like I said this afternoon, you'll hear a little bit about that from a grantee about how they put that policy and procedure in place. But think about all the wraparound services you're providing, and particularly if your organization does not usually provide those, if it's a new type of service, if you've not done transportation vouchers before, things like that. That's one place to pay a lot of attention to spend some good time on developing your policies and procedures because you don't want to have disallowed costs that relate to that because you spent money and you can't show that the money actually went to the intended purpose.

[\(25:58\)](#):

Things like inadequate travel policies that may have resulted in over reimbursement of staff, that's another place. I had mentioned this earlier, but one we've talked a lot about with new work grantees is participant definitions and making sure that both you and your sub-recipients are following those eligibility procedures. So you want to look at the FOA for the cited definitions, but then look within your scope of work and what categories have you selected? Plus, did you write anything more specific about who you would serve to the exclusion of others?

[\(26:30\)](#):

Your grant specific policy related to your target populations is going to include, who did you say you were going to serve? And so the policy for this particular grant is those are the people you serve. So if you said you were going to serve individuals impacted by SUD who are new entrants to the workforce, for example, that's your policy. Because you're only able to serve those people because you wrote that, that's who specifically you said you were going to serve. If you wrote it more broadly than that, obviously you're going to adapt your policy to say whatever it is that you said in your scope of work. But then your procedure needs to be, how are you verifying that that person is eligible based on that definition?

[\(27:12\)](#):

There was an example that we ran into of a grantee in round one who had to develop policy and procedure because they had talked about, they were spending quite a bit of funds on outreach, and the outreach included individuals who may not necessarily be eligible as participants. So they were going into high school classrooms, for example. And so freshmen and sophomores in those classrooms were not eligible to be participants, but they were part of the outreach activities and they were counting the youth that were reached through those grant activities. But they had to develop then a bright line between what is an outreach individuals, I think is the phrase that they used, versus when does someone become a program participant? Because if you sat through the performance monitoring session yesterday, when someone's a program participant, there's a lot of data that you have to collect on them.

[\(28:00\)](#):

One really important thing to think through is, what's that trigger between when somebody is just interested in your program or expresses interests, maybe they even apply for your training program, when do they become a program participant? And write that down and have a policy so that you know that those people and only those people are people you're going to be collecting that participant data on. A shorthand for that, if you don't know exactly and it's not obvious in your program, they have to receive a workforce service. So in order to be a participant, it might be training a training activity, it might be a needs assessment, that sort of thing, but it has to be a workforce service for them to be considered a participant.

[\(28:39\)](#):

In the example that I mentioned with Sunny, just being present at an outreach discussion does not make someone a participant. Obviously, that also then has implications on your participant counts, so they're not able to count all the people who just attend this info session, obviously they can only count the people who are then actually receiving a service. Another thing to be aware of then is, it affects who's receiving supportive services. So only participants can receive supportive services. And supportive services should be outlined in your scope of work, and I'm a broken record here, but you should have policies and procedures around all of those supportive services and who is eligible for them. Are there amount thresholds caps that people can access? Is it a cap for all supportive services or is it by supportive service? So can someone access a certain amount on transportation and a certain amount on childcare, or is it a certain amount overall?

[\(29:34\)](#):

Again, these are details that you have to work out in your organization. But an important part of this process is not just ensuring that the money was spent as you said it was, but that the people who received those wraparound services were qualified participants. So this is where those policies might connect, most likely, you're going to have policies around supportive services as a standalone, policies around participant definitions as a standalone, but reference each other so that if someone's making a change to one of those, they can go back and reference the other policy and make sure that they still connect in a logical way.

[\(30:08\)](#):

Some example findings, this is straight from DOL, so no written policies and procedures for sub-recipient fiscal monitoring, no supportive services policies and procedures. So recipient does not document the need for supportive services that have been provided to participants. That is something else I wanted to mention here. Just because you've written in there that individual's supportive service is childcare or is transportation, this might seem obvious, but as part of your steps, you want to make sure that you were doing an assessment that, that supportive service is necessary for that person to complete training. So

that's the test here, it's not just because you said childcare is available, this seems really like a no-brainer, but you have to be able to show in documentation, and maybe it's a self-certification, it could be some other process of the participant saying, I need childcare in order to attend to complete this training.

[\(31:05\)](#):

In some cases, policies and procedures seem like really obvious no-brainer things like, of course, we would only give childcare support wraparound service to those who need childcare. But the important thing is, is it written down? Do you have a way to show this is the thing that we follow? Because your FPO doesn't know, they're going to come in, they won't necessarily just take your word for it, that someone takes that step, it could be part of a form, it could be part of just the step by step in your procedure, but make sure that it's in there.

[\(31:33\)](#):

And the third example finding that DOL gave is, does not maintain adequate policies and or procedures for financial management and grants management in these areas. So tracking of match which is not relevant for work, but bank reconciliation process, procurement policy limited only to equipment purchases and no other procurement actions. The example in this case is, they have a procurement policy for equipment, but they don't have a procurement policy for things like services. So if you want to make sure that that's a place where just because you have a policy you called procurement, you want to match it up against that uniform guidance to make sure that the content that's required in code shows up in your actual policy and procedure itself.

[\(32:16\)](#):

Recommended next steps for you. It is assessing your stock of policies and procedures against your requirements and recommendations. This title here is an old one, so ignore that. We were going to have an example, but it got really long, so that's a typo. Review your existing policies and procedures to ensure the continued applicability and relevance. Again, compliance is really important, but does it actually reflect what you do and what you need to do in your organization? Fill those compliance or operational gaps and then go into the implementation phase, that distribution, the training, continually communicating that with your staff.

[\(32:52\)](#):

If you need help, I think Mason had mentioned yesterday in his session, we have helped some organizations, some grantees, think about how to develop some different policies and procedures, especially things around the participant piece and the wraparound service piece, which I know just in a lot of cases you have these organizational policies and procedures already in place because you've dealt with federal or state funds, but you may need some of these additional grant policies and procedures. And that's a place where our team can help you, we'll always help you with the giant disclaimer that we are not attorneys and we're not your attorneys. So we do recommend that you obviously check with your board, check with your attorneys, make sure that what you have in place is compliant, not just federally, but within your state as well.

[\(33:36\)](#):

And last, I mentioned this here, so the policies and procedures for federal award recipients, that's where most of this information came from. They have a training that covers a lot of what I just covered. They also have that separate checklist that I mentioned that Mayor and Mayor created for them, both of those are available on this site and for download. They're also available through higher logic in our library. I mentioned this yesterday in the intro session, but in case you missed it, there is a grants'

management virtual training conference from February 14th through 16th that ETA is putting on, I strongly recommend that you go through that. There's also on Workforce GPS, there's a smart 3.0, the last version of this training that has a lot of resources, a lot of templates, and a lot of things to walk you through. The basics of a lot of this if federal grant management is new to you or to your organization.

(34:24):

And then the last thing is, there is an electronic 2 CFR 200 or all CFR library available online. So that's going to be the easiest place if you just can search E 2 CFR or we're going to distribute this PowerPoints so you can click on the link here. But that's going to give you, if you go to those citations that I mentioned in those nine policies and procedures that are required, then you'll see all of that here.

(34:46):

I know that's a lot, but also, in some cases, what people are looking for is a template that says, this is what I have to have in here, which unfortunately is too specific to your organization to have available. But hopefully, this gets you started on the process of doing that initial audit. Of those nine things, I would say if you want to know a place to start, that's a place to start and then go into the more detailed things, which are also really important. But you want to make sure that you have those nine at least in place. Let me pause there, I am going to stop sharing, which I think it did, all right. And just let me see, are there any questions that we got in the chat, Molly?

Molly (35:33):

Hi, no, I don't see that we got any questions in the chat, but if anyone does have questions that they want to add from Nicole's presentation, feel free to pop them in the chat or the Q and A and we can address those as they come in.

Nicole (35:46):

Yeah, we've got a little bit of time. While we're ... I'm going to filibuster for a second and say, I think one of the questions that we've gotten is, will my FPO approve my policies? And I know we have at least Coretta on here, so Coretta, correct me if I'm saying this wrong. The information I've gotten is that no, an FPO typically will not, they're going to come in during a monitoring visit and monitor you based on the content. But my understanding is, they will not sign off on a policy or procedure like a draft one you send them in advance saying, does this comply?

(36:25):

I think that's correct, Coretta, if you're with us and you're able to confirm that that's accurate, that FPOs aren't going to bless your pol ... and again, neither can we, we can help you, we can offer to our best of our ability. And Mason, especially on our team, he's our compliance policy and procedure expert, and I think he mentioned yesterday, he's been brought in on multiple grants, not just work grants, a couple of work grants, but many other Department of Labor grants where grantees have gotten past the monitoring and now are finding themselves in a place where they're having to scramble to put all of these in place. And he has brought in as that emergency help, so our goal for you is that none of you are in that position. Coretta did confirm there for us that the FPO doesn't have the authority to bless your policy or procedure and say, you're in compliance, you're good to go, unfortunately. Although I'm sure we'd all love that.

Molly (37:21):

Nicole, for clarification, if we have policies, especially financial, that have already gone through a DOL monitoring, can we assume that those are enough for work too?

Nicole ([37:34](#)):

I am scared to say, yes. Yes and no is the answer, even the yes has a giant asterisk because sometimes things change and so you'll still want to make sure to do that compliance audit. But what I will say is what we have seen, is that organizations, I'll use Sunny as an example, the Sunny system in New York manages huge amount of federal grants. And so they had all of the organizational policies that they needed in place. And to my knowledge, they did not have to make any edits to those sorts of things. We're talking about cash management and procurement policies and all those big things that you're going to want to have no matter what.

([38:09](#)):

The thing that they did have to create was the one that I mentioned, the participant eligibility and wraparound services policies. So those are probably going to be grant specific, they need to comply with your organizational policies, they can't conflict with those. But you will probably want to create something around eligibility, determination and participant tracking. And if you have wraparound services in your grant around administering those funds and who's eligible, how much, what's the process for determining the need for those wraparound services and then what's the process for determining that those payments have gone to the appropriate place?

([38:52](#)):

All right. I'm going to hang on for just another minute or so, I know we're a little early, but we wanted to allow plenty of time for questions. And I know this is tons of information and you may have more questions later, we are available to you if you have further needs and further help, we have some limited hours that are available to actually help you walk through policies or think through policies. Like I said, Mason's a good one, and we've got a second contractor who's down in Texas who also has a ton of experience with this compliance stuff.

Molly ([39:27](#)):

Question from Carol ... and Coretta did confirm that generally, Marty's assumption was correct, but making sure that those policies do align with the specifics of the work grant, just like Nicole said, so thank you Coretta for that. From Carol, if we don't have supportive services provided in the work grant, do we need to provide those policies as part of the review?

Nicole ([39:49](#)):

Again, Coretta, I'm really glad to have you here, correct me if I'm wrong. My understanding is no, that this is really looking around the use of funds for your work grant, and so you're going to want to have policies around those use of funds, but if you're not using funds in that way, you don't have to create a policy for something that you're not doing, is my understanding. It's a common one, since I know a lot of organizations struggle to find grant funding for wraparound services and so may not have been in the position before. Maybe even if they were providing them, they didn't have to do the same tracking or justification using federal funds than would require. All right, any others before we wrap up?

Molly ([40:39](#)):

All right. So question around, could you go over the classroom with younger non-eligible and older eligible that you referenced earlier?

Nicole ([40:47](#)):

Sure, I can give you the example. This was actually, this was Sunny Cobleskill, they had a program where ... it was a diesel tech program, probably not important, but just to give you some context. So it's the diesel tech program, they had really deep relationships with employers. And so essentially, they were doing outreach to, youth new entrants were their target population as defined in their scope of work. There are some details around that, that if you're going to serve youth, they have to expect to be employed within six months of their grant ending and some things like that that are in the FOA. So if you're a youth serving organization, that would be something to go back to your FOA and read back up on.

[\(41:28\)](#):

In their case, those youth that they were serving, the eligible participants were in a classroom with other people who wouldn't be eligible participants either because they were from a county ... so they were on a border region with non ARC counties. So in some cases, the youth in the classroom might not be from a service area county or they might be too young to be considered a participant, but they're in the classroom where the outreach is occurring. And so there's no prohibition against somebody hearing that information. And so that outreach activity was an allowable activity under the grant in general, an allowable use of their funds that was in their scope of work, all of that. But a participant then, so the idea was that they would be connecting the eligible new entrants with those employers, and then they would be going through internships, they would be going through some badging processes and some other short-term training that the employers would be giving them equipment, that kind of stuff. So there were workforce services that then would happen because they were going to be enrolled as a participant.

[\(42:27\)](#):

And so they had to write this down essentially because they were trying to determine, when we are reporting how many participants have we served? We can't count everyone who's been a part of that outreach because listening to a presentation about industry is not a workforce service, which was good. They would've liked to count everyone to get to their participant goal, but it was important because the requirements for then tracking data on participants, once that person becomes a participant and you're counting them as a participant, that's when you have to start tracking those workforce outcomes. So they needed to write down, and it wasn't a very long, it was a page and a half probably, policy on how are they defining a participant? How are they defining ... they created the term outreach individual, that's not a formal term, but that's just what they were using to differentiate between the two.

[\(43:14\)](#):

Everyone starts out as an outreach individual, someone becomes a participant once they receive a workforce service and they said including duh duh duh, and they listed the different types of things that they were providing as workforce services as training under their grant. And then that's the time, that's the place where it triggered enrollment, they were of [inaudible 00:43:34] so it was Wagner-Peyser in their case and calling on Wagner-Peyser, what are the other steps that we need to take to finish determining eligibility and tracking all their information and all that? So hopefully that makes sense, that was in their case because they were spending funds that happened to be reaching people beyond just participants. They wanted to make sure that that was really clear and, in their case, at least that past their monitoring visit. Any other questions? These are good questions.

[\(44:04\)](#):

I think the final closing piece of advice I would say is, I know it can feel really overwhelming, especially partly because this is high stakes compliance, no one wants to be out of compliance ever. So it's scary to write this down and then to worry whether it meets it or doesn't meet it. And I would say don't over

complicate it, just think through logically, like a participant one as an example, where once they sat down and put pen to paper, it actually wasn't that hard to differentiate between the two. It just was the process of doing it and actually just writing it down. And it doesn't have to be too long, it doesn't have to be in legal jargon, it can be a lot of just common sense documentation, but having it there is really important.

[\(44:48\)](#):

And then one other thing I would say, and I think Stacy mentioned this yesterday in the monitoring presentation, having them organized for yourself, whether that's an intranet, whether they used a Dropbox folder, it doesn't have to ... depending on the size of your organization and the number of staff that you have who might need to access, it's going to make your life a lot easier, especially when it comes to monitoring time. If you have these organized and give a naming convention system and a file system or whatever, a lot of time, and I know you all have all these other things to do to actually serve the participants you're wanting to serve, but it is worth the investment, it will make your life easier in the long run.

[\(45:27\)](#):

All right. Well, I think we're going to pause there. Our next session is at 12:30 Eastern Time. Molly is actually going to be leading a panel of grantees talking about wraparound services. So we're going to be covering a couple of different models for transportation as wraparound services. Sneak peek into that, the enterprise van system is one that one grantee uses, and so they're going to talk about what that looked like and why they chose it over other models that they tried. And then we're going to be talking about childcare, the basics of various types of childcare, if that's a new industry for you, but you're trying to offer that as a service. And then we're going to have a grantee who does indeed offer childcare as a wraparound service.

[\(46:09\)](#):

That's the 12:30 session, and then at 1:30 we're going to be talking about grant modifications, period of performance extensions, all that good stuff, since I know especially our round three grantees are thinking about that right now. But for those of you who were earlier on, you might be thinking about scope modifications over the next couple of years. So thank you all so much, great questions, we will see you at 12:30 Eastern.

Day 2, Session 3: Wraparound Support Strategies – Transportation & Childcare

Molly Chamberlin ([00:00](#)):

Right. Hi everyone. I'm just going to do a quick sound check with my panelists here. Hannah, Megan, Cathy, can you all hear me okay?

Cathy Hays ([00:07](#)):

Yes.

Megan Pieper ([00:08](#)):

Yes.

Hannah Jarrett ([00:09](#)):

Yes.

Molly Chamberlin ([00:09](#)):

All right. Great. Well, welcome back everyone. Hope you had a great lunch and we have a great session for you for the next hour. We have three wonderful panelists who are joining us today, and we are going to talk about a couple things. First, transportation as a wraparound service, and then also diving in a little bit to the early childcare... Or the early childhood education and childcare ecosystem, as well as that as a wraparound service. So we have a set of questions where we'll be going through transportation, then we'll switch over to childcare. But before we get started, I wanted to give our panelists a chance to introduce themselves. So I'm going to start with Hannah, and if you could just tell us, just introduce yourself, your organization, and tell us just a little bit about your work project.

Hannah Jarrett ([00:56](#)):

Hi everyone. My name is Hannah Jarrett. I am VP of Community and Collective Impact with United Way of the Piedmont. We serve Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union Counties in the upstate of South Carolina. And our work project is in partnership with Spartanburg Community College and SC Works focusing on ways that we can help individuals go through different opportunities, workforce development, job training opportunities to then be in high demand jobs. In our community, we have a particular focus on those who have been justice involved or have previously been incarcerated, to connect them to those high demand jobs. Things like apprenticeships, paid internships, experiential learning opportunities. And in United Way of the Piedmont, our role is kind of the connector. Transportation is a huge barrier to employment and job training in our community, so we provide that component of the project. I'm happy to be here today.

Molly Chamberlin ([02:05](#)):

Thanks so much, Hannah. Cathy?

Cathy Hays ([02:08](#)):

Hi everyone. Thank you for having me. My name is Cathy Hays and I'm with Volunteers of America Mid-States. Our program is the Recovery Reintegration Program. We're located in Corbin, Kentucky. We serve eight counties, Bell, Clay, Jackson, Knox, Leslie, Laurel, McCreary, and Whitley. And we help those

who have been affected by recovery, are currently in recovery to reintegrate into the workforce. So we're helping them to find opportunities with employment or through education if they choose to further their education. We do see a lot of peer support, we see a lot of dental schools, and so we're seeing our education rise a little bit. We do place a lot of people in jobs. We started our program last March with our first client that entered our building. And to date, we have served over 260 clients. So we are seeing a big widespread need for what we do. And of course, we have other opportunities that we offer. We do provide the supports, tuition, laptops, clothing for interviews. Anything that they need, we're going to take that away. No excuses only solutions.

Molly Chamberlin ([03:26](#)):

Great. Thanks Cathy. And Megan?

Cathy Hays ([03:27](#)):

Thank you.

Megan Pieper ([03:29](#)):

Hi, I am Megan Pieper and I am with COAD, which is the Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development. And we serve all of the Appalachian counties in Southern and Eastern Ohio. And so specifically, our project is called the WECAN Project, and that stands for Workforce Enabled Childcare Access Now. And our goal is to provide all the training, support and resources to open a hundred new licensed in-home childcare businesses. We also have a goal to support employer-owned and or support a childcare and Appalachian region of Ohio as well.

Molly Chamberlin ([04:17](#)):

Great. Thanks so much, Megan. All right. Well, I have a set of questions that I'm going to run through with the panelists. As we go though, if anyone who is in the audience has a question that you have that comes up, we are going to try to save some time at the end for questions, but if you have thoughts or questions that come up, feel free to pop them in the chat and we will get to those as we go through. So we are going to start by talking about transportation.

([04:42](#)):

So going to focus my questions on Hannah and Cathy to start with. And I know, Hannah, you had already alluded to this a little bit, and Cathy, you had mentioned this, but can you talk a little bit about, for your particular projects, the folks that you're serving for your areas, why was it a high priority to offer transportation as a wraparound service in your project? I'll open it up to either one of you who wants to start out.

Hannah Jarrett ([05:10](#)):

Go ahead, Cathy.

Cathy Hays ([05:12](#)):

Thank you. For our program, we are in Southeastern Kentucky. We have more countryside than houses. And for transportation, our clients are coming from an environment where they may not have a driver's license, they may not have access to a vehicle. So we wanted to make sure that we took away that barrier for them to be able to get to work or get to school and see a future after they have went through their recovery process. So we know... I have a background in recruiting, so I know one of the biggest

issues that we had with attrition was no transportation, no way to get to work. That and childcare is the two biggest issues that we face in Southeastern Kentucky.

(06:01):

So when we were planning this process, we wanted to take away any of the problems that could arise. So we definitely wanted to make sure that transportation became something that we offered, which we still find hiccups because we don't have Uber, we don't have taxis. I think maybe we have one taxi company and we serve eight counties. So our taxis do not go from county to county. We have two services that we use quite often and they don't go into a lot of different counties, but we've got them, they're separated enough that we can use one for one area of our counties and another for another. So we still see some issues with transportation, but we have taken out a lot of the issues by offering that wraparound service.

Molly Chamberlin (06:47):

Great. Hannah?

Hannah Jarrett (06:48):

And I would echo a lot of what Cathy said. We find, in our community, that a lot of the job opportunities are not necessarily close to physically where people are living, particularly those individuals who may be lower income and have more barriers to accessing employment. We have a pretty, I guess, a city center, but then beyond that city center here in the city of Spartanburg, we're very rural, very disconnected, not a lot of public transit opportunities, not a lot of Lyft or Uber or taxis. So for individuals who do not have transportation, it can be very challenging for them to get and maintain employment. We know a lot of people who walk two miles one way to work in all kinds of weather or who are reliant on friends, family, coworkers to get to and from work, which can present a lot of challenges.

(07:57):

So we know that we have a lot of jobs in our community. We know that those jobs need employees and transportation is one of those barriers that we felt it was important to address in our community. We are a very vehicle-dependent community and we don't have a lot of public transit options or bike lanes or anything like that. And owning a vehicle can be very expensive and a big barrier to help people overcome. So it's not just providing the transportation one or two times to get to work, but how can we solve this more sustainably? For our community, we provide lots of things, which I'm sure we'll talk about later.

Molly Chamberlin (08:38):

Yeah, definitely. Yes. I'm going to come back to you in a minute, Hannah, because I know that you've been through quite the iterative process. But Cathy, coming back to you, you started talking a little bit about some of the different types of transportation support that you've used and I wondered if you could go into a little bit more detail because I know you have a wide variety of supports that you're offering. So could you talk about those and then also any challenges and successes with any and all of those?

Cathy Hays (09:06):

Yes. So we have two options that we use every day, and that is Daniel Boone Transit and RTEC transit. They will operate during the daytime hours, so we do face issues if it is a night shift or something along that line that our client ends up working. But we also provide gas cards and that can help them as well

to secure transportation if they are later in the evenings. So we do provide the gas cards to help them to ensure that they do get to and from work and the rare clients that we have that have vehicles receive those gas cards as well. So we have seen a lot of successes with our program. Of course, the fact that we are to serve 350 during the course of our grant and we're over halfway there and we still have another year to go.

Molly Chamberlin ([10:01](#)):

That's so great.

Cathy Hays ([10:03](#)):

We have seen a lot, and I think the transportation has helped a lot because one of the first things that I noticed when talking to a client is they'll tell us they don't have a way to get to work. They would go to work, they would get a job if only they had a way to get there. So we work with them, we help to schedule their appointments that we just ask that they give us their scheduling time so that we can book it. RTEC is, they want 24 hours notice. So anything after that, we're begging and we're not above it. We do beg RTEC to pick up clients for us when we need to. So I wish that I had all the time in the world to go into all the intricate details that it takes to set our clients up on transportation and to get them to and from their destination.

([10:53](#)):

We have had clients to request bicycles, but like Hannah had mentioned, we have no bike lanes in our counties, in any of the counties that we serve, just curvy dangerous roads. So I do recommend that our clients don't go that route. But also as Hannah mentioned, we have clients that would walk to work to get there. Because we may have someone in Whitley County, but they're going to work in Laurel County because Whitley County didn't have an opportunity for them.

([11:21](#)):

So that's two counties away, so they're doing this... They're stressing. So we do have RTEC that will go from Whitley to London. So we're constantly trying to maneuver the logistics of which operating system we have for transit. We'll take them to which county that they need to be in. So that's our main focus all the time. And we do have a lot of clients that use the transportation service that we provide. And our goal is to get them independent enough that they can start paying that fee themselves or get a car because we know Goodwill has the Cars to Work program. So we hope to get them connected to that.

Molly Chamberlin ([12:10](#)):

Great. Thank you so much, Cathy.

Cathy Hays ([12:13](#)):

Thank you.

Molly Chamberlin ([12:15](#)):

I was just getting a notification though. My connection may be interrupted. Can you all still hear me?

Cathy Hays ([12:19](#)):

Yes. I got the same one, so I thought maybe you all couldn't hear me.

Molly Chamberlin ([12:24](#)):

It's not just us. No, thanks Cathy. That was great. Hannah, I would love to hear, because I know that, like I said, you've been through quite the iterative process, kind of starting on the Lyft side and then moving over into the Enterprise. So wondered if you could talk us through your transportation evolution.

Hannah Jarrett ([12:43](#)):

Yes. So we're actually on our third version of a transportation service. We started this work back, I think, in 2017, 2018 timeframe, recognizing that there are a lot of people in our community who want jobs, they need jobs, they're qualified for jobs. And we have a lot of jobs available, but they didn't have that transportation to get there. So we originally started by piloting something with a local transportation provider that operates a lot like Uber or Lyft. So it's a door-to-door on-demand service, but it was local company. So we went that route just so we could work closely with them, with the owner of the company. There was a lot more flexibility in trying new things and we learned a lot in that process. I think it was like a 9 to 12 month pilot program just to see, what does it look like? Does this type of service meet the needs? What challenges are in place?

([13:51](#)):

I would say we learned a lot during that. One of the main things is that we as United Way are not a transit provider. We are not a logistics. That is not our strength at all, nor does it need to be our strength. We also learned that transportation is very expensive, and then finally we learned that there's a lot of people in our community who need transportation and it's a huge help. So while we recognized that that original pilot program was not the direction that we needed to go from a sustainability perspective, it did validate what the need was in our community. So we then partnered with Lyft to provide Lyft vouchers through our Ride United program. Lyft, some of you all might be familiar with the Concierge program through Lyft or platform that you can go online, you can schedule a ride for your client and the Lyft driver will come pick them up and drop them off at that location.

([14:57](#)):

Because of the scale of people that we were wanting to help through our transportation program and our capacity internally, we didn't feel like Concierge was going to be something that we could handle, scheduling every single person's ride for every single day. So they have Lyft, you can do... It's similar to Concierge, but it's a voucher or a gift card type thing instead of scheduling the rides. So we provided \$350 Lyft vouchers to individuals that they could use for their commute to and from work or to and from job training, whether that was their community college or some other type of education or job training program.

([15:44](#)):

In our community, we don't have a lot of Lyft drivers. So it was a wonderful service on the back end. It was very smooth. People could use it when they need it. Sometimes they might be able to get a ride with a coworker and they wouldn't need to use it. Other times, maybe they did need to use their voucher. But during high peak times, so that 7:00 to 8:00, and then between 4:00 and 6:00 PM when there's a lot more people in need of those services because of the number of Lyft drivers that we have available in our community, we found that some people were having to wait a couple of hours after their shift to actually get a ride. We also found challenges just because we couldn't necessarily control when people used their voucher. We had a policy in place as well as a procedure to monitor it.

([16:37](#)):

And there were a couple of instances where we found that people misused their voucher, but we were able to identify that rather quickly because of the policies and procedures that we had in place with it. So the other thing that we learned with the Lyft program that the voucher program that we did was that \$350 went very, very quickly for some people. There are some individuals who are riding a 10-mile one way commute in our community, so the \$350 was maybe gone in a couple of weeks just because of how expensive that service is. And others, it might have gotten them two, three months worth of commute. But people's transportation needs don't go away after two weeks or two months. The individuals who need transportation services in our community, they're probably looking at six months, 12 months, a year, two years, depending on what their barrier is to that transportation.

[\(17:40\)](#):

So now, we are in our third, trying something different, and so far it's been the most successful on the most cost-effective, logistically the smoothest and very promising for sustainability as well in our community as a long-term service. So we have partnered with Commute with Enterprise, Enterprise being the car rental service that I'm sure everybody is aware of. So they have a program where they work with employers to help coordinate van pools for their employees to get to and from work.

[\(18:19\)](#):

Enterprise really handles all the training. They work with the companies to make it customized to their employees, their area, their needs. And then the riders have an Enterprise rental vehicle that they use to get to and from work in that van pool model. And then we subsidize the cost of that van pool in order to make it affordable for the riders. And I'm happy to share more details about how that work and what our experience has been. But so far it's been really good. I believe we have 17 companies or 17 vans on the road in our community in Spartanburg and Cherokee counties. So far so good.

Molly Chamberlin [\(19:05\)](#):

Great. Thanks so much, Hannah. Yes, and I'm sure that there may be some questions about the commuting with Enterprise. And as I said, we'll make sure that we save some room for questions at the end. But I wanted to switch gears just really quickly and then we will come back to talking about policies and procedures. But I wanted to switch gears to talking about childcare. So again, we've talked about transportation as a big need, obviously childcare also is, and so we've got Megan and Cathy kind of working in two slightly different spaces. Megan's project is really looking to build the ecosystem, and then Cathy, you're recognizing offering it as a wraparound service. So I wanted to start with you, Megan. Talking a little bit about you're working to build the childcare ecosystem, what are some of the major things that you think work grantees should know about the childcare ecosystem if they are brand new to the space or if they are looking to either build it or offer it as a wraparound service?

Megan Pieper [\(20:07\)](#):

Okay. So I think mainly, so we're working basically with in-home and home-based childcare. That was our main focus. We do have kind of a sidebar to work with employers who want to open childcare, but that would have to be as a center, they couldn't do in-home childcare. So specifically, we're working with home-based. And I think that home-based childcare kind of gets underrated and misconstrued as just simply babysitting. You're just babysitting kids in your home. When in reality, licensed childcare includes operating your own small business, creating lesson plans from infants to preschool age, there are state regulations that have to be followed, emergency and safety procedures, professional development and child development, and licensure and childcare really requires individuals to enter a professional space. And then running a childcare center requires all of that and then the ability to

organize and lead staff in their own childcare journeys. So there's a lot of thought really that goes into licensing someone in childcare and coaching them through that.

Molly Chamberlin ([21:37](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. Thanks Megan. Cathy, can you talk a little bit about, same question as transportation, and you've alluded to this, why was childcare a priority wraparound service for the community and the folks that you're serving?

Cathy Hays ([21:56](#)):

That's the same with transportation. It's one of the biggest reasons why attrition happens in the workplace. Parents need someone to support them. A lot of times if you're coming out of recovery, you don't have that support system. So you kind of feel lost and you don't know what you're going to do and you need someone that's going to be there and be reliable and take care of your children and you don't have to worry about them. But as everyone knows, childcare is very expensive. So when you're first reintegrating into the workforce, it's going to be hard for you to have the finances to cover everything that you have to cover as far as utilities and rent because you're just now coming from this in-house rehab facility to going to being on your own. Childcare was just, it was astronomical for them and they felt overwhelmed.

([22:52](#)):

So it's very important that they have that opportunity and they have that help to get started. We do have some programs in Kentucky with the childcare council and they can help to offset some of the cost of childcare, but that can take a while. It's a lengthy process to get them involved in that. We do start that with our clients from the beginning to help them to get into that, but they need to be working for a length of time. So we knew that we were going to have to do something to help to take away that burden. So childcare became one of our top priorities. They're the two that we are focused on biggest, childcare and transportation. One of our issues still in our area, because we are just so sparse, is there's not a lot of childcare options. So we're constantly trying to get our clients in with the daycare areas around us.

([23:55](#)):

Of course, I know we're going to talk about policies. Our policies is written that we don't allow a family member to watch the child because there's a lot of legalities in making sure that the funds that we provide are actually going for what they need to be going for. So with our in-house policies, we don't have that option currently. But it needs to grow in our area. We just don't have a lot of options. So that is one of our hurdles, but it's very important that childcare is there. And so far we've been successful with it. We have not had to have any clients to leave their employment because we weren't able to find them childcare. So we have a lot of great partners in our communities that help us to find and locate childcare opportunities to get our clients' children in. So it's been rewarding so far.

Molly Chamberlin ([24:54](#)):

Great. And before I switch it over to Megan, because Megan, I want to talk to you a little bit about kind of challenges with building that ecosystem. Cathy, you mentioned having partners that you've been able to work with to help connect. Can you give us an example of some of the partners that have been most successful with making those connections?

Cathy Hays ([25:10](#)):

We have Daniel Boone Community Action Center. We have EK SEP that's located here. Goodwill is very good to work with. Oh gosh, we have so many partners, I can't even think of them all off the hand, but everyone that we have reached out to in our community is very, very receptive to our program. We've never been told no by anyone that we've reached out to either to hire our client, to enroll them in education, to take their children for daycare, transportation. No one has ever told us no.

Molly Chamberlin ([25:45](#)):

That's great. Well, and Megan, I know your project is working to do just what, address the barriers that Cathy's talking to, building these ecosystems. I know you're still pretty early on, but what kinds of challenges have you seen as you work to build this ecosystem? What kinds of successes have you seen and maybe what surprised you?

Megan Pieper ([26:09](#)):

So the biggest barrier, like Cathy said, not to piggyback on her speech there, but I guess the biggest barrier is finding childcare. We're lacking. So we actually collect a lot of data and we use that data to drive a lot of our programs. And since March 2020, we've had 226 childcare programs closed in the Appalachian region of Ohio. That's 112 centers and 114 in-home care programs, which is the equivalent to 7,615 childcare spots that we lost due to closures. So the care facilities that are available all have waiting lists. We also have childcare deserts, like counties that have little to no childcare facilities where they're far spread out. And another barrier is the non-traditional work hours. So many providers don't offer evening or weekend hours, but a lot of parents have that need. And there's also a need for childcare for children with special needs.

([27:29](#)):

Now, I guess sort of some solutions to that, and some successes. So childcare is a resource and referral agency. So we actually help folks find childcare and what is available. So they can call us, they can give us their information, like their search area, the ages of their kids, the hours they're looking for, and we can send them a personalized report with contact information and what's available, and that's sent out to the parents. So a couple of things that have happened within our program, Cathy, you work with a recovery to work type of program. We actually have started working with a similar program in Athens County in Ohio.

([28:26](#)):

It's a survivor advocacy group. And they found the same thing that you had, we're sending these people back to work, but what do we do with their kids? So that was a huge hurdle for them. They actually are using us and our program to open their own center that can serve, because like you said, these children also have their own specific needs. And traditional childcare may not be the right setting for them, so they're opening their own center within their little communities. So that may be something, I don't know where that funding comes from for them to be able to do that, but that may be another connection that you can make to get some advice on how they're doing that, how they're solving this problem.

([29:23](#)):

So that's been a really interesting... And you talked about Goodwill. We are actually working with Goodwill in Ross County who wants to open their own childcare center onsite for their employees. So those are a couple of really nice things that are happening and solving... So basically people solving their own issues. So yeah.

Molly Chamberlin ([29:51](#)):

That's great. Thanks Megan. Well, I want to switch gears just a little bit. Like I said, I want to make sure that we have time for questions at the end, but policies and procedures, I know Nicole gave very informative presentation earlier today about policies and procedures, and policies and procedures for wraparound services is often something that comes up, transportation, childcare in particular. So focusing on the transportation side of things, Hannah, you already alluded to a number of policies and procedures that you put in place for transportation. So I'll ask you Hannah, and then probably you Cathy as well, what policies and procedures you may have in place. Let me start with you Hannah. What are some of the policies and procedures you put in place for the use of transportation?

Hannah Jarrett ([30:36](#)):

So we've had all of our clients that we serve through the program, fill out an application, just with I think the standard information that you might expect in that, but also proof of employment or proof of enrollment in a job training program. And they have to provide that continuously throughout their participation at different checkpoints. And they also sign an agreement that very clearly outlines what the service is for, what's expected of them and what the consequences are. If for some reason those things aren't upheld, and we take all of those points very seriously. When we first started this work, we would just sort of send the application and the agreement to the individuals and they would sign it and return it back. And we quickly recognized that people weren't fully reading the agreement that they were signing. So part of the process is once we received the application, we actually call them or bring them into our office if that's an option for them.

([31:43](#)):

And we thoroughly walk through what they're signing up for. And we found that that addressed a lot of the problems and preemptively that we were having. When we were using the Lyft Pass platform, which is that voucher or gift card type model through Lyft, we would calculate everyone's commute distance to work or training. So we would know, this person, a one-way trip is 11.2 miles. And so if we saw a one-way trip that was 33 miles, we'd be like, "Oh, that wasn't to work. That was to something else."

([32:18](#)):

And we would give them a call of course, to first ask questions to get clarity and understanding. But then if we recognize that they were misusing that, we would then as per the agreement that they signed, revoke their pass. That's one great thing about the Lyft Pass model. If your community does have a lot of Lyft drivers to meet the needs that you might have related to this, you give them the \$350, but you can also revoke the balance of that pass at any time. So it's not that that money's just gone and you never have it back, you've only spent what they've spent. So that's great.

([32:58](#)):

So it required a lot of daily monitoring, and we just had a couple of people on our team dedicated. They would each check it once or twice a day because we would get that real time information and reports from Lyft. It required that monitoring and also that communication. We also do as part of our procedure, a monthly check-in with anybody who's participating in our, riding in our transportation programs, just to see how it's going, get feedback, make sure that it's meeting their needs because we don't want to be providing a service that's not really helping people. And hearing from those who are being served by the program, they're the best usually solution drivers of anybody.

([33:42](#)):

They're going to have the best ideas that are most relevant and most helpful to them. So we also do a monthly check-in that can either be over the phone, via email, or we have an online type survey form that they can fill out too to make it as convenient as possible. So those are some of the policies and procedures that we've put in place over the years that have really helped both proactively but also reactively to things that come up.

Molly Chamberlin ([34:09](#)):

Great. Thanks Hannah. And then Cathy, in terms of transportation, any policies and procedures?

Cathy Hays ([34:18](#)):

Our is not as broad, I would say, as Hannah's, but we do have some that are in place. Our clients are expected to keep in contact with us by contacting us at least once a week. They are not permitted to schedule their own transportation. Our transportation services is for work and education purposes. We have had clients to ask us to help them by going to the grocery store or something like that. But unfortunately, our grant does not allow us to offer that opportunity for them to do anything outside of the two services, the education or employment. Excuse me. So we have our workforce development specialists are the ones that schedule transportation and as I had said earlier, it's in our policy that they give us their schedule so that we can schedule it out as much as possible in advance. If our clients fail to keep in contact with us, then there's going to be a conversation about whether they can continue to receive that transportation service.

([35:24](#)):

If they do not call us to tell us they're not going to be making it that day, we're still charged if RTEC or Daniel Boone come out. So we need to know in advance that they're not going to make it that day. That can also be a conversation where they could lose their transportation privileges. It's very hard to convince me to do that because I always give the benefit of the doubt. I wear my heart on my sleeve. I just do. But there has been points where I've had to discontinue transportation for just a little while and then we always revisit going back to that. We are pretty straightforward. We do not transport any clients in our own vehicles. There's just too much of a liability issue. And we will schedule transportation for interviews, we'll schedule transportation for applications or to go to school to get registered and do the financial aid, which we also assist with.

([36:28](#)):

So that's basically our rules there. Just make sure that they are doing as they agreed to. We don't per se have an application that they have to fill out, but when they sign their client contract with us, it's all written in there. And of course, as Hannah said, they're not going to read it all. So we do go step by step with them when we are doing intake and then when we are contacted that they're ready to have that first scheduled dates for their transportation, we once again go over their expectations and what we expect from them. And we always make sure we inform that anytime they fall out of the guidelines of that, then there is risk that they'll lose their transportation.

Molly Chamberlin ([37:11](#)):

Thanks, Cathy. And Cathy, then also on the childcare side as a wraparound service, how similar or different are your policies and procedures there?

Cathy Hays ([37:20](#)):

They're pretty much the same. Of course, all of our clients for the first 90 days are expected to check in at least weekly. If we contact them and we don't reach them, we do ask that they contact us back within 24 hours. We understand people are busy. So we try not to put too broad of requirements for them because we know life gets in the way and they also have drug court and they have meetings and they have ILP and things like that. So we want to make sure that we are accommodating for that. But we do expect to know what's going on.

(37:56):

If they are not taking their child to daycare that day, we do ask that they let us know and kind of just say, "She's sick today, I can't take her into daycare." So that we know what's going on and we can keep in front of any issues that the childcare agency may have. They may contact us and say, "Well, so-and-so has not brought their client or their child into daycare for two or three days." And we want to make sure that we can offset any questions, so we do ask that they notify us as well as the daycare center, but we're also going to contact that daycare center to speak on their behalf and let them know what's going on. So we're in constant communication. But outside of that, everything is basically the same with both.

Molly Chamberlin (38:42):

Great, thanks Cathy. And Megan, I know you're in a little bit of a different space, but I wondered if you know had any other thoughts on either policies and procedures that you've put in place as you start to build that ecosystem or that you might recommend based on your knowledge of the early childhood ecosystem?

Megan Pieper (39:01):

So within the licensing process like that, the beginning of the process, the state has their own policies for that. There are certain things that you have to go through, certain trainings that you have to go through before you can even create an application for your license. So we kind of put them through that same process and it's extensive. So that's a level of commitment there in itself. If they're willing to go through that process in the beginning, then they're pretty committed. So we don't really go any further as far as spending money, covering trainings or getting them into trainings that we cover or background checks or anything like that until that first little bit of commitment because a lot of people really don't make it through that. We have a lot that we work with that kind of... Or they go through it and they realize, "This is not what I thought it was. This is not for me."

(39:58):

So what it really is, it's a checks and balances on both sides. It shows them what the commitment looks like and it shows us if they're really committed. So that's our... But after that, everyone's kind of in their own sort of level or process within the licensing process. People are just all over the place at their own pace. So it's a lot of spreadsheets and a lot of data that's collected on each person. And COAD is divided into three different regions, so that we have three people, one in each region who are keeping track of their specific counties and then I'm kind of keeping them on track. But yeah, that's really... For us, it's more about are you committed to the project before we actually invest in you?

Molly Chamberlin (41:02):

That makes sense.

Hannah Jarrett (41:06):

And Molly, I thought of one other thing, hearing Cathy and Megan speak, that was important for us. So we have a domestic violence shelter in our community and we quickly noticed that that was a huge referral partner for us in our transportation work. However, that shelter is confidential. It's a non-disclosed location. So one thing we take that very seriously, the safety of our clients and the people riding our transportation service. So we did work with that shelter to have a different pickup point that wasn't the shelter. So just keeping... Remaining flexible I think was a policy or a procedure that we had in mind to meet the needs. But if that is a clientele, making sure that you have those safety protocols and you're ready to respond in those situations and being adaptable in those cases.

(42:04):

The other thing that we found a lot is that while we don't have a childcare component of our program we did, many people said, "Well, I have to drop my kid off on the way to work or on the way to school or my training program. How does that work?" In the different versions of transportation that we provided, we've had different rules on that depending on what that service was able to accommodate. But we did find that that was a extremely common request. So if you are considering a transportation program, that might be something that you want to think about of what is your response going to be if parents need to drop or caregivers need to drop off their children on the way to work and what is allowed and what's safe?

Cathy Hays (42:56):

And one thing I didn't mention with the childcare, as far as being eligible for the childcare services, they have to already be employed or already enrolled in education before they qualify for our services. So if a client comes to us and they know they're going to need that service, they have to go through the program and do what needs to be done to either enroll in their education avenue or to find employment before they're eligible to put their child in childcare.

Molly Chamberlin (43:29):

That's great. And actually Cathy, you saying that, and Hannah, what you mentioned made me realize something Megan said earlier that I had meant to ask a follow-up on. Megan had mentioned the lack of non-traditional hour childcare so those are kind of outside the traditional hours as a challenge. Cathy, to what extent have the folks that you work with, do they run into that as a challenge?

Cathy Hays (43:54):

In the beginning, it was a huge challenge because we don't have daycare in our area. Barely, we have very little and some of the counties that we work in does not have any at all. There's no daycare facilities there. So in the beginning, it was quite challenging. But now we have got such a good relationship with our employment partners that we work with them to get a schedule that's going to work best for our client. So they've been very open and communicate with us well and help us to find the timeframe that's going to work for our client as far as transportation and as far as childcare.

Molly Chamberlin (44:34):

Great. Thank you very much. Well, thank you to all of you for the great information. We have about 15 minutes left in our panel and I wanted make sure that I stop here and wanted to see if anyone has questions, anyone in the audience wants to submit a question in the chat for any of our panelists. And I will pause my speaking for just a minute and see if anyone has questions. And if not, I have one other question for our panelists. Any questions?

[\(45:06\)](#):

All right. I will give it a minute in case there are questions. I do have kind of one wrap up question I wanted to ask our panelists, and that really is, if you had one piece of advice to give to either work grantees that are looking to do transportation or childcare as a wraparound service or grantees that are looking to work in this ecosystem or expand the early childcare ecosystem, what would be your one biggest piece of advice? And whoever wants to start.

Megan Pieper [\(45:51\)](#):

So I would say that my biggest advice is to have a good plan of execution and a plan for marketing your project. So COAD has a large base and a good relationship with existing childcare, but we have had to develop new relationships with job boards and business supports that we've not always had a strong relationship with in the past, because we haven't really had a project that focused on business so strongly. And we could have gotten probably a bigger jump on this project, had those relationships already been in place and those organizations could have been sending us referrals right out of the gate. And then my other advice would be to develop a good team, one that is dedicated to the project and flexible to switch roles and adapt when needed to cover other parts of the project as it kind of unfolds. Because you definitely run into things and you're like, "Oh wait, this isn't going to work. We got to switch gears a little bit." So you definitely have to be adaptable to your hurdles for sure.

Molly Chamberlin [\(47:07\)](#):

Thanks, Megan. Cathy or Hannah?

Hannah Jarrett [\(47:10\)](#):

So it's not going to be one thing. One is that for transportation, I do recommend that, because we tried a completely free version of our services where the writers, the clients do not pay anything and we found that we had a lot of people, no call, no show in those situations. So I do recommend that you, at least in our experience, we found that having the clients pay even just a very small amount increased the likelihood of them showing up and using the service and therefore cut back on waste of paying for drivers and rides that nobody was taking. Also, I would say, to know your strengths as an organization, as a community, the strengths of your partnership, partnerships that you have, and really understanding what is your role and knowing that you're not going to meet all of the needs of the community, but understanding what part of the need can you meet and just setting those very clear expectations.

[\(48:20\)](#):

I'm not here to say that our work in transportation has solved all of our transportation problems. That is far from the truth. However, we've helped based on our strengths and our partnerships and the needs that we see in our community. It's not hurting, but it's not the magic wand solution. Haven't found that yet. And then I would say that we've had a really great experience with the Commute with Enterprise program. I do not work for Enterprise, they're not paying me to say this, but we really have had a great experience with them. It is long-term sustainable focused. They talk about how they've had van pools that have been on the road for seven plus years in communities.

[\(49:06\)](#):

So for those individuals who don't have licenses or owning a vehicle is just not financially feasible for them, or maybe they have some type of disability where they're not able to operate a vehicle, whatever the case may be, Commute with Enterprise has really been that option that does have that longevity. People can ride it for however long that they need, the longer, the better. In many cases, also Enterprise

does so much in terms of the coordination and logistics and the training and the monitoring and all of that. And it is more affordable for the employees riding. So I really do suggest that you, at least, look into it to see if it is something that might be a possibility to help the transportation to work needs of your community. And we've had a great experience with it so far.

Molly Chamberlin ([50:03](#)):

Great, thanks Hannah. And Cathy, I'm going to put your advice on pause for just a second. We will make sure we get your advice before the end here, but we did have three questions come in. So I wanted to make sure we had a chance to get to these questions. The first question is, have you had any success in helping with licensing or long-term transportation solutions for participants who might have lost a driver's license? Cathy, I see you nodding.

Cathy Hays ([50:27](#)):

Yes. We actually have had quite a few cases where our clients have lost their license due to something in the justice system. There's a process for every county or every state. We do have some clients that come to us that had their driver's license taken away in a different state, but we contact that agency and find out how to go about requesting that the ruling be overturned so that they can get their driver's license back. Every process is different. I don't think we've ever done the same process twice on any client, but we have been successful with every client that we have requested that they be reinstated their driver's license.

Molly Chamberlin ([51:09](#)):

Great. Thanks Cathy. Hannah, have you had any experience in that area?

Hannah Jarrett ([51:16](#)):

So we ask our riders what is their transportation barrier? Not having a license, whether that their license has been revoked or they have some astronomical fee to get their license back, whatever the case may be is one of the more common. The other common one is just it costs so much to own and maintain a vehicle that it's just not financially feasible to do so. We find that people who have that license barrier, who we work with them to set up, look at their budget, we have something called our community resource coordinators who do a lot of case management, one-on-one coaching, budgeting, so we can connect them with those individuals.

([52:02](#)):

So maybe they have to pay a fee or a fine on their license work for them to save up that money as quickly as possible so that then they can pay that off or if they need to participate in some type of class and maybe pay for that for them to participate in or advocate with their employer for them to be off work to participate in that. So we've done some of that, but I would say we find that that being able to financially own a vehicle at the end of the day is the most common barrier to that we see in our community regardless of whether or not they have a license.

Molly Chamberlin ([52:40](#)):

Yeah, that makes sense. And then I see a question for Cathy. This says, Cathy mentioned I believe a Cars to Work program, which I believe is outside of the work grant. Can you provide some additional information on this?

Cathy Hays ([52:53](#)):

Yes, it's through Goodwill. They have a Cars to Work program. I believe, if I can remember correctly, our clients need to be employed 90 days and be able to make the monthly payment. I believe Goodwill helps with the down payment actually. I think it's like \$500 maybe or so for the client to be able to purchase that vehicle. I can send information, Carol, if you want to give me your contact information, I'll send you the name and information for Becky Wilson who is over Goodwill and she'll be able to give you more information on that.

Molly Chamberlin ([53:33](#)):

Great. And Hannah, I see that you've answered Lottie's question in the chat. Lottie was asking, does the Enterprise, the van program do it nationally and who paid the other subsidy?

Hannah Jarrett ([53:45](#)):

One thing that I'll mention that I didn't put in the chat about in response to that is the city of Spartanburg also provides a subsidy for any van pool starting or ending in the county of Spartanburg. And part of that is, again, this is very customizable to your community and the needs of your community, but the city of Spartanburg can then use the riders who participate in Commute with Enterprise towards their overall public transit riders, which then means that they can have more federal dollars, federal transit dollars coming into our community that then just helps address other needs related to transportation. So it really becomes like a win, win, win. So the city of Spartanburg says it's worth it for us to invest in this program because it ultimately will then help us leverage additional dollars. So again, just another reason that I highly recommend that you look into it. It might not meet the needs of your community, but there are a lot of benefits to it.

Molly Chamberlin ([54:46](#)):

Great. Thanks Hannah. And as promised, back to Cathy. Cathy, what is your piece of advice?

Cathy Hays ([54:54](#)):

One thing I did forget to mention is that our program, we have the transportation opportunities, but if we have a client that has a vehicle but something is wrong with it, it's not working properly, we do pay the cost for car repairs. So we do help them to get their car on the road. So I did want to mention that really quickly. We've actually covered quite a few car repairs in the past little bit. So that is just a good little thing that we have going on. My biggest advice I think would be to know your resources, get familiar with your community partners, know your limitations. There is a lot of information out there for anything for childcare and for transportation. One thing I wish that I had known a little bit more of was the limited transportation that we have in our area.

([55:53](#)):

I did know of a couple of our taxi services, I just did not realize they didn't go into other counties, that they're very limited in their range of where they go. So that's one of the biggest things that we noticed was just make sure everything. Be prepared so when you launch your program, you hit the ground running and you're not scrambling to try to figure something out. You've already thought of the worst because I'm one of those that thinks of the problem first and works on the solution before it even happens.

([56:26](#)):

I'm like, "But what if this were to happen?" I drive my team crazy. My team is wonderful. So that's absolutely a must. Megan had said, make sure you have a wonderful team. They would tell you, I am the most turned around person. At times, I'll come out and ask them to do something one way and 10 minutes later I've thought about it again and I'm going back into their office and I'm like, "But let's just talk about this a minute. Maybe we should switch gears." So just be able to switch on a dime and I think everyone will do great.

Molly Chamberlin ([57:00](#)):

All right. Well, thank you all so much. I want to thank our panelists, Hannah, Megan, and Cathy so much for your time today. I'm sure if you have additional questions for them, they would probably be happy to answer them. Throw it in the chat or if you want to contact Nicole or me if you don't have their contact information, happy to share that. Again, thank you three so much for your great insight and we will get ready for our next session. Thanks everyone.

Cathy Hays ([57:26](#)):

Thank you.

Day 2, Session 4: No Cost Extensions and Other Modifications

Nicole Dunn ([00:00](#)):

Good afternoon, everyone. We are happy to be bringing you this last session as part of the 2023 work virtual convening and today, we're going to talk about No Cost Extensions which isn't the technical name for it but I know that's what a lot of people know it by and other modifications. So I am really pleased today to be joined by several great panelists. So we have Christine Tah and originally, we were going to have another grantee, Shie, with Six. So at the last minute, I'm really grateful to have two Federal Project Officers. I'm sure many of you recognize them, Patti Davis and Linda Bobo so I'm just going to start with a quick round of introductions. I think, probably, you all know me by now. You've heard from me a lot but Nicole Dunn with Chamberlin/Dunn, I'm one of your TAT team members. Christine, would you mind introducing yourself?

Christine Tah ([00:47](#)):

Certainly. I'm Christine Tah. I am the grant coordinator at North Georgia Technical College. We, I believe, have the project lead, Kim Ali, but I think she'll be slipping in and out of this session occasionally so I'm covering for her.

Nicole Dunn ([01:09](#)):

Thanks, Christine. Patti, let me go to you.

Patti Davis ([01:14](#)):

Great. Thanks, Nicole and good afternoon, everyone. My name is Patti Davis. I am a Federal Project Officer with US DoL's Employment and Training Administration Region 2 in Philadelphia.

Nicole Dunn ([01:26](#)):

Very good. Thank you. And Linda?

Linda Bobo ([01:30](#)):

Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Linda Bobo and I, too, am a Federal Project Officer in Region 2.

Nicole Dunn ([01:37](#)):

Very good. Thank you, all. All right. So we're going to go through some slides. This is going to look a little bit like, in structure, like Mason's presentation yesterday where I'm going to have our panelists jump in as they go through. I'm going to ask them some questions but also feel free to use the chat to ask me questions as we go or ask our expert panelists questions as well about modifications, no cost extensions, all that good stuff.

([01:58](#)):

So starting with some basics, this is likely review for many of you, especially because I know a lot of you have been through modifications as part of your grant approval process. So what is a modification? It is a formal process. It is used to make changes to your grant agreement and it requires your National Grant Officer's approval. So simple in concepts, not as always so simple in execution but we'll jump through that and we'll get through that today.

([02:24](#)):

So couple of types to be aware of and we'll talk a little bit more about each one of these types of modifications or response to your conditions of award. Like I said, most if not all of you have been through that type of modification. That's what happened at the very beginning when they said, "Hey, congratulations," but we have some things that we want you to respond to as conditions of award in order to get going. I think some of the Round 4 grantees may still be quite at the end of that process.

[\(02:50\)](#):

The second type is a statement of work modification which I'm going to talk a little bit more about in a second. Budget realignment, purchase of equipment, and then quite a few types of modifications that fall under the administrative umbrella and we're going to talk of the Period of Performance Extension specifically under that one.

[\(03:09\)](#):

So a couple of things to know with a statement of work modification, if it's something that you are interested in seeking, you most likely need a modification if you are looking at changes to your population served, changes to your industry or occupation of focus, changes to your training design including the types of wraparound services you want to be able to fund, changes to your service area, changes to your subrecipients, or changes to performance goals and measurement. I'll talk all about that one especially in just a second.

[\(03:38\)](#):

Now, obviously, probably this goes without saying but I'll just mention it, all of these things would still have to be in alignment with the FOA requirements but this would be if you, obviously, in your statement of work, you're going to have more specific things, you said you'd serve these types of people, for example, and with this type of training, that sort of thing. So if you're wanting to make changes to that within your own scope, obviously, it has to be allowable within the FOA. But just because it's allowable within the FOA doesn't mean it's allowable for you to spend funds on if you did not say that's what you were going to do in your statement of work.

[\(04:15\)](#):

Typically, these things are not approved. So typically, you are not allowed to remove your primary population served. So if you said, "We're going to serve dislocated workers and new entrants," and then you want a modification to say, "Actually, we're not going to serve new entrants, we're going to serve incumbents." That typically is not approved to stop saying it and the reason for this, and I know we have our FPO panelists so chime into this if you have anything to add, but the reason for this is you were awarded these funds with a specific design in mind including the types of people you would be serving.

[\(04:46\)](#):

And so, to then go back post award and say, "Actually, just kidding. We'd rather do this," it raises a level of a question of fairness that you were not awarded with that design, as awards are being made, there's a lot of different priorities that are balanced and so it doesn't work to then just say, "Oh, actually, we're going to completely pivot and train a whole new group that we hadn't planned to train at the expense of our original design." Is that fair to say Patti and Linda?

Linda Bobo [\(05:21\)](#):

Yes, that's right.

Patti Davis [\(05:23\)](#):

Yes, Nicole. I think you have it covered. You got it.

Nicole Dunn (05:26):

Good, good. Yeah. And then, so saying goes for occupation and industry of focus, removing a service area and reducing outcomes is essentially, virtually, never allowed. The service area is something I wanted to mention specifically because we've gotten this question before and, again, correct me if I'm misunderstanding, but what I've always been told is that with your service area, you're defining it, again, in your statement of work, in your application, and then in your approved statement of work.

(05:54):

Just because a county is in the ARC region that you could theoretically serve but if you did not outline that in your service area, you cannot just begin serving that county without a modification so that's something to pay attention to. I know we've gotten that question before. Well, this county's in an eligible region so is that... And same goes with eligible workers. So those three eligibility types of [inaudible 00:06:17] dislocated, new entrant, and incumbents, if you said two of those out of the three, you can't just start serving the third without a modification and if you are going to propose that you do that, my understanding is the bar to get that approved is pretty high and you have to provide a pretty strong justification for doing so.

(06:37):

All right. So moving on then to period of performance. So if you are going to request as, again, a lot of people know this as a No Cost Extension, that's the colloquial term for it. Technically, Period of Performance Extension is what it's called. So you will need to include, if you're thinking about doing this and I know Round 3 grantees are probably right in the midst of thinking about this right now, you will need to include the circumstances, challenges, or problems that created the need to extend. So hopefully, you've been outlining these in your quarterly narrative reports along the way so that this is not a surprise to your FPO, you want to be able to explain, start laying that as soon as you start seeing maybe the need for that, or at least you will have done a good job.

(07:21):

Mason mentioned, I think yesterday, or maybe it was Ben, anyway, that using those quarterly narrative reports really as a journaling exercise to be able to track through progress throughout, explain things that are challenging so that again, when you get to the point where you're having... If you do decide to ask for a Period of Performance Extension, it's not a surprise. There's nothing new that your FPO will learn at that point.

(07:43):

You'll want to talk about the amount of funds remaining. You'll want to talk about the efforts to address challenges and whatever corrective action you may have already taken or you will be taking to try to remedy those challenges or if you have a shortcoming in your metrics, for example, what are you doing to correct that to make as much progress as you can? What do you think you'll be able to accomplish by the end of your original timeline? And then, what might you be able to accomplish in an extension period, so what might ETA be able to expect if they allow you to go up to 12 additional months? Let me pause there and see, Patti or Linda, anything you would add here on the Period of Performance Extension that you'd want to see in the modification?

Patti Davis (08:26):

Sure, Nicole. I'll add a couple things. First, as you've already mentioned that period performance requests can only be made in the last year of a grant award. So Nicole, you're correct in saying at this point, Work 2 grantees could be preparing to submit a period performance extension request. Second of

all, equipment is not allowed to be purchased in the third year or maybe, the last year of the grant award so I wanted to mention that as well. So even if the equipment purchase request was approved by ETA previously, if you have not purchased all of your equipment by the end of the second year, you are not approved to move forward purchasing equipment in the third year of your grant.

Nicole Dunn ([09:04](#)):

That's a good test. Yeah. That's good to know. I think I might have said Work Round 3, I did mean Round 2 so thank you for clarifying that. Yeah. All right. Very good.

Linda Bobo ([09:12](#)):

I'll just add that you do need to have a very good explanation of why you need the extension because like you mentioned earlier, it's a competitive award and you were awarded the grant based upon you said you could accomplish this in this timeframe so you really do need to have a very thorough explanation of why you need an extension.

Nicole Dunn ([09:35](#)):

Yes. Yes, which is a great segue to my next point which is I think many people know this by now but I know I've gotten this question before, having leftover money is not in itself a justification for extending. I've heard people say like, "Well, we have this money left, we can serve more people." But really, again, correct me here that what ETA is looking for is how can you meet your outcomes... If you need additional time to do so, how might you do that in that final year? It's really not just, "Hey, we have more money so we can serve more people."

([10:10](#)):

I'll also mention here too, I know I've seen quite a few period of performance modifications coupled with others so coupled with, let's say, a budget realignment because you do have leftover funds but you may not need it in one area, maybe you haven't purchased all the equipment that you planned so you have some leftover funds there. By allocating those funds to a different cost category, you're making the case for how that will help you meet your outputs and outcomes. So we've seen that sometimes a company, a scope modification as well in rare cases where you're able to maybe add an industry while also serving your original industry that you had planned or something like that. But again, if you're going to change those type of scope elements, you're going to have to make a pretty strong case for why that is needed.

([10:58](#)):

All right. So then, budget realignment, really quick on this, it's pretty straightforward. It's that you're having to change your budget, change across categories. So the review for this is they're going to look at allowability, "Can you actually spend money like this per your statement of work and per the FOA? Is this a reasonable change? How much are you saying it's going to cost to do a certain thing and why will that be necessary?" Necessity is the third. Why will it be necessary? And then, mathematical accuracy, they're going to check that the numbers that you're putting forth actually add up the way that they're supposed to. I'm sorry. The same thing here. So that's if more than 10% is moved across categories so you can move that 10% total across the entire period of performance across cost categories without having to seek a formal modification.

Patti Davis ([11:48](#)):

Yep. You got it, Nicole.

Nicole Dunn ([11:51](#)):

Perfect.

Patti Davis ([11:51](#)):

Yeah. I would just add to that if any grantee is considering a budget realignment to speak with their FPO first. Because to Nicole's point, even if the budget realignment is less than 10% of the total grant award, the FPO is going to want to see a revised budget, the SF-42A form, and a revised budget narrative for their records. Just so that we're all on this, FPOS and grantees are on the same page.

Nicole Dunn ([12:15](#)):

Yes, that's a great point and it's also a good way to just track. I know tracking, that kind of thing, can be hard over time and just having really good records, really clear records, is going to help you in the long run. Good. All right. Well, let's go through the process here and through this, I'm going to have Christine talk a little bit about each of these steps that they went through at North Georgia Technical College. So before I do that, Christine, would you mind talking to us? Just talk through the types of modifications that you all have pursued so far during your period of performance.

Christine Tah ([12:45](#)):

Okay. So we had two modifications. One was the scope modification and the second one was what you call the No Cost Extension. To give everyone a background, we are a Round 1 grantee. We were awarded the grant six months before the official declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic. The challenge was that our project was designed for ground-based service delivery. In other words, in-person, face-to-face, our participation rate was very low even though we were trying various strategies to boost the project enrollment and completion rates. So let me take you back to the early days of the pandemic which our project leaders highlighted in their Q&Rs.

([13:46](#)):

So there were a lot of administrative issues in the background that was impeding the start of the project. So we are a two-year college located in the far northeastern tip of Georgia, bordering the two Carolinas and our project was to provide employable skills training to workers there, I mean, to both our college students to incumbent workers as well as new entrants. When the pandemic, just as it was happening, our college leadership had to form a COVID Task Force. They had to communicate with students and their families about COVID, evacuating our dorm students, converting 100% of our classes to an online format for the remainder of the spring semester.

([14:48](#)):

And then, as time went on, we had to figure out how to purchase PPE, sanitizers, disinfectants for students, faculty, and staff when the state mandated all faculty and staff to return to campus in July 2020 so a bare or four months later. It was hard doing all of this because the majority of our purchase orders were diverted to hospitals. And then, lastly, our college president contracted the virus in August 2020 and died six weeks later. So we had a lot of administrative things going around in the background that was affecting the project team being able to go forward and launching the project.

([15:39](#)):

We had reached out to you, Nicole, and several times what we do, I remembered that you had scheduled some webinars for us and so we heard what other Round 1 grantees were talk talking about. We tried to pivot to working in a virtual format which is a little bit more difficult because a lot of our

students live in areas where broadband was either non-existent and was sketchy at best. It seemed with our employer partners, many of them did not have good access to broadband. And so, it took... Internally, the project team constantly tracked the enrollment and completion project rates at least on a quarterly basis, if not on a monthly basis. They met with the college leadership several times to discuss various mitigative steps that they could take.

(16:55):

But by the 18th month, the college's executive team authorized Kim who was the Lead Student Success Coach to seek a modification. It was around this time that we were notified that Julian Hardy was our new, at that time, was our new FPO. He had reached out to us to ask to meet with us so he could get to know us and to know our project. And so, we asked you, Nicole, to join us in the virtual meeting because you were helping us with this issue as well as other issues. And so, when we met with our FPO, we highlighted what we wrote in our Q&Rs about the delays and the COVID-related challenges. Kim also highlighted the mitigative steps that her team tried in delivering both virtual and ground-based services.

(17:51):

And so, we presented to him three ideas from the college's leadership and the first one was the addition of a third training delivery method. Our first delivery method was a standalone workshop. Our second one was what we call embedded workshops into existing occupational classes and the third one that the college leadership proposed was a credit bearing course for students. A second idea was to open up the project participation to upward division students, in other words, students beyond their first year of college. Their third idea was to reduce project participants down to about thou 1000 students. We knew it was a long shot but it just didn't hurt to ask so we sought advice from our FPO on that.

(18:59):

And so, we work closely with our FPO and with you to identify appropriate evidence in supporting case. So again, we had been documenting, Kim had been documenting all of this in her Q&Rs. We emphasized the effects of the pandemic on starting the project. We talked about the low project enrollment because by 18 months into the project, our project enrollment was in the single digits in terms of percentage and we had 16% decrease in their student population. But those who did enroll in the college not just the project was 67% increase in distance education.

(19:52):

And then, Kim also talked about the low employer partnership participation rate because right before the pandemic, a lot of the employers were experiencing worker shortages but it intensified during the pandemic. There were layoffs, there was fear of condition, there was issues of shutdown of childcare providers during the early days of the pandemic and dealing with children who were being homeschooled who had to study at home. So Kim outlined all of these steps in her request for a scope modification.

(20:35):

And then as you had pointed out, things that's typically are not approved. So we ended up withdrawing the issue of participant reduction because as you pointed out, reduction in outcomes typically are not approved. We also withdrew the issue of broadening the definition of eligible participants to include students of any year. As you had pointed out, especially this morning, the definition of participant, it's an internal issue that grantees had to decide so there was no need for ETA to be involved so we ended up with keeping just the enhancing the training design with the third training delivery method.

Nicole Dunn (21:28):

Yeah, yeah. What Christine is talking about there is that their participant definition was still new entrants which they had identified as their target population. And so, new entrants of their freshman year of college, new entrants of their junior year, it was the same definition in that case. Yep, yep. That's great. Good. Yes. One of the things I meant to mention on the slide with metrics. So one thing I have seen done and I guess the disclaimer I'll try not to repeat too many times is and I'm sure Patti, Linda, I think you would agree with this, every case is different-

Christine Tah ([22:04](#)):

Yes.

Nicole Dunn ([22:04](#)):

Every single work is different. And so, just because something was approved in one area, in one case doesn't mean it's necessarily going to be approved in a different case because there are other details. However, one thing I have seen be successful related to metrics is a realignment of submetrics. So in one case, one of the Round 1 work grantees had identified a certain number of trainees in nursing and a certain number of trainees in business, an overall number of participants trained.

([22:32](#)):

They didn't touch the overall number of participants trained but they did reallocate those submetrics to say, "Actually, we're seeing a booming demand for nursing and a little bit less of a demand for business so we'd like to focus more on nursing to help meet that overall goal," and in their case, that was approved. So that's an example of where that top line number is very, very unlikely to change but it's possible given your circumstances that within that you could say, "Well, if you had set a sub goal, let's say for dislocated and new entrants, maybe there's a possibility you could reframe that so that you're focusing on more of one and less of the other." Again, I promise I won't repeat this disclaimer again but that's obviously all based on specific circumstances.

([23:15](#)):

So let's jump into the process and Christine actually talked about this process a little bit. So my shameless attribution here, I stole these graphics from Department of Labor. So down here at the bottom you'll see there's an FAQ for modifications that is really useful and walks you through. Your grantee handbook also walks you through this step by step, the information compliments each other but you can see that as a resource.

([23:39](#)):

So the first step, this is what Christine described. So you meet with your leadership, your staff, any relevant external partners, and they did that before they even came to us, to talk about whether you need and what kind of changes you might need to make to your statement of work or any other modification timeline or budget or whatever that might be. So that should be an internal discussion first. Are there steps that we can take to proceed as originally planned or is it really important? If so, what kind of modification might we be pursuing/proposing?

([24:12](#)):

Step two then is researching the design and content of a successful modification. So this is, again, where... So they met with us and we're happy to do that. This TA coach is a dude, we're not dudes but that's okay. So you meet with us, we're happy to talk you through it. Again, we're happy to share the examples that we've seen that have been successful. We've also seen somewhere either they were

completely unsuccessful like it's not possible to, as Christine mentioned, that reduction in number of people you're going to serve.

[\(24:43\)](#):

But we've also seen some cases where the evidence initially provided wasn't strong enough and so there was some additional justification required for something like serving another industry type or serving in an additional county. Again, it's going to be case by case but we have seen some places where certain justification was kicked back as not sufficient and other justification might have been provided so this is a place where we can help you with that. Unrelated to this work project but Molly and I do a lot of work in labor market analytics and so, that's a place where, too, we can leverage a little bit of our experience with the labor market data to be able to help provide some of that supporting information.

[\(25:24\)](#):

The next step then, I doctored this graphic so I added this dotted line with your TA coach because as Christine mentioned, she let us sit in on the conversation with her FPO, with Julian, which is really valuable for us. It's really helpful for us to hear firsthand some of the interpretations, some of the things that might fly, might not fly. Also, then to be able to take that feedback and go back and help Christine and others as we've sat on these rework and reframe their documentation. So certainly not required to include us in these conversations ever with your FPO but it is helpful for us for our own edification and being able to take those lessons to other grantees, it can be really valuable for us. And then, in turn, hopefully, valuable for you all.

[\(26:05\)](#):

So then yeah, again, you would go to your FPO as Christine mentioned. Julian was willing to have that initial conversation where they had laid out everything she just described. This was our original plan, these were the challenges we've encountered, these are the things we're proposing as possible modifications, and he was able, as she talked about, to say, "Yeah. Well, based on my experience, this one's probably not going to happen at all. You're going to get stuck, essentially. If you try to put this all in a single request, I know it's going to get kicked back basically."

[\(26:34\)](#):

And so, much like with policies and procedures we talked about this morning, your FPO probably can't... They're not going to say, "Yes, absolutely. This is going to be..." But they can offer a lot of advice on the way they're interpreting it and the kind of thing that they might know based on their experience won't fly. So let me pause there and see, Linda or Patti, is there anything else you would add here about the type of things that you would want a grantee to have prepared when they meet with you to talk about a modification?

Patti Davis [\(27:08\)](#):

Well, Nicole, I think you've covered it a lot already with respect to what's in the grantee handbook. That speaks a lot to what is required for really any type of modification request along with the links you provided on the slide here below. Also, even having just that initial conversation, even if a grantee is saying, "Well, I'm thinking about making a change," what needs to happen is, "Do I need to submit a formal modification? Do I not?" Just to even get the conversation started.

[\(27:36\)](#):

Of course, Nicole, we always welcome yours and Molly's support on those conversations especially because we may be able to speak to the what or a compliance concern but you may be able to assist on the how. So again, always welcome your support as well. But yeah, really referring to the grantee

handbook and the materials out there, really just getting your thoughts and your notes organized and then really trying to figure out what's doable and what may not be doable. Again, to your point, Nicole, really everything is on a case by case basis but we certainly are always welcome to lend our insight.

Nicole Dunn ([28:15](#)):

Yep. That's great.

Linda Bobo ([28:18](#)):

I'll just add that one other thing that may need a modification request, you should check with your FPO is a change in partners or an addition of a partner. I think that was just one thing that I wanted to cover. That's it.

Nicole Dunn ([28:36](#)):

Yeah. Absolutely.

Christine Tah ([28:38](#)):

Okay. Also, Nicole, one of the issues that we also had to deal with initially was what type of modification. We were already, I think, into our 18th month of the project so our midway point of the project so we weren't too sure whether at this point we should go for scope modification or just wait a little bit longer just trying to do other mitigative steps and go for a no cost extension. Julian recommended that we just go with the... No, I'm sorry. With the scope modification first and see how that goes.

Nicole Dunn ([29:23](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Linda, I think that was a good one and I did mean to flag that earlier in the list, partners. Now, the FAQ document does note that for employers, just because you're adding an employer, let's say, and they weren't specifically mentioned in your grant application, that doesn't necessarily require modification unless your employer is playing some really big role in your grant and you're swapping them out and you had named them in the application as your key partner to, let's say, do onsite training or something like if you're doing incumbent worker training and they were one of your big sources and now all of a sudden, they're exiting your project and you're totally replacing them, that might need. But that's where, again, to Linda's point, don't be afraid to have those conversations to raise those questions. This really can be a conversation with your FPO, you don't come with every single question answered, they really are a great resource to be able to tell you.

([30:18](#)):

To Christine's point too, what we were talking earlier about the participant definition, I've seen several cases where the result of this conversation is actually... There really just needs to be a clarification made, documented rather than a full modification so that's been the case in several instances which makes everyone's life a little bit easier. The timeline on that is much shorter.

([30:41](#)):

All right. Yeah. We had started to get into this. So what will you need to prepare then in this third step? So you don't have to come to the first meeting with this all prepared but before you submit formally, this is what you're going to have to put together as part of the form. So you'll need a cover letter on your letterhead really just summarizing what are you looking for, what have been the issues, what are

you looking to change, what type of modification are you requesting. It's going to need to be addressed to your grant officer.

(31:09):

As we've talked about, you will have to provide a comprehensive written description of justification and I have seen modifications be sent back to grantees to say, "This part's been improved but this part needs more rationale or more justification," and so getting it as strong as possible, the very first time around will save you time rather than having to resubmit. Any appropriate documentation, that's going to vary obviously by the type of request but you might have other things that need to be attached. You will need to email that draft to your FPO for feedback. It's a good idea to have that person read your FPO review at first and then you will be submitting a final version signed by your authorized representative, which by the way, that also will require modification if you ever change your authorized representative or your point of contact. All those little administrative things do also require those modifications. Those are easier, you don't have to have a full justification, like a two-page justification necessarily for that but that does require modification.

(32:02):

Depending on the type of modification you're pursuing, you might have to submit an updated project timeline, an updated budget narrative, an updated SF-424A as Patti had mentioned if you're going to do a budget realignment. Let me pause there and see, do our panelists have anything, any other content you'd be looking for, or that you have to submit?

Patti Davis (32:21):

Yeah, Nicole, let me just add on the bullet in the middle of the email or submit final version signed by your authorized representative to your FPO. I believe that may vary region by region. So I would recommend to a grantee that when they are ready to submit a final version of a modification request to obtain instructions from their FPO on how to do that because like I said, I believe that may be a different internal process region to region.

Nicole Dunn (32:48):

That's great advice. Thank you for that note.

Patti Davis (32:51):

Yep.

Linda Bobo (32:53):

I'll just add that if you're showing a change in a statistical information, it's nice to read it as a table like, "This is what we said we would do, this is our change, this is going to be our new outcomes," to make it read easier is helpful.

Nicole Dunn (33:17):

Yeah/.that's a great point. I mean, almost this is the advice we give when people are developing applications. It's like, "Don't make someone hunt for, is this information there?" So really clear headers as Linda was just saying, really good tables. Some of the documentation too, I've seen it vary by region but for a period of performance modification, there are certain forms that I've seen an FPO send to a grantee to say, "We want it in this exact table format. We want to be able to see these cells," so if you

have questions about what should go in that or want to see a dummy example or something like that, certainly ask for that. But I think, Patti, you made a good point too about variations in the process region to region. So that's why, again, it's a great idea to have that dialogue in place with your FPO before you go too far down creating something that either not creating something they're going to need or spending time creating something in a format that's not going to work for them.

(34:13):

All right. Step four then, of course, is submitting your formal grant modification and so that then your FPO is going to send that up, if you will, and then it will be reviewed. That review timeline can really vary. We've seen it happen fairly quickly and we've seen it take several months so it's really tough. I think once, my understanding at least, once your FPO has sent it off, again, Linda and Patti, you live this so correct me, there's not a lot of... It's out of your hands at that point and that review process has to take place. And so, there's not a lot of updates you can really be providing except that, "Yes, it's in this stage of the process." And so, again, it's one of those things where once you think you're going to need it, it's a good idea to go ahead and move that process forward on your end as much as you can so that when it gets to this step four in Department of Labor, you're allowing for that time to occur.

Linda Bobo (35:06):

You also want to allow time to occur for the discussion between yourself and your FPO so there might be several iterations of your modification requests going back and forth, just even before you submit it. So my recommendation is like, "Don't wait." Time flies and you want to get your modification in as quickly as possible because you don't know how long it's going to take and I would hate for grantee to be in a situation where they're desperate for the modification.

Nicole Dunn (35:39):

Yep. Yeah. Christina, I was going to ask you about how long did your process take both times? So your first modification, your statement of work modification and then second with your timeline modification.

Christine Tah (35:54):

So for the scope of modification, we started the informal discussions with our FPO back in May 2021 which is roughly our midway point of the project. We submitted the initial draft to him in July of that year and then when he came back in around September to say that, "Okay. They're not going to go with the reduction in project outcomes," so we redrafted it, submitted to him around late September 2021 and we received the approval in January 2022. So that is for the scope modification. It-

Nicole Dunn (36:39):

Yep.

Christine Tah (36:40):

Yep. Go ahead.

Nicole Dunn (36:42):

Yeah. On your timeline then?

Christine Tah (36:45):

Yes. And then, since we ended up seeking a No Cost Extension as well and we started making a case for it pretty much when we realized that the pandemic was not going to be a 2-week shutdown. So we took your advice to start discussing pandemic related delay setbacks in our Q&R, starting with one ending March 2020. Kim also highlighted in her Q&Rs the supportive services that the project team delivered to our participants and she talked about the other mitigative steps that she attempted to bring the training delivery portion of the project forward. And so, as I had mentioned earlier, we discussed the issue with our FPO about midway of the grant's term because the No Cost Extension basis was so closely related to the scope modification.

(38:05):

And then, during the virtual monitoring visit we had with Julian Hardy and then Coretta Boseman joined around that time too so we discussed and we discussed it extensively with the two of them. We explored additional mitigative steps and included them in our Q&Rs and in our corrective action plan. After the monitoring visit, we stated our intent to request a No Cost Extension to sustain the momentum generated by the Creative Action Plan. And then, in terms of working on the No Cost Extension, the actual language for it, we requested a meeting with our FPOs May of last year. We also met with you separately to review our outline, our draft of the No Cost Extension. Kim submitted the draft to our FPOs around a week or two later and then we submitted the No Cost Extension request 30 days later in June. We received a response by, I believe the end of September. I think there was at one point where Coretta Boseman requested clarification or something else and we provided that promptly.

Nicole Dunn (39:36):

Yeah. Good. So yeah, I think as Linda mentioned, and then as you're hearing from Christine, modifications can take quite a while, especially if you look at the full process, starting from internal conversations all the way through the approval. So I know it's easy to say and hard to do, to start that as soon as possible, but if you are a Round 2 grantee and you are interested in seeking a period of performance modification, that's something that I would strongly recommend you at least initiate those conversations as soon as possible because then, that will hopefully avoid having to be right at the very, very end.

(40:11):

But one other thing I'll mention on that, the advice that we've heard before is your period of performance extension can be up to 12 months. It does not have to be 12 months. The recommendation unofficially that I've heard from other FPOs is do it by quarter at least because if you perform even one day in that quarter, you're going to have to do a quarterly reporting for that entire quarter so you might as well perform in the entire quarter.

(40:36):

That's not official advice or anything but that's something I've heard several FPOs just say something to consider. So extend for 3, 6, 9, or 12 months even though you can't actually go any increment within that. Those are the big things. So let me pause and just see. I guess I have one other question for you, Christine, and then I'll see if others have questions here which is what, if anything, do you wish... Now you've been through this process twice, is there anything you wish you would've known or would've done differently in either cases that you... Lessons you learned you would pass on to others?

Christine Tah (41:10):

Oh gosh. For me, I mean, coming from a compliance monitoring background in a previous lifetime, I would have wanted to start it personally, the whole process much sooner but I think it just all played out

because of things that happen in the interim, the changes in FPO. And then, besides the death of our college president, Kim went through a transition in her vice president. He had retired and a new one came on board and there was an interim in between so I couldn't have pushed it any further than this.

Nicole Dunn ([42:04](#)):

Yeah. That makes sense. All right. Well-

Christine Tah ([42:08](#)):

Oh. Yeah.

Nicole Dunn ([42:08](#)):

Oh. Go ahead.

Christine Tah ([42:09](#)):

And then, in terms of the documentation that we provided for the No Cost Extension, we followed the outline in the ETA's modification tool spreadsheet that Coretta and Julian sent to us and Kim added demographic data about our enrolled participants and compared them to the general population of our service area. It's not one of the required documents but Coretta suggests that might help us. Also, other items that were not required was that Kim added letters from six employers' partners in which they emphasize the continuing need for the project as the country begins to emerge from the pandemic. She also included letters from five of the student participants talking about their project experiences and the value of the training and supportive services they received. And so, like Stacy had mentioned yesterday during the session about program monitoring, our FPOs already knew about some of these employers and students because Kim had arranged for the employers and students as well as her own project team to be interviewed during the virtual monitoring visit so it wasn't a surprise to our FPOs. It wasn't what they had already heard about.

Nicole Dunn ([43:46](#)):

Yeah. Great. Well, we do have a few minutes if anyone has questions. I don't see any in the chat at the moment but we can go ahead and take questions or, Linda and Patti, while we're waiting on, see if any questions roll in. Anything else you would add in terms of advice for a grantee who's considering... Oh, Liz asked, "Can we go to the step one of the process?" Oh yeah. Sure, Liz. Definitely. Like these other presentations, we will be sending these out to everyone. We're recording the sessions. Is it this one, Liz? So meeting with leadership staff and external partners relevant to determine if you need to make a change. Good.

Patti Davis ([44:31](#)):

Nicole, I have nothing to add. I think you covered it very thoroughly.

Nicole Dunn ([44:35](#)):

Great. Thank you. Patti, anything from your seat, lessons you've seen, or types of evidence you would recommend or anything else grantees should consider?

Patti Davis ([44:50](#)):

I mean, I would just continue to support that constant communication with grantees amongst their partners, their leadership, their own staff, their FPO especially if they feel like a modification is needed. Really, the communication is key. You really want to make sure everyone is on the same page and that, again, and that there are no surprises. We certainly don't want to have grantees doing duplicate efforts with respect to modification requests so we really just want to make sure that communication is open, that the guidance that is available, such as, again, we keep saying the link from Workforce GPS but resources more for Workforce GPS and the grantee handbook that they're referenced every time you prepare a request. I mean, all the information is really out there. If you follow what's there and again, with support of your FPO and Nicole that you would be really, I think, putting yourself in a really good position to have a successful modification. But again, it's really just about the communication and just referencing all the resources [inaudible 00:45:52]-

Nicole Dunn ([45:54](#)):

Yep. Absolutely. We might be losing Patti just a little bit.

Christine Tah ([46:00](#)):

Also, I would suggest to Round 2 grantees who are looking to put in a timeline modification is to really, really discuss the issue with your organization's key leadership and ask advice about the feasibility of this timeline modification as well as the input as to how realistic it is because it is more than just the ETA site that you have to deal with. You have to make sure that your organization has a capacity to help you through the additional time that you plan to request. I mean, explain to the leadership about the resources you would need for the timeline modification, ask for their support or assistance in securing those resources because we really, really needed that in order to make it possible for our modification to be successful. And then, keep them up-to-date, keep your organizational leadership up-to-date as to the progress of the No Cost Extension requests as well as project deliverables while you are waiting for ETA's decision.

Nicole Dunn ([47:20](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. I think that's great. Again, it's easy to say, hard to manage but I've seen a couple of cases where grantees were to the point where they were really hurting for that modification to go through and the timeline was still in the process and they had communicated with partners, this wasn't Christine, this is someone else, had communicated with partners under the new proposed expanded model, "Hey, we're going to start this soon." And so, partners were ready to go and the modification hadn't gone through yet. And so, that's, again, I recognize how hard it is to manage this, manage that timeline, but managing expectations in that process is going to be really important knowing that, unfortunately, it's not going to happen overnight. It could take a few months or more to get through the entire process. So just being realistic about that, I think, with partners especially external partners and internal leadership, if you've got people who are not day-to-day connected to the project, can be really important.

Christine Tah ([48:21](#)):

Right, because one of the resources that was added, not specifically for the project, but it became evident with the project that it was necessary, was the college added a mental health counselor that we used separate federal grants for it but that helped relieve or alleviate some of the time that Kim and her team because they had to spend so much time working with the students. Again, this was during the main part of the... I won't say main part of the pandemic. So they were dealing with issues not only with us but with our students. The average age of our participants, of our college students, it's 26. They have

young families. Most of them were raised by grandparents so they have to deal with pandemic-related issues, fear of coming back to campus, all of that. So making the organization, the colleges' leadership aware of these additional resources that are necessary outside the scope of the grant in order for the grant project to proceed and succeed.

Nicole Dunn ([49:47](#)):

Yeah. Yep. I think that's a really, really good point. Good. Liz, I see your question here, "When do you really start looking to do an extension, a period of performance modification?" So it will not be entertained by Department of Labor until the final third of the grant. So in this case, three-year grant so final year. However, you can start laying the groundwork internally, I would say two things at least come to mind and then I would open up to our panelists.

([50:13](#)):

One is making sure that in your Q&Rs, you're tracking your challenges, what is leading to any delays or anything like that. The second thing would be also documenting well the plans you've then put into place to manage that. So what sort of internal corrective action are you taking? Are you expanding your outreach pipeline? Are you dedicating resources to employer relation depending on whatever the issue is that is affecting your grant? That's the thing too because both of those things are going to be needed. What are the issues? But then, what have you done to date to solve them or address them so that there's confidence with that extension, you can continue to make progress toward your outcomes? Anything else that my panelists would add there about if you're already thinking about that modification for next year?

Patti Davis ([51:08](#)):

No. Other than, Liz, I would recommend speaking to your FPO about it. Again, because I'm not your FPO and I'm not familiar with your grant or where you are with respect to statement of work goal achievement but certainly to Nicole's point, it certainly doesn't hurt now to really start thinking about it and to start gathering up your documentation, whether it's from your Q&Rs, your performance... If you're concerned if it's like you need more time because of performance, where you are with that now, where you could see yourself later on this year. But again, I think it doesn't hurt now to start thinking about and getting ready to have a conversation with your FPO, even if it's just informal, to see what really makes the most sense for you.

Nicole Dunn ([51:46](#)):

Yeah. That's good advice. Any other questions for me or for our panelists? Perfect. Yeah, Liz. That's great. Yep. All right. Very good. Well, again, as we've stated many times, our team is available to help if you want a thought partner, if you want to think through, if you want to ask us, "Hey, have we seen this type of thing move forward?" We can offer some, again, unofficial usually advice on, "Hey, if you're thinking about this thing, maybe approach it this way," or, "Here's some evidence you might be able to provide," that sort of thing. Always happy to help with that and then to walk alongside you in that process of modifications. But you do have the benefits now, Round 3 and 4, especially of the benefits of some of these earlier grantees who have been through it.

([52:40](#)):

So please join me in thanking our panelists for today and thank you all to those of you who attended over the last two days. It's been really great to have you. It's always fun to do this convening. We are

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going to regroup in about four minutes for just a really quick wrap up from Molly and me and so we will see you in just a couple minutes.

Christine Tah ([53:02](#)):

Thank you. Bye.

Nicole Dunn ([53:03](#)):

Thanks.

Day 2, Session 5: Open Q&A and Closing

Nicole Dunn (0:00):

Alright, well again, thank you everybody, and thanks for those of you who are sticking with us through this last Q&A session. This is going to be really pretty short, we didn't want to leave you all just hanging at the end of the session. We did want to give a chance, if there are any final questions from today, final questions about any other ARC-related topics we've got Kinsey here. I did want to ask, before you go please, I dropped this in the chat, we do a feedback questionnaire. We really do read these things. We really do analyze the data. We really do talk about it with Kinsey, so it's always very helpful to hear how you felt about different sessions, the kind of information you think is useful, and especially other information you want us to cover throughout the rest of the year. So we've got some TA funds that could go toward bringing in other external speakers, you know, we can bring you all together if you just want to have a convo on a specific topic or, you know, periodically check in. So on that note, we will check in periodically, I think I have mentioned this a couple of times. We try not to bother you. We know you're busy, but we also know it's easy to forget we're here and a resource for you. So we'll ping you throughout the year. Those of you who aren't on Higher Logic yet, please do register. We'll be sending out a whole list of the links for the recordings, the presentations, these other resources, things like registering for Higher Logic. We'll send out the survey link in case you don't want to take it now. I promise it'll take about 2 and a half minutes to do. So with that, if you have other questions, we're here to answer them. Otherwise I will kick it to Kinsey for a formal wrap-up. Should have hold music prepared.

Kinsey (1:46):

Yeah, I know some background thought music, that's a good suggestion for next time. Yeah and if y'all are just information overload right now, that's okay. Oh, here's one from Julie.

Nicole (1:59):

The approval back after signing up for Higher Logic. It should be really quick. We had a little bit of technical difficulty to be upfront about it with signups not actually connecting to the WORC community, but I think we've worked that kink out, so it should happen really quickly is my understanding.

Kinsey (2:23):

Also if it doesn't let us know. We can get on the backend of that stuff and troubleshoot whatever you need on Higher Logic.

Nicole (2:30):

Yeah. I think everyone has my, I'll drop my email address in the chat also just in case. I'm on email speed dial. We're always happy to help. We'll be upfront if it's something we don't know, we'll go find out if we can or we'll tell you what we do know, so please don't hesitate to reach out. My watch is talking to me, my technical expertise here is on display. Alright. Well very good. I see we've got a couple people dropping off. This is an excellent community. It's full of really knowledgeable people. Really again, I want to thank you so much for spending some time with us these last couple of days. It's really nice to go out and do this in person, but I know you're coming from all over the place. So virtual. There's no food or AC to talk about in the feedback form, so it does make it a little bit shorter that way. Otherwise thank you again so much for your time and attention the last couple of days.

Kinsey (3:34):

Yeah yall thank you for engaging with us. I know two days is a lot virtually but you were really engaged and asked a lot of really great questions that will help us inform not just our practice where we're facilitating amongst yall on Higher Logic, but our programming in general to provide the best TA we can. And thank you to Nicole and Molly for always being super supportive of me and all of the work we're doing with WORC. I know I double say that word a lot, but that's just how it goes. Thank you, I appreciate it.

Nicole (4:04):

Alright well, you know how to find us, thank you again, everyone have a great rest of the week, take care.