

National Monitoring Training for State Agencies

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY: PARTICIPANT FILE REVIEW



Today's Presenter

2



Danielle Worthen-Ramos

*Division Chief, Division of Workforce
Investment*

USDOL

✉ worthenramosdanielle@dol.gov

📞 (617)788-0314



Today's Objectives

3



- Purpose and benefits
- Sample selection
- Key compliance elements
- Key quality/effectiveness elements
- Checklists and tools



The Value of Participant File Review

4

PURPOSE & BENEFITS



Purpose and Benefits

5

- **Reviewing participant files can answer a number of important questions:**
 - Is everyone being served actually eligible?
 - What kinds of people are being served? What are their barriers? Are they hard-to serve?
 - Are case managers maintaining appropriate documents and creating thorough case notes?
 - What service delivery strategies are in place and are they effective for participants?
 - Are case managers following the policies and procedures you've reviewed?



Selecting the Best Sample

6



Sample Selection

7

- Select a timeframe within the period of performance
- Request a list of participants that is diverse
 - Career and training services
 - Active and exited
- Determine sample size
 - Should be between 10-20% of the participant pool
- Determine the sampling methodology to be used:
 - Random, stratified or targeted
- Discuss with the grantee



Sampling Methodology—Random

8

- Minimizes sampling bias
- Considerations may include:
 - Size of participant pool
 - Number of grants in review
 - Complexity of case file
 - Amount of time dedicated to the review
 - Staff resources available for the review



Sampling Methodology—Stratified

9

- Breaks participants into all possible paths/outcomes or “strata” and selects a sampling of participants from each strata to ensure all possible outcomes are represented in the sample
- Random sampling methodology applied to each strata
- Effective for review of programs with large populations



How to Create a Stratified Random Sample

10

- 600 program participants with 3 major outcomes:
 - 100 dropped out of training,
 - 200 completed training and received a credential
 - 300 received career services.
- For this methodology, you would randomly select participant files from each of the 3 major outcomes to review.



Sampling Methodology—Targeted Sample

11

- Non-random methodology
- Utilize risk assessment and knowledge of grantee operations to determine sample
- Useful for quick desk reviews and other ad hoc participant file reviews



Final Preparation Steps

12

- Provide the grantee with your participant list and a checklist of the areas you must be able to assess in the file review, i.e.:
 - ✦ *Eligibility*
 - ✦ *Assessment results*
 - ✦ *ISS/IDP*
 - ✦ *Case notes*
 - ✦ *Services*



Final Preparation Steps

13

- Find out the format(s) of the files and secure access, if needed.



Reviewing the Files

14

COMPLIANCE & QUALITY



Key Compliance Elements

15

- Eligibility documentation
- Grievance/EEO forms
- Assessments
- ISS (if applicable)
- Case notes
- Justification for services provided
- Training and ETP information
- Supportive services
- Exit and follow-up
- Outcomes



Key Quality/Effectiveness Elements

16

- Organization of file contents
- Individual Service Strategy and Assessment
- Case notes
- Communication
- Training for in-demand occupations
- Labor Market Information
- Barriers identified and addressed
- Outcome(s) for the participant



Use a Tool or Checklist

17

- Include both compliance and qualitative elements
- Tools that get you from beginning of the review to the final stages of the review
- Checklists that follow the flow of service delivery
- Continually update tools



Samples

18

- Core Guide

https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/grants/pdfs/2018_Core_Monitoring_Guide.pdf

- Pages 201-212; WIOA Adult, DW and Youth

- Workforce GPS

https://grantsapplicationandmanagement.workforcegps.org/resources/2019/05/22/03/19/State_Monitoring_Oversight



Helpful Tips

19

- Write down name/identifier for each file reviewed!!
- Share participant file issues with the grantee/subgrantee as they come up to provide grantee/subgrantee with an opportunity to explain.
- Share one or two noteworthy (positive and/or negative) participant “stories” to provide grantee leadership with a sense of how individuals are being served.
- Share name/identifier for all files with issues that must be addressed



Thank You!

20

