**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**New Grantee Orientation Series – National Farmworker Jobs Program**

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JONATHAN VEHLOW: So without further ado, I'd like to kick things off to our moderator today, Steve Rietzke, division chief, Division of National Programs, Tools, and Technical Assistance. Steve?

STEVEN RIETZKE: Great. Thank you, Jon. And that you to all of you for joining us. Good afternoon or good morning, depending on what time zone you're in. We appreciate you all joining us. And we're excited to kick off what is the first of several webinar events that we're doing as part of a series of grant orientation sessions.

Congratulations again on your award under the NFJP competition. In this cycle, we know that you all have to put a lot of work into that application. And this was a particularly challenging time to be doing that. And we really appreciate all the effort that it took. I hope you're all continuing to stay safe out there and that you're all doing well.

The goal of today's session really is to kind of kick things off, give you some introductory information that we think you need to know or want to know right up top in your grant. And this is the first of six sessions that we've got planned over the next few weeks, but it's not the only time you're going to be hearing from us. We're going to be here to provide technical assistance throughout the life of your grant. And we collaborate in doing that with a lot of other folks in ETA. And we're going to talk a little bit about that structure in this session.

I guess just a few housekeeping items as we're all engaging in this remote learning – I'm sure you've all been doing a lot of this. But we did want to ask just to set some expectations that to the extent you can, please try to be present and focus on these webinars. We tried to plan them so that they're in digestible chunks – about an hour and a half per session. They're not too long – not too short. We're going to ask that you type your questions into the chat box. We probably won't hold every question until the end, but we'll try to answer the ones that we can at different strategic points in the presentation.

If there are any questions that we can't answer on the slide, we'll be making a note of those and doing whatever research we need to on our end to come up with some answers. If you have specific questions about your own grant agreement, it's probably best to follow up with your federal project officer, and we can connect and figure those out in the coming days. And just so you know, this presentation will be recorded. And we'll be able to share the slides when that recording posts. So a little bit about us – I do want to say up top, we know that many of you have been in the NFJP communities for a long time. Some of you may be relatively new faces.

And so some of what we're going to cover may be a refresher for a lot of you, but it's also some basic fundamentals that we think are important to refresh every so often. And what better time than the beginning of a four-year grant cycle. If we're reiterating information you already know, bear with us. I'm sure we'll get to some stuff you may not know in the course of the presentation as well.

As Jon said, I'm Steve Rietzke. I'm the division chief for National Programs, Tools, and Technical Assistance. Our division sits inside the Office of Workforce Investment in the ETA National Office. And we serve as what we call the program office for the NFJP Program.

And just to zoom out a little bit, I wanted to highlight the overall mission of the Employment and Training Administration is to contribute to the more efficient functioning of the U.S. labor market by providing high quality job training, employment, labor market information, and income maintenance services primarily through state and local workforce development systems and through national programs like NFJP.

And I mention that just to sort of put your work in this broader context of what ETA is trying to accomplish nationally, and really to highlight the fact that your work is very important in helping ETA to meet that mission; and specifically by helping farmworkers either retain their current jobs in agriculture, or to acquire new skills to start careers that may be able to provide them with higher wages and more stable year-round employment. So we really appreciate and applaud the work that you all do for the farmworker community. We know that so many of your participants really need the assistance that they receive through NFJP.

And just personally, I've really appreciated the last two years that I've been in this position. I really have appreciated the sense of community and the sense of passion and care that you all have for farmworkers in this country, who are in such a critical position of helping to put food on our table. And I really just want to say thank you for all the work that you do to support farmworkers and support their efforts in agriculture and in other industries as they move on into other kinds of employment.

We've got kind of a full agenda today. I know last week we shared a little bit of pre-work for this webinar. We thought it might be better for you to look at some of the more general information at your own pace. And we're going to try to get into some more NFJP-specific information today. If you have questions as we go on, feel free to put those into the chat section. And it doesn't necessarily have to be questions. If you have comments or other kinds of information that you want to share with everyone, feel free to type that in as well.

I mentioned we'll try to get to as many questions as we can during this session. And we'll follow up with questions we're not able to get to. To kick things off a little bit, I know a lot of you were introducing yourselves briefly in the chat window for the last few minutes. Can I ask you to do it again? In particular, we'd like to hear your name, where you're located, what's your institution, what's your project name? And in particular, can you share what does NFJP mean to you? And that can be anything you want it to be. But share a little bit about what NFJP means to you or what is your perspective on the program?

I'll give folks a few minutes to type your answers in. And while you're doing that, I'll say a little bit about what does NFJP mean to me? I mentioned a couple points on that last slide where this is a population that's particularly vulnerable oftentimes, whether they're forced to migrate to find work, or can only find work seasonally, and often say it's a lot of barriers to employment, barriers to income, and have kind of irregular income over the course of the year.

I think this program's efforts to try and stabilize that, to try and really put folks in a better position to maintain their income and have more stable income and potentially higher wages is good work. And I really appreciate being able to be part of it from the national perspective in our federal role of the program. I see folks are sharing a few answers.

Mary, thanks for sharing that – to help farmworkers reach economic independence. Let's see. (Inaudible), bringing help, education, and jobs for some amazing people facing giant barriers. That's a good comment, John, housing being a basic human right. And NFJPs addressing critical housing needs of MSFWs to afford them that right. Great comment. So I will let folks keep chatting in the chat window if you have things that you want to share with the group. And I think everybody can see everyone else's comments. So thank you all for sharing.

Today you're going to hear from me, obviously, but you're also going to hear from Laura Ibañez. She's the unit chief for Specialty National Programs, which falls under the Division of National Programs Tools, and Technical Assistance that I manage. And you'll also hear from Charles Cox, who is the Grant Officer for NFJP in the Office of Grants Management. And you may have noticed his signature on your grant documents. So we're glad to have Charles with us. And you'll enjoy hearing from Laura and Charles as well.

Let's go to today's agenda. Here's what we're going to try to cover today. We've got a little bit of an overview of the program. And a lot of this you're going to be familiar with already. Next slide. So we're going to talk a little bit about the grant program. We're going to talk a little bit about grants management in ETA and how we're set up and what some of those processes are like. We'll talk a little bit about the content of your grant agreement, things to be aware of and pay attention to in the agreement itself.

We'll talk a little bit about grant modifications and what that process looks like and the kinds of things that we would want to see in the justification for modification. We'll talk a little bit about how you'll communicate with ETA, both at the regional level with your federal project officer, as well as with the national office. We'll talk a little bit about our plans for technical assistance for the program, and a little bit about next steps, and I think some preview of materials to come in the subsequent orientation sessions that we'll be diving into.

So a little bit about where the grants are – you can see we put a map of all of North America. We've got a big chunk of that covered. We've got 9 housing grantees in several different states. And then we've got 53 careers services and training grantees covering most states. And the funding by state is determined by a formula. And for the most part, we're covering most states with NFJP awards. Some of the industries of focus that we noted in your grant application – aside from agriculture, of course – manufacturing, transportation, construction, health care, IT, welding, etc., as well as agricultural trades.

We've got one brand-new organization in California – that's West Hills Community College. And we welcome, we appreciate you joining this group. And we've got a couple organizations who expanded services in Illinois – (inaudible) – and in New Mexico, Met (sp). So that's kind of where we are distributed. So we start with a team here at ETA. There's a few different units within ETA that you'll encounter. First, there's your federal project officer. And we'll talk a little more about roles and responsibilities for each of these entities later on I think, but your FPO obviously is your primary point of contact. They sit in a regional office in ETA.

Then there's a grant officer in the national office. And you'll hear from Charles in a bit. And there's also a grant officer in the region. And there are some distinctions in the types of things that they'll review. And you'll hear more about that later. And then the program office, which is where Laura and I sit. We'll talk through some of these roles and responsibilities in more detail in a bit, but that's sort of our basic set-up in terms of the sub units that you'll deal with at ETA.

And here's the detail I promised. Your federal project officer – obviously, I think you all know this already – they're based in your region. They've been assigned to work with specific grantees. And they should be identified in your grant package. You can see the regional map here. I do want to say that this map, there's one update to the way these regions are designated that isn't fully reflected on this map, which is the regions 1, and 2 now report up through the same administrator. So they're kind of combined into the northeast region.

There's still folks that sit in Boston and sit in Philadelphia, but administratively or organizationally, they're one region now. And kind of the same deal in regions 4 and 6 – they report up through the region 4 administrator in Dallas. But the role of your FPO really is to assist you day to day, serve as a resource on any kind of grant-related matters. They are your primary point of contact for all technical matters, the person that you're really going to have the most frequent and direct contact with.

Often, you'll hear us in presentations like this default to the answer, well, first, contact your FPO. Ask your FPO first. That will be kind of a common refrain for a lot of grants management type things that come up. They provide clients assistance. They do oversights through things like monitoring reviews. They look at your performance. And they have to coordinate any technical assistance that you might need. We work with them closely in the national office on all these things. Again, your FPO is probably the single most important person at ETA in terms of the person that you'll have ongoing and frequent contact with.

The Office of Grants Management is the grants office at the national level. And your grant officer, his signature is on your grant agreement. OGM is what we call them for short. And basically, they run the grant competition. They make award selections. And then they maintain the official grant documents. So the regional grant officer is also in the mix. And they can approve certain types of budget modifications and equipment purchases. And then some of the more complex statement of work modifications and things like that will come through the national grant officer, as well as things like changes to your signatory, things related to the indirect cost rate agreement, and a few others.

It's all a collaborative effort, but there is some distinction between what the regional grant officer will look at versus the national grant officer, as well as the grant officer who sits in the operation side of the grant office. There's other folks in OGM who work on grant policy issues. And they do a lot of great training on some of the hard core physical and administrative requirements of the grant. So you'll probably be encountering some of that over the course of your journey as a grantee. And I know we've got some material that we've borrowed heavily from them throughout the orientation sessions that we're kicking off today.

And then finally, the program office team – I talked a little bit about us already. We sit inside the Office of Workforce Investment in ETA. And our administrator, by boss, is Kim Vitelli. And in a nutshell, we've highlighted a few of the key roles of the program office on the slide here. We support your FPOs and other ETA staff who might be involved in your grant. And we do that largely through things like providing policy clarification and guidance. We help to coordinate technical assistance, or TA, from the national level.

We can provide customized technical assistance to grantees who might have particular issues or challenges or specific aspects of the grant that you want to address. And some of this TA will include things like peer networking opportunities, peer learning so that you can learn from each other. And we try to play that kind of clearinghouse role of sharing best practices or promising practices across all the grantees. And we'll talk a little bit about this more when I think Laura's going to talk about our communication plans later in the presentation.

Another key role for us is performance management. We work with you to select and assess performance data through quarterly reports. This data's particularly important where a lot of times we are reporting that information up, whether it's through the White House and the Office of Management and Budget in the White House, the Government Accountability Office, and other agencies who from time to time are looking for more information about grant outcomes.

And obviously, that plays into our budget process as well.

And so we'll periodically ask you for some additional information about your grant outcomes when we do furnish that to particular entities who may be interested at the national level. And we really appreciate the work that you do to not only provide services, but I know that federal money comes with a lot of strings attached, right? And one of those strings is the accountability that comes with federal money. It's a lot of work to keep track of all that, but I also think it really helps to demonstrate the value of the program, and it helps to be able to point to the outcomes that the program led to, and to show what we're getting for the investment.

So that's a little bit about the program office. Let's pause for a minute and do a polling question. Besides funds from other DOL programs, which other agencies provide funding to support your work? That could be other non-NFJP Department of Labor grants, HHS, Department of Ed, Department of Agriculture, HUD. Or there may be others. If there are other agencies you receive funding from and you want to share, feel free to chat that or type that in the chat window.

All right. It looks like a pretty good mix across these agencies, with maybe the bulk of them in non-NFJP DOL grants and Department of Ed grants. I'll give folks just another minute to put your answers in. It looks like the DOL non-NFJP grants may be the most popular. All right. Well, thank you all. I think now we're going to move on to the next portion of the presentation. I'm going to turn it over to Laura Ibañez to walk through an overview of the grant program. Laura, are you there?

LAURA IBAÑEZ: I am here. Hi, everyone. I'm Laura Ibañez. It's great for all of you to join us today. Welcome to today's orientation session. Here DOL awarded 80.6 million. About 9 grantees were housing grants, 47 organizations received career services and training grantees, 6 grantees received bridge fund grants. And as you know, our grants cover all locations except Alaska and DC.

The period of the performance is about 15 months. As to call I notice unusual every new program year, but although you received your notice of award a little bit late, the grant start date is backdated to July 1, 2020. And the grant is scheduled to end until September 30, 2021. And NFJP typically in a program year is July 1 to June 30. However, as many of you refer to fifth quarter, there is that quarter that is in September 30. And that's July, August, and September.

I'm just going to move along here. We also seem to have the purpose of the grant is to counter chronic unemployment and underemployment experienced by migrant seasonal farmworkers; to assist eligible migrant seasonal farmworkers, including youth and adults and their dependents, to receive career services, training services, housing assistance; help stabilize their career agriculture jobs, as well as acquiring new skills they need to start careers that provide higher wages; and lastly, to support better economic outcomes for farmworkers, NFJP also works to meet a critical need for safe and sanitary permanent and temporary housing.

And as many of you have shared through your chat, responsive to the question of what does NFJP mean to you, it definitely seems like this resonates with you, and that you truly do understand the purpose of the grant. And that definitely has been shown over the years. We do appreciate all that you do for farmworkers and their families. To know your target population – and we are going to go more in-depth, like who is a migrant and grant seasonal farmworker?

How would you define a low-income individual? But just in very general, as you know, NFJP is targeted to working migrant seasonal farmworkers and their dependents. And you can either serve them as a youth participant or adult participant. And as you [inaudible], you're looking at farmworker status and low-income status. And we will touch on those in upcoming sessions that we have planned. Target population current services and training grants – you're serving the training grant.

On the dated application to enrollment, in order to receive careers services and training individual who meets farmworker requirement must be either an eligible seasonal farmworker, which includes farmworker and low-income status; an eligible migrant farmworker, which farmworker and low-income status; an eligible migrant seasonal farmworker youth. And that includes their farm work and low-income status.

And a youth is considered someone who is age 14-24. So if someone is perhaps 18-24, they could either be served as a farmworker youth or an adult. And then the last targeted population that we serve are dependents. So NFJP does definitely support the idea of not only serving a farmworker, but the entire family, in order to achieve their family's economic goals. And so a dependent migrant seasonal farmworker, that dependent status, is defined in 20 CFR 685. But again, we'll go more into that.

If you just wanted to take a view for use as a refresher. But if you are interested, you can definitely find these definitions for low-income farmworker dependent and – (inaudible) – in TEGL 18-16. Here we have the target population for housing grants. We do hold housing grants to the same eligibility requirements. And I do want to say are eligible and serve the individuals and families.

You may be eligible migrant seasonal farmworker where you would use the same definition for farmworker and the same definition for low-income. An eligible migrant and seasonal farmworker for family, which is the same requirement as above for family definition of dependent as applied in 20 CFR 685.110. We ask that one thing you should know about permanent housing however is that there is a way to serve individuals who are not considered eligible NFJP – (inaudible) – for families.

So although eligible NFJP – (inaudible) – shipping and priorities, NFJP housing grantees are also allowed to serve other individuals and other families. And the real performance measures are actually based on these four groups, so you have an eligible MSFW farmworker individual or an eligible migrant and seasonal farmworker family, other individual, or other family. Definitions are available in TEGL 18-16.

For housing grants temporary on the date of application for enrollment, in order to receive temporary housing services, an individual must either be an eligible migrant seasonal farmworker using the same definition of farm work and low-income status, or an eligible migrant seasonal farmworker family using the same requirements as above plus for family. Use the definition of dependent as defined in 20 CFR 685.110. And these are available at TEG 18-16. Here is a knowledge check. Steve, do you see the polling question here?

MR. RIETZKE: I do. Yeah. True or false – the regional grant officer can approve grant modifications and equipment purchases. And I see most people are saying true. We got a few false. This is maybe a little bit of an extreme question, because I think there's a subset of grant modifications and things like equipment purchases that the regional grant officer is able to approve. There are other kinds of modifications, like statement of work changes and some other things like signatory changes, that will come to the national grant officer.

For you, you don't need to worry too much about which grant officer will approve which type of modification. But I think maybe one of the important things to know is that if you're proposing a change to the statement of work, that's generally something that will come to us in the program office for concurrence before it goes on for approval by the grant officer. So your FPO is going to – (inaudible) – us. We're going to concur, or sometimes we're going to come back for additional information before moving it forward.

I think that's the answer there. It's may be a little more nuanced, true and false. But for the folks who said true, I think you're probably most correct. But for the folks who said false, that's also somewhat correct in the sense that there are some modifications that will come to the national grant office. And I think the thing to remember – what do you do when you're not sure about a grant modification? Talk to your FPO first. All right, Laura. Back to you.

MS. IBAÑEZ: Thank you. Let's see here. We also have a second grantee polling question. What stage of implementation is your NFJP project? One, preparation, you're still getting your key staff in place, policies and procedures. Two, early implementation, staff are hired to cover details, trying to recruit initial participants for service delivery. Three, ready to hit the ground running. Your staff are providing skillful service delivery. Nothing is broken down.

And you also have an option of other. If you were other, if you could please share in the text box, that would be great. And we're not surprised – many of you are ready to hit the ground running, which is great. If you were other, please let us know where you are in the chat box. Steve, would you like to comment on this poll?

MR. RIETZKE: Sure. Like Laura said, I think we're not surprised that you all are ready to hit the ground running. I'll also reiterate, Laura mentioned the fact that the awards came a little bit later than anticipated this year or maybe a lot later. And we definitely recognize the challenges that that timing raised for many of you. And I just thank you all for your patience in that process. We're thrilled to have the grants out and have you working full steam ahead. So I appreciate your patience again.

MS. IBAÑEZ: Great. Thank you. So let's talk a little bit about the grant project in mind. As you know, this is part – something that we ask all of you to explain in your response to the funding opportunity announcement. So as you know, there is career service and training in one type of grant. This type of grant focuses on training that leads to agriculture upgrades, a new career path. We've heard in the past – and it really depends. I think it depends on who your client who your purchase is. However, some people are very much interested in staying in agriculture and take great pride in the work and would be interested in training that's going to help them stand out to other workers in the field and to have support agriculture employer.

So that may be a choice for them that they want to pursue that they receive training that's going to help them upgrade their ability to stay agriculture work. We also know that some individuals either I've met family before where maybe they were interested in stay in the ag work, but they knew that they wanted something different or for their child. So if they had a youth in their household who's interested in taking a different career path and was trying to see what other options are there, NFJP is a great partner to have to help make that possible.

So you know that individuals are interested in making a new career path. And training strategies can prepare participants to work in demand industries. And this can be stackable and portable credentials, occupational and state license apprenticeship, secondary school diploma or an associate degree. One thing that we definitely do take a lot of pride in at NFJP – and I know many of you would agree – is that we truly believe in having a customer-centered design method, which many of you – you get to know what your customer or your client participant is interested in and what their needs are and what their goals are. And you support them.

You support them along the way in a way that allows them to know what they can do immediately. They may have an immediate need, for example, to work sooner than to take the program. And that's okay. But they can kind of settle fold in taking care of their immediate needs, but also focusing on a little bit of their long-term goals. As you know, under a lot we do support career pathways. So it's not just getting someone a job itself that they can do on their own, but how can we support them to go for something a little bit more meaningful and that's going to have meaningful results and support them in the long-term?

So this measurable outcomes career services and training grant, here is how we capture that information and that impact that you have. You look at the employment rate for second quarter, employment rate for fourth quarter, median earnings second quarter, credential attainment, measurable skill gains, and effectiveness in serving employers. We know that many of you are probably sitting waiting for you. What are we going to do about performance targets? And I do want you to know it's definitely something that we've been working on so the next speaker.

So we do hope to communicate with you and to start those conversations with you about your performance target and what that's going to look like. I want you to know as we've done in the previous years, we will share our proposed targets for you, but it's really just a way to start the conversation. So there will be opportunities for negotiation if you felt like there was a need and you had enough supporting data or enough data to support your request.

We'll say more about that soon, so look out for an email from us at the national office. You should hopefully receive that within either this week or next week. So I'm going to continue. And then the second type of grant that we have under NFJP is housing. Service element include permanent and/or temporary housing services that you plan to provide in the poster area. Supportive services is how you apply basic sanitary housing that addresses a critical need for the availability of permanent and temporary housing options. And I definitely want you to know that that's something that's actually in the regulations.

And we will go more into that, as today was just really meant to be an instruction to all of us that we really do underline this expectation that housing is safe and sanitary. Another aspect to housing project design is that specialized services describe customer-centered approaches and methods and how such methods will support participants' employment and education goals and lead to better economic outcomes.

So here we mentioned this earlier, what's unique about housing grants compared to our career services and grant services in training grantees is that who is eligible for housing grants actually makes up performance outcomes. Permanent housing total number of eligible migrant and seasonal farmworker served. Another indicator is the total number of eligible migrant and seasonal farmworker families served. Third is total number of individuals served. And the fourth is the total number of families served.

We do have a session that's planned – and I believe it's stage 6 – where we're going to go into more detail on what this means for performance reporting. For temporary housing, there's two indicators. The first one is total number of eligible migrant seasonal farmworkers served, and then total number of migrant seasonal farmworker families. Here's where we're going to give you a five-minute break. If you need to stretch, go get a glass of water, whatever it is. It's 3:20. We will resume at 3:25. All right. So we'll talk to you soon.

MR. RIETZKE: All right, folks. I think it's been 5 minutes. Let's dive back in. Thank you, Laura, for your overview of the program. Thanks, all of you, for sticking with us. We've got about 35 minutes left. We've still got a lot of ground to cover, but we're going to try and do some of this quickly.

So I'm going to turn it over to Charles Cox, your NFJP grant officer in the national office to talk about grants management and the grant agreement.

CHARLES COX: Thanks. Yes. I'm here. Terrific. Let me just get a sip of water because I just had a piece of chocolate. Sorry about that, folks. Dark chocolate is my vice. OK. We're going to talk about grants management including – next slide. OK. Sorry. I'm working from two different functions here so it makes it a little bit hard sometimes. What we're going to be talking about today is the grant award letter. And that talked about the payment management system, ETA's grantee financial reporting system. This is some passwords and pin information.

We'll also talk about the grant agreement. And lastly, we will talk about the Grantee Handbook. So let's talk about the grant award letter. Your grant award letter, you should have received it from our office in the grant award package, which consists of your grant award letter and the actual grant agreement. The grant award letter contains information about the payment management system, ETA's grantee fiscal reporting system, and passwords and pins for the online security when you're accessing your accounts. Next slide.

Let's talk about your grant agreement. The grant agreement includes the notice of award, or otherwise known as the NOA; followed by the conditions of award page; a table of contents of the grant terms and conditions and attachments, which include the application for federal assistance, also known as your SF-424; the budget, which includes the SF-424A and budget narrative. It also includes your statement of work, and if applicable, the indirect cost rate agreement.

Question for everybody – has everyone reviewed the information in the grant package? And do you have any questions? OK. I'm seeing a few people say no questions. So we'll give folks another moment. OK. Will we get a copy of this orientation? It is downloadable. If you go to the file share box, you can see that the PowerPoint is available.

MR. RIETZKE: Yeah. And, Charles, like I mentioned earlier, we'll also be posting the recording of the session along with the PowerPoint on our Workforce GPS. It's usually a few days after the presentation if you don't get a chance to download it right now.

MR. COX: OK. And next slide. And the all-important Grantee Handbook – this is an important part of your grant package. And this presentation contains a link to the handbook. And of course, when I went to the slide, it immediately started downloading it. So we know that the link works. I'm happy to say that. We'll talk more about the Grantee Handbook in day 2. But ETA's Grantee Handbook includes details about everything you need to know about effectively managing your grant. Make sure you bookmark a copy.

And make sure that you share it with your staff, because it's not just the project director who needs to be aware of what is in the grantee handbook, but it's every staff member who's associated with the grant, because each member of the grant's team is contributing ultimately to the success of that grant award. So I really encourage all of your grant leadership to review the handbook, but also make sure that your line staff are also aware of the handbook so that as they're implementing the grant, they know what is required of them. Next slide.

In the conditions of award, other requirements included in your award are – the conditions of award, for example – you may need to revise your 424A along with the budget narrative. Most of the grantees will have additional conditions that address the compliance review, and will need to provide clarification or submit a modification to their FPO.

Also, some conditions of award will also include that you need to provide us with an updated NICRA. If your NICRA is expired or you need to submit one when you claimed that you were going to have an negotiated indirect cost rate, those could be some of the special conditions of award that you'll need to respond to.

Next slide. Key systems – the payment management system, the grantee reporting system, at the workforce integrated performance system, otherwise known as WIPS, are the three key systems you will be using to manage your grant. Has everyone been able to access these systems, and do you have questions about access, pins, or resetting your password? It's important to remember that if you have not logged into WIPS within 5 days of receiving your credentials, the password will expire and you need to have the credentials renewed.

OK. I'm not seeing any questions. So let's move on to the next slide, grant modifications. Now, grant modifications is a process that is pretty straightforward. So let's just walk through that process and make it a little bit more simple for you. The process for modifying a grant can take between 30 and 60 days to complete. And request to changes cannot be implemented until final approval from the grant officer is received. This section will help you better under these steps. Next slide, please.

To submit a modification, you should draft a letter of request addressed to the grant officer. The letter should be written on your organization's letterhead, include the modification type, grant name and number, and justification for the requested modification. Your FPO will review the letter and provide feedback if needed. A final letter signed by your signatory should be submitted to your FPO, who will then forward it to the grant officer. There is more detailed information about submitting a modification in your Grantee Handbook, so please use that as a guide when submitting your modifications.

And I will say this as a plug for the FPOs having been an FPO up until June of this year – your FPOs will give you the best guidance that they can provide. And they understand your needs. And they certainly are there to help you. If they're asking you a lot of questions during the draft process of the modification, understand that by asking those questions, they will help you make your modification request so much better. And it will get easy approval hopefully by both the program office, if necessary, and also the grant officer. Because it's a lot easier if they do that footwork beforehand so that when we get it in the national office or in the regional as appropriate, they can process that request fairly quickly.

Let's move on to the next slide. As I've said, your FPO will be the first to review your modification request. They will provide feedback on your request letter, and then submit it to the regional grant officer for approval if it is a simple budget modification or equipment purchase over $5,000. If it is a more complicated modification, your FPO will send the request to the national grant officer for final review and approval after the regional management team provides their okay.

If there is a statement of work change, that will also require a review by the program office. Your FPO will send these requests to the program office for review. The grant officer will review the request and may ask for additional information or revisions. If there are no additional questions, the grant officer reviews and signs the modification. Both you and your FPO will receive a copy of the signed modification via email. And, again, I'm going to say that with your FPO, they will be asking you a number of questions. They will be providing you feedback.

And as I said earlier, their feedback and guidance will ultimately make the approval of your mod request a lot easier, and it will be processed faster. So I would recommend that you heed what your FPO is advising you on. I guess we're going to play a wonderful game of ModLibs. And can we have the next slide, please. With ModLibs, let's play the variation.

MR. RIETZKE: Charles, I think we may need to skip through this one, because it seems like it may take a little too much time and we're running a little short on it.

MR. COX: That's fine by me. I am flexible.

MR. RIETZKE: Well, maybe I'll interject a comment on this slide that I think in particular Charles talked about consulting with your federal project officers throughout the process so that they can help you frame the request in the best way possible. And I guess just to elaborate on that a little bit, particularly in the program office, if we're looking at a change to the statement work, we're going to be asking the fundamental question of, is this in the best interest of the government to approve this?

That sounds a little selfish on the government's part, but really what we're looking at is, is this going to make some improvement to the outcome under your grant? So when we look at the goals of NFJP to give people credentials, get people employed, stabilize their employment, we're going to be looking at it through that lens of does this change create some positive delta, some positive change in the project in terms of what you expect to accomplish? OK. Back to you, Charles.

MR. COX: OK. I think we were going to the next slide, please. What I am going to show you right now is some grant modification samples. And I'm not going to read them verbatim. This slide talks about the budget realignment modification. It provides you the grant number. It's talking about what it wants to do. And one of the things that you'll see is that it talks about added amounts that comprise fringe benefits, specified number of in-state and out-of-state trips that include in travel, added quantity in unit for cost of supplies, and so on.

Those are the types of information that we will want to see in a budget modification. And next slide, please. OK. We have in here the budget narrative that was referenced in the previous slide. And here it gives the break-down of what is going to be charged to the grant. And in this case, you're seeing the top of the budget narrative talking about personnel and identifying the executive director annual salary, full-time equivalent salary. Next slide. And this is a break.

MR. RIETZKE: Charles, if we were in the chat off to the side thinking we've only got about 15 minutes left and it's kind of homestretch here. So we're thinking in the interest of time, we'll just go ahead and skip that break. If you really need to step away, obviously, you can do that if you need to. But we're going to forge ahead. We've got about 15 minutes left. Charles, thank you for that overview of the grant agreement and the modification process. And we're going to turn it back to Laura to talk about our communication plans and some other things in the program office.

MS. IBAÑEZ: Thank you, Charles. And thanks, Steve. I can cover this in about 5 minutes. I do like to make sure we have enough time to hear some questions from all of you. Now we're going to talk about our communication plan points of contact in community of practice. For the year 2020, we've created a communication plan which includes quarterly performance office hours, monthly grantee calls, peer-to-peer cohorts, and conferences calls.

As you know, this may look familiar to you. One thing that may seem a little bit slightly new through our technical assistance plan is one of our goals is to establish peer-to-peer cohort. We want to hear what your needs are and help identify 3-5 topics in order to hold those virtual peer-to-peer conversations. So we'll say more about that later, but I do want to flag that for you to get you thinking what are those topics that you'd be most interested in having and on the timing, the frequency, so how often do we want to hold those peer-to-peer conversations?

Point of contact – as you know, it's very important for you to have your authorized representative as a point of contact to make sure that your federal project officer knows who that is. And whenever there is an update that you communicate update to your FPO and also to the national program office by emailing the FPO and copying nfjp@dol.gov your point of contact is going to be the person who receives all the main communications about webinars, peer-to-peer contact information, as well as any guidance that we may give out. So it's really important that we have that point of contact on our list.

And what we usually do with the point of contact is that we also most likely will put it on our website on dol.gov underneath the name of your organization just in case there's any questions about NFJP projects to make sure that information's available to the public. I'm going to move us along here. Although it's really important for us to communicate and to engage with you as our grantee, probably the best part of our jobs really is engaging all of you. We do ask you to first work through your FPO so if you're a grant lead or another of the grant project or if you have any questions that you would want to go directly towards your FPO.

And if you have any questions related to performance reporting, please email wioa.feedback@dol.gov with a copy to your FPO and nfjp@dol.gov. I want you to know that someone at the national program office is tracking these questions. So it's really important that you keep all three of us in the loop – the WIPS development team, the FPO, and the national office as well. If you have any questions including challenges with financial reporting, you do want to email ebss.health@dol.gov with a copy to your FPO and nfjp@dol.gov. Any policy clarification, program questions, technical assistance, it is important to email your FPO.

And if you're interested in looping us in, if you loop us in, I will tell you most likely your FPOs are really good about communicating with us as well. So we definitely do try to coordinate with the FPOs. So if you're an organization that has multistate grants located in different areas, I know FPO office started looping each other in. For example, region 2 might loop in someone from region 5 just to make sure that our guidance and instructions are consistent.

(Inaudible) – If you haven't already, I definitely encourage you to check out Workforce GPS. We have an agriculture connection community of practice where you're going to be able to find the recording for this new grantee orientation. And if you are already a member of agriculture connection, I definitely want you to think about some other communities out there. So as you know, we have communities on apprenticeship, labor market information, LMI.

There's also one based on customer center design. And there's so many more communities out there that a lot of this information that's shared for Workforce GPS may be relevant for to know as well if you have an NFJP grant.

I'm going to move us along to grantee technical assistance. I have the goal of finishing in about one more minute. Peer cohorts – so I mentioned a little bit about this and what we have in mind. And we want you to succeed really. One of our TA goals is to establish career peer cohorts and to facilitate virtual discussions on 3-5 products based on what you need. And we wanted to do this on an ongoing basis rather than waiting once a year to see all of you. So we're hoping to leverage our technology here and to begin these virtual conversations.

Here in these four boxes, what you'll notice is that it's sort of like what we're hoping to accomplish to these career peer cohorts. But we're not stuck in these boxes. We can definitely think of other goals that we want to accomplish once we move forward and begin to establish the peer-to-peer cohorts. Grantee polling question – in what area is your NFJP partnership particularly strong? There are four options here. One is employer engagement. Two, developing and maintaining strategic partnerships. Three, outreach and recruitment. And other. We're interested in knowing where you believe you are.

As you notice, we're asking many questions throughout this new grantee orientation. We are going to use some of this information to help guide and inform our decisions on what topics need to give your interest. We have developing and maintaining strategic partnerships seems to be the highest. It seems like we could use a little bit more support around employer engagement and outreach and recruitment. And especially, I would definitely agree with outreach and recruitment, especially in times like now. I think we really have to rethink our strategies and how to go about to reach our targeted population.

Thank you for participating in this polling question. I think we can end that. And if I'm right, I believe we are going to ask you one more. What are your three biggest programmatic challenges? Is it developing regional partnerships? Are you still trying to figure out what to do with career pathways? Outreach or recruitment assessment strategies. And then other. So based on this polling question, your biggest programmatic concern seems to be outreach recruitment assessment strategies. I encourage you, if you haven't already, there's an "other" and you're like, no. We got these three items – we need help with this.

Definitely encourage you to share in the chat box. We definitely want to hear from you. And this is going to help shape our topics for our peer-to-peer cohort discussion. Thank you, Mary. I see that you're starting to type away. Can we just all agree that I did meet my goal and that I finished within 5 minutes?

So if you're typing, it seems like our other is growing to 6 percent now. So please share in the chat box, and thank you. All right. I am going to throw it back to you, Steve, if you want to see if there's any questions that we may have.

MR. RIETZKE: Sure. Well, thank you, Laura, for that expedient conclusion. Sometimes it seems like 90 minutes is a really long time to be online with folks. We had a lot of ground to cover. Laura, what's on the screen now is showing the next –

(Crosstalk.)

MS. IBAÑEZ: If you haven't already, I would just say for this screen, the biggest thing to focus on is making sure you show up on Thursday, October 8. Please join us to continue this conversation. We're planning to cover grant administration and operation. That's the main thing that we can walk away from that slide.

MR. RIETZKE: And I see a couple folks with comments in the chat box. Obviously, outreach has become even more of a challenge due to Covid, not enough funding to meet demand. Isn't that the truth. That's probably the one thing that we can't help with in the immediate term. But we definitely hear you on the push to always be doing more with less resources. Constraints are definitely real. Carrie, I noticed your comment that being able to attend training that's available to staff and management that is pertinent to NFJP with a lot of different opportunities in the regions, and that's where folks are able to get together and discuss those issues.

And I do want to say I think what we covered today, this is some of the more softball stuff. I think not a ton of questions today. Perhaps in the subsequent sessions where we're getting a little more into the weeds on some more policy and operation specifics, you may have other questions. And you may have other questions that pop up after you log off today that you want to follow up on. Laura, do you want to walk through this pre-work for day 2 just to give a highlight of some different resources that we are sharing ahead of time?

MS. IBAÑEZ: Sure. Prior to each orientation session, the team has identified a few available resources that we encourage you to look at. Many of us have – (inaudible) which may seem like a refresher. But we just want to let you know that this information's available. So if you get a minute to go through any of it, if you have any specific questions about this information on day 2, which is on October 8, definitely feel free to ask us. I think the last slide here is grantee resources that are available that we referenced today during our presenter's presentations. I think we're ready to answer any questions that you may have.

MR. RIETZKE: Any lingering questions that you want to throw out there before we let you go for this afternoon? I do want to say the resources list as pre-work – we definitely know that's a ton of stuff. I think we mainly want to remind you that those things are there, and encourage you to get familiar or stay familiar with what's in them and where they're located. But we won't be quizzing you with the Socratic method on 2 CFR 200 on Thursday or anything like that.

MS. IBAÑEZ: And I just want to put it out there, it seems like based on your responses here in our polling questions, we should definitely look into outreach and recruitment and perhaps case management being possible topics for our peer-to-peer cohort discussion.

MR. RIETZKE: Yeah. Those topics certainly sound on point. Well, I see a couple of thank you's in the chat box. Thank you to you all for your time and attention in the subsequent sessions. I know we're trying to cover a lot of ground. I say this a lot, but I do wish we were in person and walking through this stuff and seeing your faces. This online world that we're living in right now is a little bit isolating. But we appreciate your attention in this format, and glad it looks like folks are getting something out of this so far. And we'll be back with more details in the subsequent sessions. Laura, any other final thoughts before we let folks go?

MS. IBAÑEZ: It was such a pleasure to hear from you. We look forward to seeing you all online on Thursday. And I'm just going to hand it over to Jon, because I know that we do want to get some feedback. Seems like we're receiving feedback in the chat box, but if you could just take a couple minutes to give us some feedback, we'd really appreciate it.

(END)