**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Implementing Priority of Service Provisions for Most in Need Individuals in the WIOA Adult Program**

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LAURA CASERTANO: I want to welcome everyone to today's webinar. And I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Kimberly Vitelli. She's the administrator of the Office of Workforce Investment with the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration. Kim, take it away.

KIMBERLY VITELLI: Thanks, Laura. And it's good to see so many of you on the line today. We're really excited to be able to talk with you about the recently issued guidance, Training and Employment Guidance Letter 720 on the adult priority of service provision. We're going to cover a lot of ground today. We're going to talk with you about the overarching vision, as well as the technical requirements of the adult program priority of service. We'll also talk about the data that allows us to see how we're doing in accomplishing that goal, as well as the strategies that allow us to be able to support these types of services. And of course we'll leave time for you all to be able to ask questions.

Our speakers today include our Assistant Secretary, John Pallasch, as well as several of our expert staff, Cesar Acevedo, Patrick Dennis, and Kellen Grode, to do all the hard work of the data analysis and the policy drafting. Now that you know who we are, we want to hear who all is on the line with us today. Go ahead and tell us a little bit about yourself, and select an answer that tells us whether you're a state or local board, a one stop operator, or a workforce development provider, or something else. And just let us know in the chat box who you represent so we know who's out there today.

Looks like lots of people are filing this in, which is helpful. It's really helpful for us to see who's with us. We see a lot of workforce development professionals at the state and local level, as well as service providers. Thank you. That's really helpful.

So we're going to turn now to our opening remarks with our Assistant Secretary, John Pallasch, who has worked hard his entire time at ETA to align federal workforce programs to benefit our common customers. John, we're really glad you're here. Would you like to kick us off?

JOHN PALLASCH: Sure thing. Thanks, Kim. And special thanks to Kim and her team in the office of workforce investment, and the folks in our office of policy development and research, for the work on getting this TEGL drafted and out the door. And now that it's out the door, the real work begins in terms of explaining to you all the expectations going forward, and then obviously providing the technical assistance needed to really give this TEGL some weight.

In publishing this TEGL, we're really just trying to provide some clarity on the adult priority of service portion of the WIOA law. Obviously WIOA was passed now nearly six years ago. And to date the department hasn't clearly defined what is meant by priority of service. And that was one of the things that I wanted to do when I came here back in July, was make sure that we were sharing with you, the state and local workforce partners, exactly what the expectation was. And I think that this TEGL gets to that. And at its core what that is is making sure that we're providing services to those most in need, those who are basic skills deficient, receiving public assistance, or low-income individuals.

And this is part and parcel of a broader approach that we're taking here at the federal level, in working across federal programs under kind of the guise of what we're calling one workforce. So earlier this year, myself, Brandon Lipps from the Department of Agriculture, and Lynn Johnson from the Department of Health and Human Services, put out a tri-party letter, where we were trying to work with states and remind states that it's OK for WIOA and SNAP E&T and TANF partners to collaborate. And that's something that we certainly want to encourage. And that's something that we want to facilitate. And this priority of service TEGL follows in line very much with that.

If you think about the WIOA side of things, one of the issues might be, well where are we going to find these individuals? How are we going to make sure we have enough individuals who meet this priority of service definition? And obviously with the – I think it's around 42 million folks in the SNAP program, and another 3 million folks in the TANF program, and you couple that with the folks that we're already serving in WIOA, and there's certainly a large enough population who is most in need. And those are the individuals that we are hoping to reach with the services that we're providing.

So in the TEGL we set an aspirational goal for 75 percent of a state's participants to be one of those three categories, receiving public assistant, basic skills deficient, or low income, but with a requirement of 50.1 percent. So really the hope is that we can far exceed that goal, but we can't really call it priority of service if not at least half of the individuals are receiving that priority. So that's really what we're after.

Again, Kim and her folks, the folks from (Opter ?), and then the ETA regional folks, are going to be here to help facilitate, to work with you, to make sure that you've got partnerships and relationships with the folks from Agriculture, HHS, Department of Education, any number of the other workforce programs, again under this idea of one workforce – how do we bring all of the workforce programs together, and how do we view customers as a workforce customer rather than a WIOA customer or a TANF customer.

And that's really what we're trying to do here is expand the pool of individuals whom we can provide services to, and leverage all of the existing workforce partners at both the state and local level, to really help us achieve that. So I'm excited about what this TEGL says. I'm excited about what it can do. Obviously there is the need for states and locals to update their policies and their procedures, a monitoring aspect of this.

And Kim and her folks will walk through all of that in the deck. And I don't want to talk too long, but I just wanted to take this opportunity to tell you how excited I was about this, and how this is something that has been on my mind since I was back in the state workforce agency, of how do we make sure that the services we're providing, the funding that we're getting, is really going to those who are most in need.

So with that, I will turn it back over to Kim and the rest of the Opter and OWI team. But it's great to see so many folks here. Hopefully there'll be lots of questions and lots of answers and lots of follow-up as we help to hone in on making sure that the individuals that we're serving are the ones who need us most. Back to you, Kim.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks so much, Assistant Secretary Pallasch, for spending some time with us today. I'm going to turn things over now to Kellen Grode to talk about the overarching vision and the requirements to fulfill the WIOA adult program priority of service. Go ahead, Kellen.

KELLEN GRODE: Thanks, Kim. And welcome everybody. Thanks again to all for joining us. We wanted to start first by sort of talking about this requirement from a conceptual sort of vision level before drilling down into the requirements. And one of the things that I think is oftentimes confused when talking about this subject is whether somebody is in an individual in a priority population or an individual with barriers to employment. And there's certainly overlap there, but those are two terms that are both used in WIOA that are sometimes treated as interchangeably and they're not.

So first I want to clarify that there is a bit of a distinction there. And we'll talk about that a little more here in a second. But first on the more conceptual level, I thought it would be useful for folks to just be reminded that when you look at WIOA there's a lot of parts of it that are requirements. But at the very beginning there's this whole section about what are the purposes of WIOA and sort of Congress' intent when they passed the law. And then if you look at the very first one it says, to increase for individuals in the United States particularly those with – those individuals with barriers to employment, access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training, and supportive services they need to succeed in the labor market.

So that purpose is sort of where the idea of the individuals with barriers to employment comes form under WIOA. It's sort of the broad overarching purpose of all of the programs authorized under the act. And the act goes a little further in defining 14 specific groups in section 324 that are considered to be part of this group known as individuals with barriers to employment. What we're talking about today is more specific than that. It's specific to the WIOA adult program under Title I, which establishes three groups that must receive priority of service in that program. And so some of those groups do overlap with the individuals with barriers to employment. But it's not interchangeable.

So some of you may be asking, well what is this priority of service requirement. Some of you may be familiar with it. But just as a quick refresher, so WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(e) requires that American Job Center staff, when using the adult program funds to provide individualized career services and training services, to give priority to those three groups that the assistant secretary mentioned, recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, which includes English language learners.

AJC staff must provide prioritized services to these populations at all times regardless of the amount of funds available to provide these services in local areas. For those of you that were around under WIA, this is a change. Under WIA it was when funds were limited. Under WIOA that does not exist anymore. It is at all times that this priority must be applied.

WIOA also requires that states develop criteria, policies, and procedures for applying this priority, which includes monitoring of local areas' compliance with this priority and those policies. So that's sort of the general like what is this requirement. Some of you that are familiar with some of our other priorities might be also wondering, well what about the veterans priority of service requirement, how does this relate? And so the short answer to that is that these priorities are in addition to the requirements that veterans and their eligible spouses receive priority of service for all DOL funded job training programs. So it's not a part of the same requirement, but because it is similar we wanted to note that it is an addition.

For those of you that are familiar with our Training and Employment Guidance Letter 1916, the next part will sound pretty familiar to you. But in terms of how these two priorities interact with each other, we tried to create sort of a simple hierarchy for folks to follow. So first is that for those folks who are veterans and eligible spouses, and they are also from one of these three groups, they receive first priority in terms of receiving WIOA adult formula funds for individualized career services and training services.

The second subgroup that receives priority would then be those who are not veterans or eligible spouses, but are in one of the three WIOA adult priority groups. After that would be veterans and eligible spouses who are not part of one of the three priority groups. And then fourth would be those priority populations that are established by the governor or the local board that are not part of one of the other two groups that we've been talking about. And then finally the final group would be anybody that's not covered by any of those priority groups that we've been discussing. So that's sort of the order that folks are required to prioritize, individuals receiving individualized career services or training under the adult program.

Then the question becomes, and this is really the key to why this guidance was written, and the assistant secretary alluded to this, because this is the part that's not as clearly defined in law or regulations, is what does it actually mean to provide priority. And so I think it's pretty simple to say that there are multiple ways that somebody would provide priority, how a state or local could demonstrate priority. But to us, at least in the premise that we're operating under, is that the simplest measure is looking at the percentage of participants who are receiving individualized career services or training services that are from one of these priority populations.

So if you take all of the folks receiving those types of services, you say how many of them are from one of our priority populations. That's what we're going to be looking at. As the assistant secretary mentioned, we envision that effective implementation of priority of service would mean that folks from these three priority populations would make up about 75 percent of WIOA adult participants receiving individualized career or training services. Our expectation for states is that this rate will be no lower than 50.1 percent in any state.

Just as a quick example, so if you serve 2,000 participants that receive individualized career services and/or training services, and 1,275 of them are from one of these three priority groups, that results in a 63.75 percent, which would meet the 50.1 percent expectation, but it would miss this goal of 75 percent.

I suspect that a lot of you at this point probably are wondering, well what happens if a state falls below that 50.1 percent benchmark. And so what we plan to do is when we determine that a state is below that 50.1 percent benchmark, we'll start taking a look at things like what are your state's policies around priority of service for the adult program, what types of practices or procedures are you doing to make sure that priority of service is being implemented. We will also initiate the provision of technical assistance as needed, depending on what our reviews may find. We may identify things, areas for improvement that could help ensure that priority is given to the most in need groups.

The reviews will also consider other potential metrics or evidence of priority of service provision. This kind of goes back to what I mentioned earlier, which is that there are certainly more than one way that someone could demonstrate that they're providing priority to these groups. And so we're not going to – when we start looking more in depth, we're not going to just ignore the fact that there may be other pieces of evidence to suggest that a state is indeed implementing priority even if it's not meeting these standards that we're looking at.

And then finally for states that continue to fall below the benchmark and aren't able to bring that up to expectations, then we would start looking at some of our existing mechanisms that we would use to address any other compliance measures. So examples would be potential monitoring, findings, or corrective actions, which would be done as are deemed appropriate. That's sort of a case by case basis based on the reviews and technical assistance that we provide.

So that's sort of the high level overview of what the requirements are, what's in the guidance. I think if you want a little more detail, we definitely recommend downloading the guidance that's attached in the file share, and taking a look and reading it if you haven't had a chance to already. But that's the high level overview of what those requirements are. And so with that, I'm going to pass it back to Kim.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks, Kellen. I'd now like to have Cesar Acevedo join the conversation to discuss how performance data will help us tell whether or not we're reaching our intended priority of service. We're getting a lot of questions in the chat which is really useful. Go ahead and keep those coming. It helps us sort of make sure that we hit the right information in our presentation and we'll also try to answer a lot of them at the end.

But just as sort of a preliminary foundational one, there were some questions about what the three priority areas are. So there's many different priorities, many different target populations in WIOA, all of whom deserve services. The three priority groups that we're talking about right now and the data that we'll be calculating is about whether or not someone is low income, a recipient of public assistance, or basic skills deficient. So that's the data that Cesar will be helping us understand next. Take it away, Cesar.

CESAR ACEVEDO: Thanks, Kim. And good morning or good afternoon, everyone. So we're going to talk quickly about how ETA plans on monitoring a state's compliance with this requirement. So we have as many of you know incorporated a priority of service measure into our quarterly results analysis, the QRA process that happens now since this summer every couple of weeks after a quarterly submission of state performance data. So the QRA is going to let us review this information every quarter consistently and accurately, both internally here at ETA, but then also where they're publishing that information with our state grantees and communicating that through our regional performance specialists.

So the QRA is going to serve as our primary tool for identifying the states that might not be in compliance or falling short of our strategic goals. So in any case regardless of a state's status as a volunteer pilot state where they're provided responses, timely responses to the QRA, your regional specialists will have the information. We in the national office will have results available to us. And we'll be engaging with states on the QRA results for this priority of service metric.

So the QRA uses those individual performance records from your state quarterly performance submissions to calculate this and other metrics. And they're shared every quarter. As a note, our performance specialists and FPOs could use this information to help them with their monitoring and technical assistance efforts.

So these low outcomes on this measure could be driven by a number of things. They could be the result of misaligned policy with WIOA's requirements, it could be missteps in the implementation, or it could be errors in performance reporting or collecting. So a key part of the QRA process is identifying those problems where the data are reported improperly because we're using this performance information and those performance records to calculate the metric and measure this requirement. In order to be successful, it's important that we're receiving accurate information from the states.

So for example, you could be failing to meet this report if there's some misstep in the collection mechanisms somewhere along the way that's not collecting or reporting low income status, in which case individuals that are rightfully receiving priority at their point of contact with the case management specialist, they're not being recorded appropriately in the data that's submitted to DOL, and therefore resulting in a lower rate. So while we can consider additional evidence for those states that are falling below the 50.1 benchmark, it could be the case that you'll need to review your policies and update the procedures in order to ensure compliance and passage of these QRA metrics.

There's some recent QRA results. These are as of our first quarter of program year 2020, quarter ending 9/30/2020. Some good news, a majority of states are meeting the minimum compliance threshold of 50.1 percent. We have just seven states failing to meet that minimum threshold. In the next couple quarters we'll be reaching out to those states directly through the regions to sort of engage and understand what other information they can provide.

The upside, nearly half of all states, territories, are meeting ETA's strategic goal of 75 percent. I saw a question here asking what the national result is. That is a good question – (inaudible) – incorporated in this slide. But as of this 9/30 quarter, the WIOA adult program is at 62.1 percent. So we're well above that minimum compliance threshold, but there's still some work to be done to meet our strategic goal. And that makes it a goal for us in the national office, but then also a good goal for folks at the state level. With that I'm going to turn it back over to Kim.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks, Cesar. You've all been working hard at delivering high quality services to those who need it the most. And our Training and Employment Guidance Letter 720 tries to highlight a few of the strategies that we've seen different states and local areas take in order to hit those numbers that Cesar was just talking about. And to make sure that we're adjusting outreach, and recruit, and intake, and services, to reach those who are low income, public benefits recipients, or basic skills deficient.

So some of those strategies include cross training across programs so that everybody can provide more streamlined and aligned services. And establishing functional teams might be a little easier now that Wagner-Peyser has the same staffing flexibility that WIOA and even WIA have always had. Some local areas have also found ways to share case notes and share data where feasible, and using technology to support aligned service delivery where a customer might use multiple programs. And not just partnering with human services agencies, but also partnering with community and faith based organizations who might be walking with our customers on a more daily basis.

Because when all of these pieces come together, we can really lay out a career pathway for folks. Career pathways remember have multiple onramps and offramps in training, allow stackable credentials, and provide supportive services, so that everybody has access to these kind of services, and everybody can participate in training.

We're also looking at the evidence that's out there on what are the ingredients in success for low-income individuals. And just like our – just like you all work together between human services and workforce development, and we work together on the program side at the federal level, our research and evaluation teams have also been working together in sharing information across the different research clearinghouses, so that I hope you know that those are resources for you to be able to find out what works as we all try to deliver high quality services.

So folks who are low income use the same thing that everybody else does, industry recognized credentials, so that they can move around from job to job and grow in a career pathway. They need access to work based learning. There's a lot of evidence that that is a key ingredient for economic success. But also the role of case management and high quality career coaching and support to be able to participate in training. And I just want to emphasize how much easier it is to provide these two things when local areas are working in partnership with other federally, or state, or locally funded services.

And I want to be able to give a particular spotlight to those who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Patrick, can you give us a little bit more detail on this particular population?

PATRICK DENNIS: Thanks, Kim. Sure. So providing – (audio technical difficulty) – 14 groups that's considered to have a barrier to employment, much like aging out of the foster care system or people with disabilities. But people experiencing homelessness are highly likely to have a number of those different barriers. And they're almost universally going to fall under one of the three priority categories, receiving public assistance, or low income, or basic skills deficient.

The following slide we list a number of the different programs out there. And this isn't meant to be an exhaustive list. But I wanted to highlight a number of different programs out there that serve different aspects of the needs for the people within that population.

I did want to take the time here to call out and provide a little bit more additional information on the continuum of care program or the COC. It's a HUD program that provides funding for efforts by nonprofits as well as state and local governments to quickly re-house homeless individuals and families, while trying to minimize the trauma and dislocation that homelessness has on these people and their communities. But also promotes access to an effective utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families, optimizing self-sufficiency among individuals.

This means a big chunk of what the continuum of care program tries to do is work with the other big programs like the workforce system to make sure that these individuals have access and they're utilizing it. The COC includes employment related policy priorities in their funding announcements, so the grantees are very aware of this need to do so, and they have been successful. We suspect a number of you guys out there are already working with your local COCs. But it's worth nothing, this is a big program as well. It's got more than 6,800 different local providers. So it's almost a guarantee that those of you working directly within the workforce system have a COC provider in or near your community already.

And the program itself is fairly large in terms of funding. In fiscal year '19, grants were between 2.2 to 2.3 billion dollars in total. So that money is getting utilized by a large number of communities and it's a large dollar amount. We encourage everyone on the webinar today and your colleagues that aren't able to join us to look at the attachments as well as the individual entries in the TEGL proper itself. And while I suspect you're probably familiar with a number of them, take the time to explore these programs you're not as familiar with, and see if there's ways to incorporate either partnerships with these programs or the information and the technical expertise that these programs provide out there to bring it in house and do some of the work yourselves.

With that though, I will turn it over back to Kim, so that we can start getting to these many questions you guys have been gifting us with.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks, Patrick. We're really glad that many of you have been asking clarifying questions. We've been digesting them – (inaudible) – try to answer them here live. And even if we don't get to your question today, the fact that you're asking it give us a sense of where we need to sort of provide additional clarifications or technical assistance. So thank you for your typing.

Some of the first sort of foundational questions are just understanding a little bit better about how this goal interacts with veterans priority, and whether or not these goals are for the adult program, or how the adult questions and veterans link together. So I'm going to ask Kellen to answer some of those questions about veterans priority and how it interacts with the adult programs.

MR. GRODE: Yeah. Thanks, Kim. So yeah, there's a couple – in terms of how the requirements, particularly with the 50.1 and the 75 percent goal requirement interact with the veterans priority, the short answer is that they don't directly interact. So in terms of when we're looking at the data, we're not looking at whether or not someone is a veteran for the purposes of these calculations. We're specifically looking at the required three groups under WIOA based on what folks are reporting.

So we do have a calculation that we have included in our QRA process that does a similar calculation for the veterans group just to look at what those percentages are. But in terms of actually establishing a requirement for veterans, that's not something that we are doing at this time. So that's I guess the short answer, is that they're not specifically – the veterans and eligible spouses are not specifically included in this group. Now to the extent that they are also one of these three priority groups, then yes, for sure they would be included.

But for those veterans that are not, they're not going to be included in our calculations. That doesn't mean to say that they're any less important. But we're looking at, at least in this particular instance, the requirement for the adult program specifically. So when we look at the veterans numbers, really we'll probably be looking at it at more programs than just the adult to see how states are doing when we're looking at it. And we don't have a specific number requirement on that.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks, Kellen. Sorry, did you want to answer another question?

MR. GRODE: No. I was – no, that's fine. Go ahead.

MS. VITELLI: Okay. We've also been getting some questions in the chat about how other individuals, how we track other individuals, and who else can be served. So for instance, our individuals with disabilities, do they fit into one of these priority groups. So Kellen mentioned the 14 groups who have barriers to employment that are specifically called out in WIOA. And individuals with disabilities are one of those groups. Also remember that individuals with disabilities are required to be able to be served in all of our programs.

So the WIOA adult program is meant to target low-income individuals, and people who are receiving public benefits, and those who are basic skills deficient, just like the dislocated worker program is designed for people who have lost their jobs, who in every single Department of Labor program individuals with disabilities should have access to those services, both in a physically accessible way as sort of operationalized and one stop certification requirements, as well as programmatic accessibility that people have equal access to services. So this definition that we're talking about right now, so that we can see whether or not as required in the statute the adult program is focused on low-income individuals, those with barriers – those who are public assistance beneficiaries and those who are basic skills deficient.

There's also a couple of questions in the chat about how we can tell how different people are served, whether we can see what states are hitting these targets and whether or not we can have access to data about how many veterans have been served. So there is a lot of data that is publicly available, and that states report both in their quarterly reports as well as in the annual reports, and those are all made available on the ETA website.

We'll make sure to enter into the chat the location, the specific URL where you can find that data. There is a lot of data to be able to do analysis at a national level. And then of course we strongly encourage states and local areas to be able to do this kind of data analysis for their own state or local area, to be able to capture nuances on who's being served, who is seeking services, who's having access to services, who's getting services, and what's happening to them at the end.

So let's look through our chat and see – Kellen, can I throw you one more about whether and how adults living in high poverty areas would be considered low income, such as what happens in our youth program?

MR. GRODE: Sure. And it's a good question. And it is one that we definitely looked into back when the law first came out. We looked into if there was a way for us to expand that definition that the youth program has laid out explicitly in the law to the adult program. And ultimately when we consulted with our lawyers, it was decided that that particular definition was intended to be specifically for the youth program. And so for the adult program, determining somebody to be low income can't just be based on them living in a high poverty area.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks, Kellen. Cesar, can you clarify about whether the calculation of this information and of this data is based on current and active participants or exiters? Or how are we doing these calculations?

MR. ACEVEDO: Sure. And that's a good question. So the way we establish the measure is based on exiters. Because we want to make sure we captured the full continuum of services provided in their entire period of participation. So if we looked at current participants, it could have been the case that they hadn't received a training service or individualized career service yet. Because we wanted to make sure that all of the services received were accounted for in the records that we're reviewing. So in order to do that, we're looking at exiters only. So we're looking at the most recent cohort of exiters in the quarterly results analysis.

I guess, Kim, I'll jump in and answer a few questions. We're getting a couple questions that are all sort of related to local area review or compliance, and what sort of tools we have out there to get this information on sort of a disaggregate level. For that information I'm going to – I'm assuming those are coming from our attendees today that are at the local level. I'm going to direct you back towards your states. I think ETA, it's safe to say that we're monitoring this at the state level and not necessarily at a local level. So you're going to work with your state workforce agencies to determine what service goals are appropriate at each individual local level. But at the state level we're expecting them to be no lower than 50.1 percent, and that we're pushing towards 75 percent. So those are state level goals.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks, Cesar. I can also see that there are some questions about whether we'll take the COVID pandemic into account when looking at the data. And so a few things on this. We did take COVID into account when we were thinking about releasing the guidance. And we chose not to release this guidance right at the start of the pandemic when we knew workforce agencies were grappling with a whole lot of challenges all at once. But we did want to make sure that we issued this timely because we know that the pandemic is having significant impact, probably the most significant impact on families who are low income.

And so collectively our – we have to keep our eye on low-income individuals because they're being impacted by the health impacts of the pandemic and the economic impacts of the pandemic. So they will remain a focus. And we'll definitely – we're definitely challenging ourselves and you to be able to focus our services on those who need it the most. There are some data complications that come out in the wash because of COVID, where we know that some of the data and sort of like the targets that states have negotiated get wrapped up with the statistical adjustment model and the number of jobs that are available in the current economy. So we have mechanisms to take all that into account. But we are definitely still going to be continuing looking at how many people are being served and who are those people. That's just as, if not more important in a pandemic, than at any other time.

Let's pause a moment. We're going to digest the next set of questions to make sure that we give you as much information as possible.

MR. GRODE: Kim, there was a lot of questions that we are getting about like what are the exact definitions of these different groups. And it's a very worthwhile question to be asking. The short answer is that these are all defined in the law in the definitions section. The longer answer is that, especially when we're talking about what we're collecting in the data, and which is then being used to calculate these various groups, those are all going to be in the participant individual record layout, or PIRL for those of you who are more familiar with how we collect the data in our programs.

There are definitions for – basic skills deficient is our element number 804, which is talking about if somebody has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the eighth grade level on a generally accepted standardized test, or a youth or adult who is unable to compute and solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the participant's family, or in society. That's one example. And I'm hesitant to just read out all of those definitions. But those are the definitions that we're operating under. They're all described in the PIRL. There's a definition for English language learner. There's a whole section of the PIRL dedicated to public assistance. Those are all the PIRL elements that are in the 600s range, I like to say.

And so to that, there was a question that came in about what types of public assistance are included. And they gave an example of cash assistance. That would be included because we have an element 604 which is for other types of public assistance. So we're really trying to capture every type of public assistance that somebody might be receiving. So to the extent that that's reported in the PIRL, we will be capturing that. Which leads me to one other point before I hand it back for more questions, which is that all of this sort of comes back to the point which is related to some of this QRA stuff that we've been talking about, which is that it's very important to be accurately reporting on these individuals.

We know sometimes when somebody first comes in, you don't know what level of service that they're going to be getting. And so maybe it's harder to initially get the right information from somebody. But we think it's really important that we do get that correct information about what somebody's status was when they entered the program.

So to the question – there was questions about if we find out later somebody was basic skills deficient, we didn't know when they first came in, we want to update that in their record. What we don't want is, not to get too in the weeds on reporting, but we don't want reporting to update because somebody's situation changed. It should only be updated to reflect where somebody was at when they entered the program. With that, I'll hand it back for another question.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks, Kellen. Go ahead, Cesar. I was just going to ask for your help.

MR. ACEVEDO: I'll take the next one. We got a question about other reasons for exit. And the question is, the calculation is based on exiters, does that mean participants exited under other reasons for exit, PIRL element 923 are not included in the calculation. That's correct. So in that cohort of exiters that we're basing this calculation on, we're only considering those where PIRL 923 equals zero.

So that means that they exited – they did not exit for any of those exclusionary reasons. They excited because their period of participation had come to an end. They did not receive any services for a period of at least 90 days. So that person's assumption is correct. We're not including those that excited under any other reasons or exclusionary reasons for exit.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks, Cesar. And I spot a question about the large number of unemployment insurance recipients who may not be low income and so wouldn't meet the adult priority of service, wouldn't help necessarily if they meet the adult priority of service requirements. So yeah, it's definitely – there's definitely a challenge with the workforce system being able to pivot and be able to handle all the people that need workforce services right now.

So there are of course multiple programs available to be able to deliver services. So folks who have been laid off are frequently – we recognize that not every single person falls in this category – there are frequently good candidates for the dislocated worker program, as well as for services that can be delivered through dislocated worker grants separate from the just regular formula dislocated worker program. So between the dislocated worker program and the dislocated worker grants, that expands the state's capacity to be able to serve. And we recognize there's an influx of individuals who have lost their jobs.

Also I want to remind folks that local areas have the ability to transfer funds between the adult and dislocated worker program as services are needed in their local area to be able to tailor services to the customers that are most in need in that local area. Cesar or Kellen, were there other questions that you wanted to be able to jump in to answer?

MR. ACEVEDO: There's another one here, someone's asking if an individual is basic skills deficient but not low income, do they need the priority of service status. So that individual would. You don't have to meet all three of the priority of service group categories. You just have to be one of them. So anyone in any one of those three categories could be considered for priority of service.

MS. VITELLI: Thank you. And I recognize we're getting more questions than we necessarily will be able to answer in this time period, especially as we get close to the end of the hour. But just do keep asking these because we will be able to provide additional information, as well as help us tailor technical assistance as we all move forward in looking at the data, and being able to tell whether or not we're meeting our shared goal of serving as many customers as possible, and maintaining quality services for those who are most in need.

MR. GRODE: And Kim, I think one thing that I wanted to address because there's sort of a lot of different questions that all fall in sort of a similar vein, so I wanted to try to answer or discuss those all together, since I know we're not going to be able to get to everything. But and that is I see a lot of questions where people are rightfully and thoughtfully asking about sort of how this priority interacts with other programs. And I think that those are important questions to be thinking about when states are developing their policies.

So one example I saw was somebody talking about the Title II program under WIOA. Probably being all of those participants could fit the basic skills deficient or English language learner categories of this group. And people mentioning SNAP and how that works with these priorities. And I think that ties back to something that we tried to hit on in the slides. But it's important to note where these areas of crossover are across the programs. And I think a lot of you are – probably most of you are already thinking about this on a daily basis.

But thinking about where those areas of crossover are, both for how are we going to get this person services, but also identifying potential participants for your program or for these other programs as well. Where is the areas where we can co-enroll people versus where is it more appropriate for us to refer somebody to this other program, rather than having us serve them if somebody else can serve them better than maybe our program can.

So I think that's an important consideration. And that gets to the point of there was questions about what about people that don't fit in these priority groups. And while a lot of them are eligible to be served by the adult program, if they're not in one of the priority groups it may be the case that they might be better served under a different program. And so those are the types of tricky decisions that I think states and locals will have to make. And so that's where having these policies sort of thought about and drafted up can help you all make those decisions.

MS. VITELLI: Thanks, Kellen. I also saw a question about technical assistance to states and local areas who will be responsible for meeting the requirements. And I would just like to sort of remind everybody that there's a whole bunch of technical assistance available through multiple channels, but particularly through WorkforceGPS, the platform in which we're operating this webinar right now. Because being able to provide aligned services and be able to create partnerships between programs has been a long time focus of the employment and training administration, as well as our federal partners at other agencies.

And so it's not just through this one avenue of this one data metric that we have in the past or will be delivering technical assistance. There's a lot of resources on aligning services and approaching customer services through a human centered design lens, all in WorkforceGPS, particularly in what we call ION, the Innovation and Opportunity Network, which is a particular community of practice within WorkforceGPS. And there's also an entire community of practice on career pathways, which is a method of delivering services that brings together a lot of different programs to allow the maximum number of people access to services, particularly training in the career pathways model.

So do take some time if you've got a chance to explore different corners of WorkforceGPS where a lot of technical assistance has been assembled for several years about aligning services to best serve those who are low income. So just being cognizant of our time together, I want to thank you, by the way, for this very rich discussion, and for asking so many questions, and for being so engaged. It's really gratifying to know that so many workforce development professionals care about this as much as we do.

I want to point out a couple of resources, some of which we discussed in the webinar today. This slide deck will also be available on WorkforceGPS, so you don't necessarily have to write down all of these URLs right now. But we've got a couple different resources for you.

And we've got a couple different other webinars that are coming up shortly that we also want to draw your attention to, one on the data within the eligible training provider list, as well as being able to deliver services to job seekers in a virtual environment, both things that are related to our shared goal of providing quality services and using data to be able to improve our services, so that everybody has access to quality services.

(END)