**Workforce 3One**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEAs)**

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*Transcript by*

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GARY GONZALEZ: So with that I'm going to transition over to today's PowerPoint. Again I want to welcome everyone and point out that, if you haven't done so already, go ahead and type into the chat window your name, who you are, where you're from.

And while you're doing that, I'm going to turn things over now to Betty Castillo. She's a chief for the Division of Unemployment Insurance Operations, Office of Unemployment here at the Department of Labor. Betty, take it away.

BETTY CASTILLO: Okay. Well, thank you, Gary. Hello and thank you to everyone on the phone today. We appreciate you joining us for today's webinar on the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Program.

This is a high priority program, and we have a lot of good information to share with you today. So I'll just get started and introduce our three speakers who are from the Office of Unemployment Insurance, and I'm going to introduce them in the order that they will be presenting.

Our first presenter is Gay Gilbert, who's the administrator for the Office of Unemployment Insurance. She will be followed by Diane Wood, who is an unemployment insurance program specialist, and then finally we'll hear from Kevin Stapleton who is an economist with the Office of Unemployment Insurance. So with that I'm going to turn it over to Gay.

GAY GILBERT: Good afternoon, everyone. I am very excited about this webinar today, and I'm glad so many of you are joining. I think most of you are probably familiar with our REA program, which is turning 15 this year. Actually, no. It's turning 20. No, turning 10. Ten.

DIANE WOOD: Started in 2005.

MS. GILBERT: Okay. So it's turning 10. Excuse me. So with celebrating the birthday, I think what we're doing here is giving the program a bit of a makeover. And so we have lots to share with you about what that means.

We know that, first of all, that this is a proven program. I saw we have some Nevada folks on the phone. I think many of you are familiar with the Nevada study that very clearly shows that if you were doing integrating your REA with the delivery of reemployment services, that you were going to get good outcomes. People were going to get good jobs with better wages and get those jobs faster and save your trust fund's money.

So we have been looking at the REA program for some time now with regard to how do we grow it. How do we improve it and generally make it better and more accessible to as many UI claimants as possible. We have included in our last two budgets in both the FY '15 and 2016 budgets proposals for a permanent RES/REA program. And that permanent program would target the top third of claimants most likely to exhaust and all UCX claimants.

It would be funded at a level that would average about $150 per claimant, which is the higher dollar amount than we saw in the EUC program, which required RES/REA for all EUC claimants. And the reason we wanted that higher dollar amount is because we think that these are folks who have a few more barriers to employment and they need more intensive reemployment services.

And the important thing about this proposal also is that it funds both the – what we know as our traditional REA functions along with the actual reemployment services themselves. And again, this is sort of one of the foundations for what we want to change today about our current temporary REA program, which is operating in 44 states today and hopefully a few more this year.

So we have a confluence of things. In addition to the budget proposal that we want to try to start to mimic in the now called RESEA program, we also have the fact that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act was enacted, and we'll want to talk a little bit about how that relates to the RESEA program now. And generally also in the appropriations language for FY 2015 we have new authority, which is very exciting to actually use the REA money again not just for the traditional REA kind of activities that we've previously permitted but also to pay for reemployment services.

The not as good news is we didn't get any more money to do that. So we're going to talk about some adjustments we've made this year to sort of hopefully leverage that money in the best possible way. So we have an evolving REA program to RESEA.

Let me spend just couple minutes on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Clearly states now have a golden opportunity, as in the Opportunity Act, to revisit sort of their service delivery designs, what happens in a One-Stop, how we integrate service delivery. And one of the things we want to encourage particularly on this webinar is that as states are beginning to do that and those of you with RESEA programs, we want you to be sure that you are bringing this program to the table and that you're integrating it, leveraging it, using it ways that make sense for the UI claimants that it will serve.

UI is a mandatory One-Stop partner under WIOA, similar to the IA, only we are pushing that a little harder this time around. We think UI is a critical component of the workforce system and needs to be fully integrated, and RESEA provides a really great opportunity and window to do that.

One of the things that we also want you to think about under the Opportunity Act is how you integrate your worker profiling program, WPRS. This transition that we're talking about today for RESEA, we'll be talking a little bit more about how that interfaces with WPRS moving forward and we think there's a nice marriage there. But again, both programs need to be sort of integrated into your WIOA planning.

So what's new? Again, I already mentioned that we have a new name, and hopefully it will start to roll off people's tongues. So RESEA, Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Program. As I mentioned earlier, the really good news from the FY '15 appropriations is we can actually use money for reemployment service delivery and not just up to the brink of referring somebody to reemployment services, which is the way the REA program operated previously.

And again, we're trying to begin to mirror what we included in our budget proposal for a mandatory program, which is to target claimants most likely to exhaust and UCX claimants. They have varied in how they've targeted claimants in the past, and we have states doing a wide range of different kinds of targeting. We are trying to standardize that now again to sort of reflect what we think our policy priorities are for this program.

Excuse me. So again, who's the RESEA population? Those most likely to exhaust UC and those who are receiving UCX. We are expecting states to use their profiling models to identify those most likely to exhaust. And you're going to hear from Kevin here in a few minutes about a great opportunity to revisit your profiling model and update it and get it better moving forward. Obviously the profiling models tend to exclude certain people who are non-eligible, which nothing about that is really changing. And generally we want you to use and maybe improve your worker profiling model as we shift in this direction.

So again, I mentioned before this new targeted population tends to have more barriers to employment. Obviously those who are most likely to exhaust, there's a reason that they're most likely to exhaust and it's because of those barriers.

UCX claimants tend to be – we've been through our UCX pilots here recently in some work with the army and some of the other military branches. We're learning a little bit more about who the UCX population is, and it tends to be more those who were in lower grades in the military. They tended to be more people who came in with no previous work experience, et cetera. So they are people who have not looked for work before. They are going to need help understanding how to transition their military skills to the civilian population and/or they may need training in just how they interact with the civilian labor market.

So again, more barriers and more needs to be served with more intensive services. And we think the individual reemployment plan that has always been a part of this program is the key way to do that. And one of the things we also think is pretty important in this process is that you – it is critical to do individual assessments for many of these claimants to understand what their needs are. We don't think, however, that just a random – the same assessment for every claimant is an individualized approach. And so we want to try to steer away from that. Generally assessments can be a sweep of different kinds of assessments, depending on what the individual needs. So encourage you to tailor that to what the individual's needs are.

So I'm going to turn this over to Diane now. She's going to talk through a little bit more of the nitty-gritty nuts and bolts of what we're expecting and what it's going to look like. But we'll obviously be getting to Q&A's here soon, and we'll have lots of opportunity to clarify this with everybody. So, Diane.

MS. WOOD: Thank you, Gay. We'll talk about some of the things that are the same. We'll still have the one-on-one eligibility review and the one-on-one individual reemployment development plan. One of the reasons that we have those one-on-ones is some aspects of that should be private, especially in eligibility review. It certainly is fine to start that process in a group setting, the employment forms to be filling out, but claimants do need to talk to someone once they've completed those forms and go through all the eligibility issues.

And then with the individual reemployment plan we think that's a great opportunity to actually tell the claimants what they need to do, rather than just say three work source contacts. We hope that claimants will know what it looks like. They might look for work, what they might do, and that claimants will have some sort of – you'll have an agreement with the claimant before the claimant leaves that these are the things that the claimant should do.

Claimants will still be asked to be provided specific labor market information for their needs. That's one of the real advantages. I can remember working in a local office, and when someone comes in and you have to tell them that they can accept to earn considerably less than what they earned in a job where they had a lot of seniority, that's a difficult thing for us to do and it's a difficult thing for the claimant to hear.

But if we have labor market information about different kinds of jobs from the entry level salaries for those jobs, then it seems much more objective. And again, we'll be referring to appropriate reemployment services and this time paying for it, and those can be available in the office or online.

MS. GILBERT: Diane, I might add one other thing that's not changing is that we are continuing to give states the flexibility as to who does this.

MS. WOOD: Right.

MS. GILBERT: But we also expect that, particularly if it's someone who is more oriented to workforce program delivery, that they're properly trained in UI eligibility and to be able to do the eligibility assessment. But again, you have flexibility as a state.

MS. WOOD: That was the reason that we added in one of the prior UFPOs that as a UI person has to be involved, and some of the states were finding that, when they were trying to identify different elements on the reports, that they needed UI staff to define what those were.

On continuing states they will spend the remaining 2014 funds first. I've sent out a request asking states how much money they had left and how far they think that will go. And thanks to everybody that's replied, and if you haven't, please do because we send a single list to the grants office. And continuing states that receive 2015 funds should begin transitioning to the new program as soon as possible with those funds. And the comparison group will no longer apply when we go to RESEA because we won't be skipping claimants. So that's not appropriate for this new population.

New states that have never received an REA grant will start with the new population. There will be no need to program the old population in the comparison groups and then transition at the end of the year and often takes about a year to get started. So again, there will be no comparison group for the new states.

We have states that are in an REA evaluation, and thank you again. We always say thank you. We greatly appreciate your help with this. You should continue with the evaluation design as you have designed it. And in the UIPL we say that states can request up to $100,000 for transition. I'll talk about that a little bit more later, but states that are in the study should also request that money. You just won't transition yet.

And we have some additional time that we can use those funds, but we want to make sure that everyone has access to that money. And the study states would not transition to the new RESEA population until the evaluation period is over.

And everyone's gotten an email. We have a conference call tomorrow afternoon at 2:00, if you can join us by phone. If you can't, follow up with me later and ask any questions. I actually have got some good questions of things we'll talk about tomorrow. We'll be talking about how to prepare your grant, not really about how to run your study.

We have the two required reports that we've had for a long time. We started those the second year of the REA program. One was a 9128, which counted workloads and the 9129, which counted outcomes. And we're going to look at what we need for the new program. We actually don't know yet what we'll be doing exactly. We'll have the new targeted population, and we'll be looking at the new WIOA common measures. So as something is developing on that, we'll let you know. But at this point we're not really sure yet.

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. Let me just jump in again a little bit there, Diane. Actually, had WIOA not passed, we might have been a little further ahead on this as we look to a more permanent REA program moving forward or RESEA now. We would like to align the performance outcomes and measures with the rest of the workforce system programs, but WIOA came along. So that's probably going to delay us just a little bit because the new definitions are being put out there now and developed under the Opportunity Act. So we would wait to kind of follow that lead, so that's why there's going to be a little bit of a delay.

But anyway, we are moving to a different paradigm here as to how we're going to measure outcomes for this program. We would envision, though, from time to time that we would still do evaluations I think particularly as we move to this new model, we'll want to take another look to see how that's working.

MS. WOOD: The 2015 budgeting cycle, as Gay mentioned earlier, we still have $80 million and hope for more. So the funding cycle is a nine-month period in 2015. It will end at the end of December. I've had a lot of questions about that, but we nearly didn't have enough money to go to the end of March. So it does shorten the time period. And since this new population may require more intensive services, you may wish to reduce the number of REAs, and if you decide to – or RESEAs. If you decide to do that, that's okay.

Right. So the idea here is, again, you're going to – particularly as you're transitioning, you're serving a different population that needs more intensive services that cost more, and you're going to be using the money to pay for the reemployment services. So again, we're trying to stretch the $80 million a little bit by shortening the time window.

In calculating the RESEA costs, it didn't change. We'll use the same method that we've always used. You can request up to five hours for each RESEA for including reemployment services. The RESEA cost projections are based on specific workload activities. You'll be talking about what we'll be funding and what that will cost and what the time period would be. States estimate the time that's required based on specific task, and then you calculate the cost based on the applicable staffing costs. We've had the formula in the proposal for several years.

So the funds are available for the actual time spent, and that's actual staff time that's spent. For example, an REA may take two hours, but part of that may be a group activity, which would be calculated differently. And the time is allocated based on each individual RESEA, and then we tried to give an example of how you would calculate group activities. If you had 10 people in an activity that lasted for an hour, you would divide that by the number of people. So you would charge six minutes of staff time per participant to get up to the hour.

Otherwise, if you charged an hour, then a person would work an hour and it would be 10 hours charged. We're paying for actual time. You should include any additional time that it takes to schedule those activities, any time it takes for follow up on those activities. We would fund all of those.

You can request up to $100,000 to implement the program changes. You'll need to break those costs down and just tell us what they are. A lot of that probably will be some programming changes, but it could be other things. So in your proposal just let us know what that is, and just tell us how you derived that cost.

The bridge funding, that's where we sent the email out and asked you how much it would take you to run until the end of June. Those funds are based on the 2014 proposal because that's what we have approved and it's in place. And we'll issue those as soon as we can, and that doesn't take very long. As soon as we get the list, we send the list to the grants office, and they'll send out owed to everybody.

So I'm going to turn it over to Kevin, who's going to talk about the profiling methods seminar, and I'm going to go.

MR. STAPLETON: Thanks, Diane. So we want to just reiterate the upcoming training and make sure everybody knows about it. This is for states to send folks to for updating the profiling seminars.

Profiling models. A lot of states have outdated profiling models. Some states haven't updated since it was initially launched back in 1994, and obviously with the recession, a lot of states haven't updated since before the recession. So the models in a lot of situations can and should be updated.

So the seminar's coming up. It's going to be presented by Dr. Robert St. Louis from Arizona State University in conjunction with the Division of Fiscal and Actuarial Services here in the national office. It's going to be held May 19th through May 22nd. So it's coming up next month. It's going to start at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday the 19th and run through noon on Friday, May 22nd.

The people that we're looking for. So first priority is going to be for state analysts that are currently developing and updating state profiling models or would be doing so in their state offices. And second priority will be to actuarial or statistical more research staff– who require a working knowledge of the profiling model.

There is going to be $2500 in reimbursable travel costs to states for sending staff to this training. And you can find more information in the 1026-14 or you can contact Robert Pavosevich or myself. Our contact information is on the next screen.

And just so everybody is aware, make sure you get this in quickly. The deadline is tomorrow COB on April 7th. So please get your applications in soon, and we'll get some information out to you as we get them.

MS. GILBERT: So this is Gay. Let me just put a little add on commercial here. Again, the profiling models are going to be taking on a kind of new role here, an improved role. So obviously we want states to have as solid profiling model as they possibly can. We have limited space in this seminar. So if we are oversubscribed, we are considering whether we might do a second one in the fall.

So if you don't get to come this time, you may have a second crack at the apple. I would also say that the staff here is also always available, to the extent that we have capacity, to provide one-on-one technical assistance to states as you're looking at updating your profiling models also. So again, this becomes a really important connection point.

Honestly, one of the things we were trying to do here with the RESEA program, and particularly the permanent one we've proposed, is to create a marriage between WPRS and RESEA so that RESEA is essentially the funding mechanism to implement WPRS. And to the extent as states transition to the new model in the temporary program, it can become that where you offer RESEA.

Obviously some states don't cover their entire state. So we still have to continue their WPRS in those locations, but again, we're trying to marry up these two programs in a positive way and the profiling model is at the heart of it. So I hope you all will share this with I'm guessing in many cases your LOI directors who help you with your profiling model and make sure they know it's available.

So I think we are ready for questions.

MR. GONZALEZ: So I believe we're going to – we have some questions that were typed into the chat. We're also going to allow you to verbalize or vocalize a question, and our operator, Simone (ph), will come on to give you some instructions on how to do so.

So, Simone, if you would, please let our audience know how they can queue up over the phone line, if they so choose.

OPERATOR: Certainly. At this time, if you would like to ask a question, you may do so by pressing star one. Please record your first and last name clearly when prompted, as your name is required to introduce the question. To withdraw your question simply press star two. Again, if you would like to ask a question, you may do so at this time by pressing star one.

MR. GONZALEZ: All right. Thanks, Simone. So, Simone, once we have somebody in the phone line queue and you hear a break, let us know over the phone so we can turn to that person. But we do have some questions that were typed into the chat. So I'm going to turn it back over to Betty so that we can start fielding some of those questions until we get any questions over the phone. Betty, over to you.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. We have a question about how states who provide services to the RESEA and not WPRS will do the reporting related to the 9047 and 9048, which are the WPRS reports. Are they RESEA reports? Okay. So Diane is going to respond.

MS. WOOD: Okay. States, if you do RESEA in some offices and do not do them in all offices, then you would still continue the WPRA service in the offices where you do not do the RESEA. The 9047 is not the profiling report. We have a 9048 and a 9049, and those would continue. But if you transition to all offices with RESEA, then the profiling reports would eventually go away.

But the 9047 is a totally separate report that we wouldn't address here. That's the reemployment report.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. So are there any questions coming in?

MR. GONZALEZ: Simone, do we have any questions over the phone yet?

MS. CASTILLO: If not, so we have a question about do individual reemployment plans – is it the same for an individual employment plan as on I guess WIOA? Is it the same type of plan?

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. I'm not familiar with an individual employment plan under WIOA, but I would be willing to bet they're similar, if there is one. We have, throughout the life of the REA program, required a reemployment plan that includes a work search plan, so obviously trying to scope out what steps the individual should take that would be most effective in their job search and their overall look for reemployment.

These are individualized and tailored to the individual based on their prior employment, their skills that they're bringing to the table, their – what the kinds of services that are available within the state or local area that would help that individual. So you want to be as thorough as possible in how you craft that individual plan in partnership with obviously the claimant.

OPERATOR: We do have questions in queue.

MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Great. Thanks, Simone.

OPERATOR: Our first question comes from Susan Bass (ph). Susan, your line is open.

Q: Good afternoon. I was wondering for – now that we will be including UCX exhaustees, from the UI perspective should we also be including those that are combined wage claims, UI, UCX, UCFE, UCX, that sort of thing?

MS. GILBERT: And this is Gay. Well, first of all, you always had an opportunity to include UCX claimants in your targeting of REA, but what we're saying now is that you need to focus on as many UCX claimants as possible, given your grant capacity. So a broader – not just that you're those likely to exhaust. We're looking to anybody who's coming on to UCX.

Q: So even if it's a combined claim with regular UI or UCFE, we should still put them in that service class?

MS. GILBERT: Given our current funding scenario, I think we would be flexible about that as to how the state would want to do it. A simple way would probably be focusing on new straight up UCX claims and then checking everybody else out through the profiling model as whether they're likely to exhaust. But I think we would be flexible about that.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

OPERATOR: Our next question comes from Nick Bishop. Nick, your line is open.

Q: Thank you. You've mentioned previously that with the new funds, that we can use those REA funds for reemployment services. Does that mean we can use it for OJTs to enroll the participant in some type of training, maybe even something such as bus passes? Can you just maybe elaborate on that or define what you mean by reemployment services? Thank you.

MS. GILBERT: So this is Gay. Basically these funds are not for training, and quite frankly, there's not enough of them anyway. I think the guideline you should use is sort of the services you would deliver under the Wagner-Peyser Act. Anything that you would deliver under Wagner-Peyser would be in that category.

OPERATOR: Once again, as a reminder, if you would like to ask a question, you may do so by pressing star one. Please record your first and last name clearly, when prompted. Our next question comes from Victoria Palomino (ph). Victoria, your line is open.

Q: Yes. Good afternoon. I'm calling from the program here in Puerto Rico, REA. I have a question, and it's reinforcing the previous question about reemployment services. Since Puerto Rico we do by regions and by sectors, the whole island would be also implemented in the RESEA program, or are we still using the same programming as REA?

MS. GILBERT: Oh, the state still has flex – or Puerto Rico in this case, territory, has the flexibility to determine which geographic locations you deliver the program in. This is still a temporary program. There's not enough money to serve every UI claimant. So you're going to have to do targeting in some ways. If you choose not to do the – particularly after you transition, if you choose not to do the whole – the entirety of your state or territory, you will still have to do WPRF in those as a worker profiling and the way you previously implemented it in places where you do not have RESEA. And you have some flexibility here.

Q: Thank you.

MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. And I think we will take some questions that have been typed in. So I'll turn it back over to Betty. And, Simone, after we exhaust a few more questions that have been typed in, we'll turn back to those that have queued up over the phone. Betty.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. We have a question that asks, "Would it be appropriate to use some of these funds to get a license from a strong skilled matching tool like TORQ, T-O-R-Q?"

MS. GILBERT: So this is Gay. I'll take that one. So generally the funding for the RESEA is intended to do the eligibility assessment, the reemployment plan, the career and labor market information, and reemployment service delivery. It is not intended to buy the tools that support your reemployment service delivery, per se.

Again, there's not enough money to do that. So this is focused on leveraging the reemployment services you already have available either online or through your American job centers or One-Stop centers and how do you connect the claimant with those services that are already there.

MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Thanks, Gay. And do we have any other questions that we want to address that were typed in? So I'll toss it back over to Betty, and if not, we will take some questions that are queued up over the phone. Betty, over to you.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. We have a question that asks, "Can one of the states request $100,000 transition funds if we intend to spend the funds on the transition infrastructure but will not start RESEA until 2016?"

MS. WOOD: Absolutely. Yes. Yeah. It will take you some time to actually do the transition. So everyone should request – that is going to transition should request those funds this year and then you'd be expected to be actually in place in 2016.

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. I may just note we're getting a couple questions on the Ticket-to-Work program, and I have to tell you that we are not the people who can answer them. The Ticket-to-Work program is a different program from the RESEA. So we apologize. We don't have the answers to that.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. All right. So we have another question that says, "When the RESEA is implemented, will we report RESEAs in ETAs 9048 and -49 reports?"

MS. GILBERT: No. Those are the worker profiling reports, and you won't report those there. And we will be giving instructions as soon as we possibly can on the reporting for the RESEA, but 9048 and 9049 are totally for worker profiling.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. We have another question that asks, "If there is not a comparison group for RESEA, will the 9129 report eventually go away?"

And I think we can say that we're looking at this now and that's likely that it will definitely of course change because that's where states reported the control group activity. For states that are continuing this comparison group, control group through the end of this year, we would ask that reporting continue through 2016 so we can get the results of what occurred. But yes. I'm sure the 9029 will eventually change or potentially go away.

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. This is an area where I think we're going to want to consult with the states as we evolve our thinking on this. So we'll be back at you about that.

MS. CASTILLO: All right. We have a question, "Will states have to select UCX claimants before others most likely to exhaust?" I think the thinking is that you will be developing some kind of a threshold for those most likely to exhaust, but we also want you to try to factor in some portion of UCX claimants.

Ideally we're looking to serve as many UCX claimants as possible along with some level of services for those most likely to exhaust. Again, I think as Gay mentioned earlier, there is flexibility for the states to determine how many people they can serve, and that should be built into your proposal if you plan to try to transition this year.

MS. GILBERT: And again, a clarification. We are looking at new UCX claimants, not – as the second population, not just UCX claimants that are most likely to exhaust.

MR. GONZALEZ: And I think we'll take one or two more questions that were typed in, and then we'll transition or put it back to the phones. Betty.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. We have a question that asks, "For the study states, does the funding end in December?"

MS. WOOD: For this grant period it does, and we know that you are – many states are starting in April. So we'll address that in 2016. The agreement was that the study would run for 12 months. So we'll work with you to do the proposal for this year, and then we'll also work with you for the first month of the next year.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. I think we'll take questions, if there are any, over the phone. Simone, do we have anyone in queue?

OPERATOR: We do have questions in queue. Before we go to our questions, just as a reminder, if you would like to ask a question, you may do so by pressing star one. Please record your first and last name clearly once prompted.

Our next question comes from Rachel Turning (ph). Rachel, your line is open?

Q: Hi. Good afternoon. I just wanted to clarify that services from April 1st to December 31st would be funded with FY '14 dollars and we should let you know what we need to operate that, and then there would be additional – it's really an additional $100,000 that we're requesting now to be used to transition so we are fully effective FY '16?

MS. WOOD: Yeah. 2014 funds you just spend until you spend them out. So the question has been how much would you need to go through the end of June. We're also going to be issuing 2015 funds, and in the 2015 funds you would have the access to request the $100,000. But we're talking about two time periods. Many states have money left over that will run them through the end of June at least. So there will be 2014 funds and then the UI PL that we send out where you – for the proposals that you're doing now will be for 2015.

MS. GILBERT: But this is Gay. I might add onto that that it's only the 2015 funds that can be used to pay for reemployment services. The 2014 funds are still limited to the traditional REA activities.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

OPERATOR: Our next question comes from Crystal Watts (ph). Crystal, your line is open.

Q: You somewhat answered it with the question just now, but I just wanted to confirm that the obligation and liquidation dates are in 2016 for this FY 2015 funding.

MS. WOOD: That's right. Yeah. It's in the UI PL.

Q: Okay.

MS. WOOD: The obligation liquidation dates. We actually allow an extra six months. What we project is that – this time we project that it will last for nine months and then we allow an extra six months because it's really not possible to get the exact dollar amount. And we are trying to eliminate all the grant modifications for very small amounts of money to extend the obligation period.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

MS. WOOD: That's always in your award letter. If you've got a question when you need to obligate or liquidate, it's always in the award letter.

Q: But a plan should be built on the assumption that we only go through December 2015?

MS. WOOD: That's right. Yeah. That's what you're projecting for this year.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

OPERATOR: Just as a reminder, if you would like to ask a question, you may do so by pressing star one. Please record your first and last name clearly once prompted. To withdraw your question simply press star two.

Our next question comes from Ms. Boran (sic). Your line is now open.

Q: It's actually Patsy O'Brien (ph), but my question is that you mentioned that there was a possibility of revision of the profiling. I'm wondering should we – although it would be difficult, should we build in a broad estimate to revise our profiling model in the transition costs, or are we going to get another funding opportunity to do that?

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. I think when we first came up with that figure, we weren't thinking about you updating your profiling model. But I don't think we'd object to that. You may not get another shot at the apple. So you're going to want to prioritize what you think are the most critical implementation costs.

MS. WOOD: You want to be sure and let us know what those costs are, that if you estimate for the profiling model, just let us know in the proposal.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

OPERATOR: We have a question from Victoria Palomino. Ms. Palomino, your line once again is open.

Q: Thank you. It was just a question in order – for here in Puerto Rico, since each area and region we have diverse popularity and different needs, how would you suggest us placing funding towards or reducing the population that we attack depending on how each one has their own necessities? People who don't have their high school diploma, we have a lot of that in our population, but they're still able to work. How would you suggest us placing our funding or reducing the people who we attack or are focusing on people who we want to gain in those populations? How would be your suggestion?

MS. GILBERT: So this is Gay. So the RESEA program is really not – what we're moving to now is a standardized model for targeting who gets served. And we're making a national priority for those who are most likely to exhaust their UI benefits or new incoming UCX claimants. So while I know that in your other workforce services you had more flexibility to do targeting of individuals like in the WIOA, Adults or Dislocated Worker Program, that's not the case here. We are setting a national priority on who needs to be targeted.

Q: Thank you so much.

MS. GILBERT: Sure.

MR. GONZALEZ: I think we'll take maybe one or two more questions over the phone. Then we'll go back to the questions that were typed in. Simone, do we have any other questions verbally?

OPERATOR: There are currently no questions in queue at this time.

MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. So I'll turn it back over to Betty so that we can take some questions that were typed in. Betty.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. We have a question that asks, "For this project are we also targeting transitioning service members or only fully separated veterans?"

And who we're looking at are people that have filed a claim for UCX. That's basically how you're, I'm assuming, going to make your selection. If this is a UCX claim, it's a UCX claimant.

MS. GILBERT: So we are not targeting veterans broadly. We are focusing in on the UCX claimant population here.

MS. CASTILLO: We have another question that asks, "Can we expand the five-hour time limit period allowed for the RESEA to be used by workshop presenters really that's staffed by the RESEA worker or must the five-hour time period be spent exclusively with the RESEA worker?"

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. Let me take a stab at this one. So we, in an effort to try to stretch money, have – we have tried to estimate what we think is sort of the probable amount of time that you would need to do more intensive reemployment services within the money that you have. I think this is one area that, if states want to argue with this, I think this is one that I think we would want – we would be happy to talk with you about, if you think that that's a lower amount. But I suggest you do that in advance of submitting your application so that we can have those conversations sooner rather than later.

MS. WOOD: And one thing to remember is that you're looking at one-on-one time charges. So if a claimant went to a lot of workshops, they could go to a lot of workshops before they hit five hours. So you're looking at individual staff time, what hours are the staff required to contribute to that effort.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. We have a question, "Will the program year change to a calendar year, or will the RESEA 2016 program begin on April 1st of 2016? Also are states expected to suspend RESEA activities after December 31st, even if the state has remaining funds?"

MS. WOOD: No. Don't stop. Please don't stop. We'll have to change our year next year, which it will start in January. We always have the time period covered. We just changed it a little bit this year and shortened it because we knew that we had limited funds. So the 2016 grant period will start with December, and it's likely that it will go through – start with January. It's likely that it will go through the end of December. I don't anticipate that we'd do a nine-month period again. And if you have money left, keep going.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. "Can we have any overlap between the old REA and the RESEA, or should this be sort of a clean break, end of REA and start of RESEA?"

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. I think we've sort of given you flexibility for this to be a transition year. So how you do the transition, I think we want to be flexible. We obviously want by the end of the year to have you fully transitioned so that 2016 everybody's doing – operating the same program. So I think we would see that you would have flexibility.

MS. CASTILLO: We have another question that asks whether claimant trainees are exempted from the RESEA program as well. I'm assuming that might be asking whether people who are in approved training or some kind of training program are exempt, and as we've mentioned before, the funds for RESEA cannot be used for training itself. So I don't know if – I suppose if you have a person that's been profiled that happens to be going to training and you think that some reemployment services on top of that training are useful, I think that we've – those funds could be used for the reemployment services but not for the training.

"Are there limitations" – there's another question. "Are there limitations to what's considered career services?" I think maybe we've answered that.

MS. GILBERT: So career services, there's a term of art under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and that is the kind of definition is a complex one. And I will commend you to those rule making that was just made available online last week and to be published in the Federal Register shortly.

And also we will be having operational guidance on all things WIOA in the not too distant future. So what you're offering these claimants are the traditional REA activities, which are doing the eligibility assessments and looking at work search. You are providing career and labor market information that's customized to that individual hopefully. You are doing the reemployment plan.

You are informing how they should look at work search and what work search activities would be appropriate, and you're orienting people to your One-Stop services or your American job center services. You are doing at least one referral to reemployment services, and now under the RESEA program you can actually pay for that reemployment service, if you choose to do that, or you can continue to fund it as you have previously through Wagner-Peyser or under WIA prior to transitioning to WIOA.

MS. CASTILLO: So we have a question. "Just to confirm, you mentioned five hours for each RESEA. Is that a total of five hours for the initial RESEA and two subsequent RESEAs?"

And it's basically up to five hours for the initial RESEA. We assume that any subsequent RESEAs take less time because the individual has already had orientation and potentially some other services. So include whatever time you're estimating for the subsequent REAs in the proposal, but you would have up to five hours for that initial RESEA.

We have another question. "Can veterans that are not included in the UCX population be treated the same as UCX claimants in the new RESEA population?"

MS. GILBERT: So the answer is no. We really are about targeting UCX claimants at this point.

MS. WOOD: It's possible – (inaudible) – profiling.

MS. GILBERT: And obviously you have other funding sources to serve veterans through Wagner-Peyser and even through the Adult and Dislocated Worker Program. So we'd encourage you to look to those funding streams to do that.

MS. CASTILLO: Another question is, "Can remaining FY '14 REA funds be used to fund reemployment services as soon as the state transitions to RESEA?"

And the answer is no. We only have authority under the FY 2015 appropriation.

MS. GILBERT: So only the FY 2015 money can be used for reemployment services. Let me say that for the third time just to make sure that you all heard that because we did not have any authority for the 2014 money to do this.

MS. CASTILLO: We have a question about interstate claimants are required to offer RESEA services to out-of-state claimants in place of the WPRS program. And I think we're going to have to get back to you on that. Right now we don't actually have the mechanisms in place to look at interstate claimants.

"What telephone meeting is scheduled tomorrow?"

MS. WOOD: The states that are participating in the study. So if you're participating in the study.

MS. GILBERT: The evaluation.

MS. WOOD: Yeah. If you're participating in that, you got an email. So if not, you're off the hook.

MS. CASTILLO: Is the intent of the RESEA program to serve all UCX participants, regardless of their score?

MS. GILBERT: So the answer is yes. You're looking at new UCX claimants. Whether you're able to get to all UCX claimants with current funding is unlikely, but we would like to see you get to a significant portion of them. It is in our mandatory proposal that we would then go to looking at all UCX program, if it should pass Congress.

MS. CASTILLO: I have another question that asks, "Are RESEA claimants considered dislocated workers under WIOA?"

MS. GILBERT: Not necessarily. And again, I would commend you. We're going to be having new operating guidance coming out in addition to the notes of proposed rule-making that has just become available online. So as we have a chance to digest all of that together, if you still have that question, we'd encourage you to come back to us with it.

MS. CASTILLO: There's a question about whether there's any reason that we couldn't go to a July to June year to facilitate planning with the WIOA scheduling.

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. Unfortunately our funding is on a fiscal year cycle. We have shifted to where we are today. We went to the original and to the March measure because they had so much carry-in money. This year we're making a conscious choice to change the cycle a little bit because we want to give you a little more money to spend on the claimants that you do serve in that nine-month period. And so I think it's unlikely that we would ever get to a June to July cycle.

MS. CASTILLO: Another question asks, "Just to be clear, the RESEA replaces and provides funds for the WPRS or RES program and replaces the UI REA program?"

MS. WOOD: Again, if you don't have the RESEA program in all offices, then you'll continue the WPRS. If you do have the RESEA program, it does replace the REA program, and if you are doing that in all offices, then you would not be doing – you would incorporate WPRS in your RESEA program. But as long as you have the claimants in any office that are not being served under RESEA, then you would continue WPRS for those claimants.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. "Are there any specific parameters for selecting UCX participants?"

MS. GILBERT: Again, we want you to do as many new UCX claimants as possible.

MR. GONZALEZ: And I think now would be a good time to transition to phones. Simone, do we have anybody on the line that would like to ask a question?

OPERATOR: We do certainly at this time. Nick, your line is open.

Q: Can I go back to the part about having a national uniform model for the selection of participants? Would you be able to send out any type of guidelines or bullet points in regards to how we should shape our profiling model? Should we go after certain people with certain education levels or should it be a mixture of things or is there any type of guidance in detail that you can provide? Or is it simply up to the states to select their own model? Thank you.

KEVIN STAPLETON: Yeah. There's certainly a little bit of national guidance on this, and really we'd encourage you guys to attend the profiling methods seminar coming up next month, if possible. There used to be a national model to direct – at least provide variables that would go into the model to direct the selection of claimants for this, but we've modified that to be more of a grouping of variables that have been found helpful.

As for specific guidance, I don't think there's anything available at the moment, but that's something we can work on. And we can make available to you the resources from the seminar coming up as well.

MS. GILBERT: Profiling models are a little bit art and a little bit science here because then they can differ in terms of how they should need to work based on your economy and your labor market and where you sit. So understanding the basic underlying kind of how profiling models are supposed to work through this seminar and then working with us individually on your state's specific circumstances is what we might recommend.

MR. STAPLETON: Right. And we do offer assistance and support to states developing their profiling models as well.

Q: Now, these are logistic regression models typically, and so you'd be looking at each of the individual variables and see what kind of T-squares you might get on different parameters. So it's just like running any other regression, and that would help you decide what you would include in your profiling model.

MS. GILBERT: Again, we would probably encourage you to partner up with your labor market information staff as you're thinking about this because they can be helpful I think. They tend to have the right – some of the right field steps.

MR. GONZALEZ: Simone, do we have any other callers on the line that want to ask a question?

OPERATOR: Currently at this time there are no questions in queue. If you would like to ask a question, please press star one. Record your first and last name clearly once prompted.

MR. GONZALEZ: All right. Thank you, Simone. I'm going to turn it over to Gay, and I think we might have a couple more questions as well.

MS. GILBERT: So this is Gay. I thought we were moving to wrap up, but if we're doing questions, we'll do questions.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. We'll take one more question. "Will the same rule about old money being used prior to new year money apply with the $100,000?" This is for a transition. "For example, can the FY '15 money be used for staff to coordinate, facilitate, to review the state's current WPRS and REA program to take the best of both and develop the RESEA program for the states?"

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. I think yes. We did envision that in addition to technology changes that you might want to make, that you would also be making changes to your business processes or your service delivery design. So yes. That would be an appropriate expenditure.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. Another question, "Would we continue to do WPRS in regions that participate in RESEA in a state that does not have statewide RESEA?"

We're assuming that if you have, say, just one center that offers your UI REA today, that in that center, unless you were planning to expand your RESEA services, you would then be able to do the RESEA in lieu of your WPRS efforts in that particular location. Otherwise, in the other offices that don't offer the RESEA, you would have to continue the WPRS services.

Another question, "If states cannot continue the profiling model training – cannot attend" – I'm sorry – "the profiling model training, will the training be available online somewhere?"

MR. STAPLETON: I believe we're going to try to make the resources available. I don't – there's no plan to make a webinar or any kind of online training guide at this point. But we can provide the resources and we can also work with individuals who are requesting assistance or have questions about what they're reading in the resources. And we can also, if there is enough interest, we are also considering offering another seminar later this year or potentially next year.

MS. CASTILLO: Another question, "RESEA services should be customized to the individual. We would like to use various assessments with the claimant. Can RESEA funds be used for these assessments?"

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. So RESEA funds can be used for – to conduct assessments for claimants. I think the one thing that we are not interested in is for you making kind of a blanket policy for all claimants, everybody who's in RESEA, that they have to have the same assessment. Many of you in your states have adopted the assessments and/or work readiness assessments. We don't think that that kind of blanket work readiness assessment kind of approach is appropriate here.

But having said that, if you believe that a particular assessment or suite of assessments is appropriate for that individual, yes. RESEA can pay for that.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. One other question is, "The $150 per claimant amount mentioned at the beginning of the presentation, the maximum or average amount expected to be spent per claimant for all RESEA activity based on the five-hour maximum?"

Basically, we talked about up to five hours being the maximum to spend on the initial REA services.

MS. GILBERT: So this is Gay. The $150 is something that's in our budget proposal. We have tried to sort of approximate it, I guess, and do an average and coming to the five-hour projection. So the $150 doesn't really play in the current RESEA program. That is something we have proposed as far as our budget proposal.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. The state of New York is asking, "New York is a study state. Can we ask questions about how the study impacts with the new grant?"

MS. WOOD: This is Diane. We've got a call tomorrow to talk all about that, and New York sent in some really good questions. So let's do that tomorrow because it doesn't apply to all states, but we'll go over any question that you have tomorrow in the conference call.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. I think that that –

MR. GONZALEZ: Well, first, do we – Simone, we don't want to cut anybody off. We've exhausted or with the time that we have I think we've addressed as many questions as we can that were typed in. Do we have any questions that are over the phone?

OPERATOR: We do. We have one question in queue at this present time. Tracy Philips, your line is open.

Q: Hi. I just want – I was just hoping you could just go over one more time the funding piece of it. So if a state offers RES and a state offers REA and they're two separate funding streams, how do those two streams work again as we transition through this process, in the event that there are carry-forward monies available?

MS. GILBERT: So Tracy, here's the scoop. Both sets of money can be used for traditional REA activities. The new 2015 money can be used also to pay for reemployment services and to give you up to $100,000 to do the transition. Does that answer your question?

Q: Okay. So exactly when does the transition need to be fully in place?

MS. GILBERT: So you need to be ready to fully implement the new program by 2017 – actually, 2016. Excuse me. I feel like 2016. So you have this nine-month period through December 30th to transition.

Q: Right.

MS. GILBERT: We'd transition sooner, but it's up to the state about whether you do that or not.

Q: It's calendar year? We have to be ready by calendar year 2016, not fiscal year?

MS. GILBERT: Yes. Yes.

Q: Calendar year '16. So we can go ahead and if we have carry-forward funds that we haven't used yet for REA, we can continue to do traditional REA, transition into the REASEA program with potentially additional funds, if we apply for them, and then have the program up and running by 2016 where we have this integrated program wrapped up?

MS. GILBERT: Right. So we encourage you to go ahead and apply for the up to the $100,000 now for the transitioning now because we don't know that we'll have it available again.

Q: Okay.

MS. GILBERT: And in order for you to be ready, you're going to need to do the transition piece.

Q: And then we would have another grant set of funding that would start January 1 of '16?

MS. GILBERT: That's correct.

Q: Okay.

MS. GILBERT: Assuming Congress permits that, but my sense is that this has been a very popular program. We don't have any reason to believe that it's on the chopping block.

Q: And are we still going to be doing the comparison group?

MS. GILBERT: Not in 2016.

Q: But throughout – during the transition phase?

MS. GILBERT: No. I'm sorry. Yes. You will be during this transition period. So through the end of this year, 2015, you will continue with a control group.

Q: Okay. Even though we're – the scope's changing a little bit for the participants? Okay.

MR. GONZALEZ: Simone, do we have any other questions over the line?

OPERATOR: There are no questions in queue at this time.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. We've got one last question, I believe, here. "If there is prior year money available, how would the state implement RESEA when they still – they have" –

MS. GILBERT: I think I answered the question.

MS. CASTILLO: Okay. "Prior year funds?" Does this have anything further on it? I think -

MS. GILBERT: I think we answered that one.

MS. CASTILLO: – it's a short timeframe.

MS. WOOD: Spend your '14 money first.

MS. GILBERT: Except for if you want to use it for reemployment services, you can use your 2015 money for that. Yeah.

MS. CASTILLO: So potentially you could be conducting a traditional UI REA program with the 2014 funds and serving claimants adding RESEA, the reemployment services using the 2015 funds?

MS. GILBERT: Yes. So we know we threw a lot at you today. This is Gay. And we're all – as in most new things, we probably didn't think of all the answers to all the questions, and there probably will be some additional ones. So we encourage you to raise those questions through your regional offices, and we probably will start a Q&A or something that says that we can continue to sort of respond to questions over time.

We appreciate everybody joining us today. We look forward to the implementation of this new model. Again, we're strongly encouraging you to move in that direction as soon as feasible. And again, we're going to want to be hearing from you, if you're having challenges or issues and additional questions.

Again, with anything new, we want to be watchful of it and be – and understand how that's playing out on the ground, and we can only do that if we hear from you.

So thanks again for participating. I'll turn it back to Gary.

(END)