**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**WIOA Partner Briefing: NFJP, MSFW, and SCSEP**

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JENNIFER JACOBS: So again, we want to welcome you to today's WIOA partner briefing webinar, and without further ado, I'm going to turn things over to our moderator today, Charlotte Harris. She's a workforce analyst for the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE HARRIS: Thanks, Jenn. Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for joining us for the third installment of our WIOA partner briefing. Today's partner briefing will be our Senior Community Service Employment Program, commonly referred to as SCSEP, and our National Farmworker Jobs Program. We have some exciting presenters today, and we're excited to learn more as partners on how these programs contribute to the American Job Center and the integrated workforce delivery system. I'm going to turn it over to you, LaMia.

LAMIA CHAPMAN: Thank you. Hi. I'm LaMia Chapman, and I am pleased to have the opportunity to share with you information about the Senior Community Service Employment Program, commonly known as SCSEP, which is a program under the Older Workers Unit.

SCSEP. What is SCSEP? Since it was first authorized by the Older Americans Act in 1965, SCSEP is the only federally-sponsored employment and training program (geared ?) specifically to low income adults who are 55 years or older with poor employment prospects by providing job skills training through community service employment activities, better known as community service assignments, and other job training opportunities. The dual goal of the program are to promote useful opportunities and community service activities and also to move SCSEP participants into unsubsidized employment, where appropriate, so that they can achieve economic self-sufficiency.

SCSEP serves more than 60,000 seniors annually, and participants provide non-profit and public facilities with over three million – well, 334 million hours of community service each year. Participants are placed in a wide variety of community service assignments at non-profit and public facilities, including daycare centers, senior centers, schools, and hospitals that reflect community needs. Because SCSEP is a formula-funded and discretionary program, 22 percent of SCSEP funds are distributed to the states and territorial governments to provide services, and 78 percent of funds are competitively awarded to national non-profit organizations. SCSEP also equitably distributes to every county in the U.S.

Who's eligible for SCSEP? So SCSEP eligibility (beep) must be at least 55 years or older or unemployed who are not job ready and have a family income of no more than 125 percent of the federal poverty level, which is about $15,000 per single household.

Who gets priority enrollment in SCSEP? Enrollment priority is given to veterans and qualified spouses, then to individuals who are over 65, have a disability, have low literacy skills or limited English proficiency, resides in a rural area, are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and have low employment prospects or who have failed to find employment after service through the American Job Center system.

Assessment and individual employment plans. Every SCSEP participant must have one. So participants are assessed at enrollment and at least twice annually thereafter to determine skill assessments, knowledge and skills and interests which are aptitude tests, suitable work experience assignments which are provided, and the IEP progress, appropriate and appropriate unsubsidized employment opportunity. The assessment services are the basis for the IEP, which guides the participant's time in SCSEP.

SCSEP's service delivery model. The Older American Act outlined a unique service delivery model for SCSEP that provides a comprehensive array of services. Grantees recruit host agencies that are public agencies or non-profits, 501(c)(3)s, and these host agencies provide worksite supervision, full skills training, and the work experience that help participants reengage into the workforce. Because of their age, it's assumed that our participants have had jobs in the past. So they may need this type of training just to become job ready.

SCSEP participants are placed in community service assignments at the host agency. Then participants are in a work experience for at least 20 hours a week and can combine their work experience training with skill training at additional hours, and payment is subsidized at the hire of federal, state, or local minimum wage. Typical community service assignments include cashiers, clerical work, cooks, daycare assistants, home healthcare workers, janitorial, housekeeping. They can work at the One-Stops. They can work anywhere where there's a need for the public or private agency that they make accommodations for.

Another element of SCSEP delivery model is to provide supportive services and additional wrap-around comprehensive services such as job search assistance, counseling, and transportation that enables participants in the program to obtain their employment goals. SCSEP also provides free (beep).

SCSEP and the workforce system. Coordination between SCSEP and WIOA is an important statutory objective. SCSEP is a required partner in the workforce development system under Section 121(b)(1)(B)(v), and SCSEP is required to coordinate with the One-Stop delivery system.

We issued regulations that required the partners to collaborate to support a seamless customer-focused delivery network. So in 2017 grantees worked with the workforce development boards and other partners to develop MOUs detailing collaboration plans and contributions to the AJC infrastructure costs.

SCSEP grantees must also use the One-Stop delivery system to provide eligible participants and ineligible applicants referrals to WIOA career services and access to activities and programs offered by other One-Stop partners. Reciprocal arrangements between SCSEP and WIOA allows assessments, service strategies, and IEPs, which are individual employment plans, completed by either partner party to be used by either partner agency.

Some SCSEP grantees choose to collocate at the American Job Centers while others make services available through a direct linkage to the grantee, such as a phone line. In some cases SCSEP participants perform their community service assignments at AJCs in positions such as receptionist or at the front desk for information. This allows SCSEP to further support the workforce system.

SCSEP State plan, how does this work? Well, every four years SCSEP state grantees must submit a SCSEP state plan in coordination with their state or as a stand-alone plan. At this time we're encouraging more combined plans with other partner agencies. The state plan is intended to foster coordination among various SCSEP grantees and sub-grantees operating within the state and facilitate the efforts of stakeholders, including state and local boards under WIOA, and to work collaboratively through a participatory process to accomplish the SCSEP goals.

State plans must outline a four-year strategy for the statewide provision of community service employment and other authorized activities for the participants. All national grantees receiving non-reserved funds are required to participate in state planning process, but those national grantees serving older American Indians, Pacific Islanders, and Asian Americans with funds reserved under OAA are exempt from this (beep).

Resources. Here are some resources about SCSEP that are located on our DOL ETA pages. So we have a piece about SCSEP, SCSEP laws and regulations, SCSEP guidance and resources, SCSEP announcements and performance information, and SCSEP Community of Practice. Are there any questions about SCSEP? Does anyone have any questions?

MS. HARRIS: LaMia, there's a question that came in. "Is there any coordination with AmeriCorps?"

MS. CHAPMAN: It depends on the type of coordination you're looking at or they're working with. Our grantees are free to coordinate with other programs. So I'm not sure of every direct coordination effort that goes on, but I can look into that.

MS. HARRIS: OK. David Jones, you saw his comment? They have senior corps programs may be a good partner.

MS. CHAPMAN: Oh, good. OK. Yeah. That's definitely something that we can look at. We're definitely open to enhancing our collaboration and partnerships with other programs outside of the WIOA partners. We're definitely interested in that as (beep) who are a part of that.

MS. HARRIS: OK. LaMia, you also made the – stated that to be eligible, they must be not job ready. Can you just elaborate on what that means?

MS. CHAPMAN: Well, yes. Typically, if the SCSEP participant just needs some job search assistance, they can go to the One-Stop partner for that type of service. But if they need soft skills like to catch up on what they basically don't have any real skills on, such as typing, computer – a lot of our participants need computer training. So if they come in and they really haven't been in the workforce system for a while, answering lines, telephone lines, and doing clerical work or any other work that they're not fully trained in or skilled on, they can get that, but anyone who basically comes in and just need a resume done, has worked in the recent past, have a long history of work typically aren't considered job – aren't considered not job ready.

MS. HARRIS: OK. And is there a timeline? Do they have a maximum amount of time that they can remain a SCSEP participant?

MS. CHAPMAN: Yes. SCSEP has a lifetime limit of 48 months. However, the statute provides that, if they have a qualifying (beep) disability, then they're allowed to stay as long as the grantee agency has a waiver to extend their participation time.

So typically, it's 48 months in the program, 26 months that a program – that the average participant should stay, but if the grantee has a waiver factor they've applied for, they can then open that up to their participants, which means that they're frail. They meet certain waiver factors like they're frail, they have a disability, and the likelihood of them working is – it's none, so that they can stay in the program longer.

MS. HARRIS: OK. Thank you. Does anybody else have any other questions for LaMia? Any questions related to SCSEP? And if you remember some, you can contact LaMia later. There's the resources slide, but we –

MS. CHAPMAN: Yes. Yes.

MS. HARRIS: So again – go ahead. I'll let you finish that, the contact information.

MS. CHAPMAN: Oh, yeah. The contact information is I'm the unit chief, and then in my – in the Older Workers Unit I have Irene Jefferson, Simi Atolagbe, Susanna Troxler, and Aaron Mitchell. And then we have a couple of contractors that work with us on the job as well.

MS. HARRIS: OK.

MS. CHAPMAN: So you feel free to contact us.

MS. HARRIS: OK. Thanks, LaMia. You can contact LaMia or – at the contact information provided there, or if you have a question that you remember as we go along to the end, you can still type it in there.

MS. CHAPMAN: Thank you.

MS. HARRIS: Next, we're going to turn it over to – you're welcome. Thanks, LaMia. We're going to turn it over to the next partner program. That is the National Farmworker Jobs Program, which includes other factors, but I'll let Laura and Juan talk about that. So, Laura?

LAURA IBANEZ: Thanks, Charlotte, and great job, LaMia. I just wanted to thank everyone for inviting us to be here today. We're excited to have an opportunity to tell you about the services we offer to farmworkers and their dependents and agriculture employers under WIOA. So today I have with me Juan Regalado who's a national monitor advocate, and so we're going to go into what we provide under the monitor advocate system in the National Farmworker Jobs Program.

So before we dive into our specific programs, we wanted to just give you some background on who are the individuals that we serve and some of the barriers that they experience as they access services and employment. So keeping in mind the barriers to employment that are identified under WIOA, we wanted to focus on a combination of factors that you see here, and the four that I'm looking at are geographically isolated, English language learner, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and low-income individuals.

So the top one is probably the only one that isn't specific to the 13 barriers that are identified under WIOA, but low income, English language learners, and migrant and seasonal farmworkers all do fall under the barriers that have been identified under WIOA. So these are factors that we keep in mind as we're serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their dependents.

When you think about the agriculture worker population, it's often isolated from resources of assistance. This population is often geographically isolated, given the remote locations of jobsites and employer-provided housing. Even if the employer does provide off-farm housing in an urban area, it's often isolated from the non-farmworker community. Another factor to keep in mind is that agriculture workers are often isolated by limited transportation, and many must rely on their employers or farm labor contractors for transport.

When you think about English language learners, we know that data has shown us that farmworkers have stated that 33 percent felt that they spoke English well enough to get by and to (beep) services and communicate what they needed. 39 percent do have schooling beyond the ninth grade. I would say that 71 percent of our farmworker population are foreign born, and majority of 76 percent are likely to be Latino/Hispanic.

So this is just something we wanted to just give you a sense of who we are serving, and another fun fact about agriculture is in that slide that I'm looking at here, and it's just like did you know. So agriculture work is the most dangerous industrial sector in the United States. Farmworkers are 20 times more likely to suffer a heat-related death than U.S. workers overall. 30 percent of our farmworkers' families live below the poverty line, and the farmworkers' average annual wages does tend to be between $15,000 to $17,499.

The last fact that we wanted to share with you is that there are about one to two million farmworkers and over 800 farms that hire in the U.S. So it's really important, whether you – we are working from the NFJP point of view or monitor advocate system, that our grantees and state monitor advocates, outreach workers, and AJC staff make themselves visible in the farmworker communities and that they establish and obtain a strong working relationship with farmworkers and employers in order to really have access to our target population, the farmworkers, and to be able to assess their labor needs and making sure that they are afforded the protections under the labor laws.

So on that side, I wanted to hand over to Juan at this time. It's just going to give you a little bit of background about the monitor advocate system.

JUAN REGALADO: Thank you, Laura. Hello, everyone. Welcome to our webinar, and going to talk a few minutes about the monitor advocate system. Back in – prior to 1972, when a farmworker would come into a local employment service office, this was way before the One-Stop concept idea, and they would come in to look – they would come into a local employment service office looking for work, and they would be told, your office is down the street.

So when they would go to their office, to the farmworker labor office, they would only be exposed to agricultural jobs while the general public in the other office would be exposed to the full range of employment and training services. Because of that, a group of farmworker advocacy agencies, along with a group of farmworkers, filed a lawsuit against the Department of Labor, and we – of course we lost it, and in 1974 came what we now know in the business as the Judge Ritchey court order.

Judge Ritchey mandated the Department of Labor to abolish the two types of offices for one, to establish a monitor advocate system – and I'll go into each one of the following mandates in a bit – to establish an outreach program, and also a complaint system. He wanted to make sure that the farmworkers were being provided equitable services in a non-discriminatory fashion.

So the monitor advocate system is basically there to ensure that the farmworkers are receiving – and this is the language from the Judge Ritchey court order that I often use is, he wanted to ensure that the full range of employment and training services being offered to the migrant seasonal farmworkers was being provided on a qualitatively equivalent and quantitative and proportionate basis of those services offered to non-migrant seasonal farmworkers.

So basically, what we do as monitor advocates is to ensure that the state workforce agencies, the local AJCs now are providing the full range of employment and training services equitably to farmworkers. The MA system is composed of over 50 monitor advocates, one national monitor advocate – that's my position. We have the one regional monitor advocate in each of the regional offices, and 52 monitor advocates – state monitor advocates across the nation, including Puerto Rico.

And basically, what we do as monitor advocates, among our duties are to foster what partnerships, and we're entering into MOUs, for instance, between the state monitor advocates and our NFJP grantees, our National Farmworker Jobs Program grantees. We developed partnerships with other agencies, such as Wage and Hour Division within our own department, OSHA, CRC, the Civil Rights Center, and then with other federal partners such as the Department of Justice, Migrant Ed, Department of Education, the EEOC, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

So those are the kind of partnerships that we develop in serving migrant seasonal farmworkers, and the state workforce agencies connect the farmworkers to employment opportunities, not just in ag but also in non ag jobs, but one important aspect of the mandate of the Judge Ritchey court order was that we establish also – the department establish also an agriculture recruitment system where we have the system for the orderly movement of farmworkers between states. So that's one of the responsibilities of the state workforce agencies to have an agriculture recruitment system and also an outreach program, as I mentioned.

The outreach workers across the nation are paid by Wagner-Peyser funds, and we do have some outreach workers through our NFJP – and you'll hear a little bit more about the NFJP program here in a few minutes from Laura – but we do have outreach workers from both agencies, from both programs, and also to make sure that the state workforce agencies have a complaint system in place where farmworkers can come in and file complaints because prior to the – ironically, prior to the Judge Ritchey court order, the farmworkers did not have a safe place to file complaints, and I will talk a little bit more about the complaint system in a bit.

And then to make sure that those job orders that are coming from agricultural employers, that these employers are compliant with the full terms and conditions of employment of these job orders. And of course, as I mentioned earlier, to ensure the equitable services to migrant seasonal farmworkers.

Over the past few years, on an average – I talked about the outreach workers reaching out to migrant seasonal farmworkers. They reach out to let them know about the full range of employment services being offered through the AJC and also on the complaint system and information on the agriculture recruitment system.

So on any given year, our outreach workers, in collaboration with our NFJP outreach workers, reach out to over 315,000 farmworkers annually. So that's a lot of impact that we have on these migrant seasonal farmworkers. Through the Wagner-Peyser program over 163,000 farmworkers were served.

The next item on a number, again, one of my pet peeves because we should have a complaint system – if I were to ask any of the state monitor advocates, what is the number one type of complaint that they get through our complaint system, undoubtedly, almost 100 percent they would tell me the non-payment of wages.

And prior to the Judge Ritchey court order, that was one of the reasons why they were coming and those investigations that were done before the – during the process of the lawsuit. They found that the farmworkers were not being paid adequately, and look at this. We still have that situation. 627 complaints sent on an average, and then that qualitatively equivalent and quantitative portion that – basis that I talked about, and in Wagner-Peyser 80 percent of the MSFWs received staff-assisted service, while only 60 percent of the non-MSFWs received the same services, thus having equity of services even more for the migrant seasonal farmworkers through our Wagner-Peyser program.

And this last figure, $4.8 million in back wages, that's a figure from Wage and Hour. Most of the investigations at Wage and Hour conduct – they conduct it through other sources, but we do – most of the 627 complaints that we take on an annual basis we refer to on – to Wage and Hour mostly and some to OSHA and some other enforcement, especially in some states where they have labor commissioners and then they handle wage-related complaints. Those are also referred through the state system.

But basically, in a nutshell and quickly – I know we don't have much time, but this is basically what the monitor advocate system is all about. And notice that I – throughout my – and Charlotte mentioned the other factors within NFJP. Notice throughout my presentation I never talked about the MA program or the monitor advocate program because we're really not a program.

We're there to ensure that services are offered equitably to farmworkers and employers are compliant with their – the laws and regulations, and then we ensure equitable services to migrant seasonal farmworkers this way. And I'll turn it over now to – I'll open it up to any other questions that folks may have at this time before I turn it over to Laura.

MS. IBANEZ: Well, Juan, I see there's a question, and maybe we can gather our thoughts to answer this. The question is, "What is the leading type of agriculture work NFJP grantees do?"

And so I was going to just give a sense – general sense of our farmworker data that we have. We know that 63 percent of farmworkers surveyed reported that they work in the fields. 27 percent of agriculture workers worked in nurseries, and then 6 percent work in packing houses and 4 percent did other types of work. So majority of the agriculture work that's being done is in the field. And I don't know, Juan, if you have anything to add to that based on what you've seen and what you hear.

MR. REGALADO: Well, the type of agriculture work, I think not so much on the type but how – I mentioned the agriculture recruitment system, and those are – that system is there for the agriculture employers to file job orders with the state workforce agencies, with the local employment service agency. But what's changing recently and more and more we see and what we call and you often hear the H2A job orders, those job orders that are placed by agriculture employers that ultimately will be attached to an application for – to bring in foreign workers.

But the reason why the agriculture – the regulations mandate the employers to file an agricultural (beep) system job order with the local employment service offices, first, is to make sure that we're testing the domestic labor market, to ensure that first we provide the opportunity for U.S. workers to be referred on these jobs. And if there are no U.S. workers, then the Office of Foreign Labor Certification can certify this employer for the number of – to bring in foreign workers to meet the demand.

But in type of agriculture work, in general, I mean, the agriculture recruitment system takes in job orders for all types of agricultural work that – and depending on the different states and the different areas.

MS. IBANEZ: But they do tend to be a majority in the field and then –

MR. REGALADO: Right.

MS. IBANEZ: – largely based around vegetable and fruit season –

MR. REGALADO: Right.

MS. IBANEZ: – crops; right? OK. OK. Great.

So a little bit about – thank you, Juan, for sharing with us about monitor advocate system. I'm going to talk a little bit about the NFJP, which is authorized under Section 167 of WIOA. Today the department invests, as you can see, $75,885,000 to award 52 career services and training grants and about $5 million to award 11 housing grants across the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

And I do invite you all, if you haven't already, please take a look at our website on doleta.gov/farmworkers so that you can see there is this map that, if you move the cursor across the United States, you can see where grantees are located and how much they receive.

So a little bit about our services. We provide career services, training services, and housing assistance services, youth services, and other related assistance services to help retain agriculture jobs or acquire new skills. And that's what I really want to make sure we communicate today. It's both we're making sure that our customers are receiving the agricultural training that they need, if they feel denied or to help them feel more safe or improve their ability to do their agriculture job or also acquire a new skill.

So it's really twofold in the sense of what our purpose is. The National Farmworker Jobs Program provides grants to community-based organizations and public agencies that assist migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families attain greater economic stability.

So I mentioned a lot of services here, and let me just give you a little bit of what our services include. So when we speak about career services, this includes outreach, skill assessment, labor market information, job search, program eligibility determination, and placement assistance. And a lot of times this also includes individual counseling and short-term pre-vocational services.

And this is where either the NFJP grantee will provide the services themselves or in many, many, many occasions they have partnered with the American Job Centers to make sure that they can leverage the resources that they provide in order to make sure our NFJP customers receive what they need.

When we speak about training services, it's more about occupational skills and job training, and on-the-job training opportunities. This is both, again, as I mentioned earlier, includes skills upgrading and retraining and also looking at other training opportunities that they may have an interest in.

You will be able to find a lot of our great success stories that talk about what are these other training opportunities that our customers are pursuing. A lot of this information is on WorkforceGPS and Agricultural Connect. So it's a great way to plug in everything that we do on Ag Connect, but I do encourage you to take a look at that so you can see some of our success stories that are listed there.

And when you think about youth services, NFJP grantees are authorized to either connect or provide services same as our WIOA youth-funded services providers do. So this includes tutoring, dropout prevention, paid and unpaid work experience, occupational skills training, certain education and leadership development opportunities, as well as mentoring and comprehensive guidance and counseling.

For related assistance services, this is a little bit short-term direct assistance that may be needed in order to help them retain their agriculture employment or to participate in an [inaudible] training services.

For housing assistance, as I mention here, we do have 11 housing grantees, and this is really to help meet a critical need for the availability and quality of farmworker housing. So earlier we talked about the percentage of farmworkers that migrate and it's pretty majority of them are migratory and so they do rely on farmworker housing. And, Juan, do you want to add anything about housing as I speak as it relates to farmworkers?

MR. REGALADO: Basically, that's – when the – there's some – the housing standards, first, the EPA standards versus the OSHA standards, employers that, for instance, file job orders that will be connected to H2A job orders must have their housing inspected. So they provide – they're going to be providing housing. It has to be inspected, and it has to meet the EPA or the OSHA standards, depending on what the house – housing was built. And basically, that's how the system is connected there, the state workforce agencies are connected to housing primarily.

MS. IBANEZ: OK. Thank you. I see that our colleague here, Gary Lewis, is asking, "Who gets the funds, and how are they typically used?"

And so I hope that answers your question that there are 52 community-based organizations and public agencies and 11 housing grantees that do receive the funding for NFJP. So, again, the main areas that they provide are career services, training services, youth services, related assistance services, and housing assistance services. This, again, is available on doleta.gov. There's a fact sheet with all this detailed information. So I'm going to move along here.

When you think about impact, in the program year 2015 there were about 16,195 that were enrolled at the beginning of the program year. It's something that we want to just emphasize about 85.6 percent were unemployed upon entry to the program. So before they entered the program, NFJP, 85.6 percent of our participants were unemployed at the time. But by the program year 2015 we had about 90.5 percent that entered employment. There is 86 percent – 9 percent that retained employment, and then there is $12,174, which seemed to be the average earnings.

When you look at the permanent housing activities, you could see there that there is about 6,575 individuals that received housing and about 1,017 families that were served. NFJP funds are also allowed to be used towards temporary housing activities and so about 4,231 individuals were served and about 1,528 families received temporary housing. As we were explaining a little bit earlier about the conditions and the facts about agriculture work and given that folks are working isolated areas, it is sometimes a need to make sure that our workers that are working agriculture – are working in the field have access to housing. So that's part of the reason why NFJP awards 11 grants.

So I'm going to move along here, and I believe I'm just going to highlight some resources that we have available. Again, as I mentioned earlier, please check us out on Agricultural Connection on WorkforceGPS. It's where we highlight a lot of our success stories, and you'll be able to find some of our resources that are available for both monitor advocate system and NFJP. Below, we also included the direct links to our NFJP and monitor advocate system website on doleta.gov.

If you're interested in learning more about the program eligibility requirements for NFJP, here is the TEGL that we ask you to look at, which is 18-16. The two primary requirements to be able to be served for NFJP is that you meet farmworker status, which means you're a migrant or a seasonal farmworker, a youth farmworker, or that you're a dependent, and that you meet the low income status. Again, all that detail can be found in 18-16.

And then we ask you, if you haven't already – I think these have been pretty given (beep) across all of us and maybe all of us in some way have contributed to development of the customer flow chart – or customer flow scenarios, but great product. It covers a lot about our work of what we do monitor advocate system. It also highlights a little bit about our disability and work opportunity tax credits programs as well.

So I welcome any questions that come at this time or if you guys have any thoughts or questions that you want to ask us.

MR. REGALADO: I think we may have one.

MS. HARRIS: Laura, I have a –

MS. IBANEZ: Yeah.

MS. HARRIS: This is Charlotte. I have a question. Related to the housing activities, are the – permanent or temporary housing. So for the participants in these programs, do you purchase housing while they work or look for work, or is this helping with apartments? What is – can you talk a little bit about that?

MS. IBANEZ: Yeah. So Part 685 of WIOA regulations goes in detail, but to think about permanent housing, it's actually allowing someone to – for example, this could be something that's going to be rehabilitation or constructing a new site or maybe a site that already is available. So the grantees are allowed to either develop something or rehabilitate something that's already existing in order to make sure that farmworkers have access to permanent housing.

Because, of course, there's a percentage that do not migrate – right – and maybe stay around and look for work that's maybe more seasonal or maybe have employment in between the agriculture work they do, something that's more temporary is let's say you need a place to stay for a few weeks or a few months just while you're on the job and you're not able to have access to housing that you need.

MS. HARRIS: OK. Thanks.

MS. IBANEZ: So yeah. So again, it's just making sure that we increase or maintain housing stock available to farmworkers and housing development and that we are keeping in mind that it's designed to improve living conditions for underserved farmworker communities. I know that it really varies; right? Juan, I think, based on your experience as well as you've been out there, you've seen housing that probably needs to be probably better maintained or can use some improvements.

And sometimes the funding goes towards that, or there's maybe just a gap in housing where there's a need to develop something new. Again, if you think about it, it's $5 million, and it tends to be really part – I would say more a smaller portion of what the actual total cost is to develop housing. And so our grantees are definitely leveraging other federal funding and other funding out there in order to achieve this housing goal. So it's not something that they do alone with this Department of Labor funds.

MR. REGALADO: And, Laura, this is Juan. I'm not sure if you mentioned this already, but the competitiveness of the NFJP awards and how often they're competed.

MS. IBANEZ: Oh, no. Yeah. So thank you for reminding me about that. Yeah. So in 2016 is when we started the first one, and so they are every four years. And so the period of the life performance of this grant right now is from 2016 to 2019.

MR. REGALADO: Thank you.

MS. HARRIS: OK. Does anybody have any other questions for either Laura, Juan, or LaMia? And if you can't think of them now and you've gone through their resources, they provided their contact information. So you can definitely get in contact with them to get that information.

Any last words from any of our presenters?

MR. REGALADO: I think – if I may, this is Juan. Just want to make sure because I know the – I see names of the participants across the regional offices, I guess. Just to ensure that if you are going out to your states, keep in mind the complaint system – it's one of my pet peeves – to ensure we mandate that each one of the AJCs display a job search employment service complaint poster in each of their resource centers.

So be on the lookout when you're out there reviewing your states, reviewing your local offices. This is something that I think it's we need to continue reminding everyone to ensure that there's a system in place. And something I forgot to mention but, when complaints are filed by MSFWs, they're filed and they're followed through to resolution by the state monitor advocate. It's one of the responsibilities. So make sure that you're out there and ensuring that the AJCs know about the complaint system because that's one of the responsibilities of the regional monitor advocates, my responsibility, as well as the state monitor advocates' responsibilities. So thank you.

MS. HARRIS: Thanks, Juan.

MS. IBANEZ: Juan, could you say a little bit – and I think it's important to realize that this is often a service in many ways to the employers – right – the agriculture employers as well?

MR. REGALADO: Right. It's – I remind folks that the outreach workers' job is not a Monday through Friday 8:00 to 5:00 job. Sometimes we're out there because we're also mandated to conduct outreach with the outreach workers. We're out there at 5:00 o'clock in the morning, 2:00 o'clock in the morning, depending on the area, especially in California in the south border towns. Outreach workers are out there contacting farmworkers at any given time of the day, 2:00 o'clock, 3:00 o'clock in the morning, but they're also – because we're paid with Wagner-Peyser funds, we're also there to serve the agriculture employer.

So we're walking a fine line, and oftentimes, the outreach workers or I, if we see anything that is an apparent violation, we try to tell the employer, listen. If you don't fix this, you cannot have this, and, well, let's try and fix this. Otherwise, we may have to refer to Wage and Hour. And most of the time they comply with our recommendations because they know, if they don't, Wage and Hour will follow us. So we do walk a fine line, but we're also there to serve the agriculture employers.

MS. HARRIS: OK. Thanks, Juan.

MR. REGALADO: Thank you, Laura.

MS. HARRIS: OK. And if we have no more comments from our presenters, just know next month we're going to have our TANF partners to provide their partner brief on how they connect with the workforce system under WIOA. That will be on February 1st. You will see information coming out about that soon, and I'll turn it over to Jen. Jen?

(END)