**WorkforceGPS**

**FY20 RESEA Grants Funding Allotments, Operating Guidance & State Plan Requirements**

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GRACE MCCALL: And welcome to "Fiscal Year 2020 Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Grants (RESEA) Funding Allotments, Operating Guidance, and State Plan Requirements."

Without further ado, I'd like to turn things over to our moderator for today, Larry Burns, reememployment coordinator, Office of Unemployment Insurance, United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Take it away, Larry.

LAWRENCE BURNS: Thank you very much, Grace. And welcome, everyone, to today's webinar. I know Fridays are a tough time slot, but we have a really good turnout. And RESEA is definitely a high priority with us. And we are anxious to share this information with you as soon as possible.

Before we dive into the presentation, I want to welcome John Pallasch, the assistant secretary for Employment and Training. Assistant Secretary Pallasch has joined us to kick off this webinar and help frame our later discussion. With that, I will hand the presentation over to Assistant Secretary Pallasch for a few opening remarks.

JOHN PALLASCH: Thanks, Larry. And thanks to everybody who has joined today. I just wanted to take a few minutes to kind of walk you through my thinking on some of the things that we've been talking about here in DC in terms of not only a vision for one workforce, but the RESEA role in that workforce system as we see RESEA potentially growing rather significantly in funding over the next four or five years and making sure that RESEA is really a part of the workforce solution to the extent that we can leverage the resources within RESEA to serve as many customers as possible .

Not simply just those who may be profiled as likely to exhaust their benefits, but the ability to really integrate RESEA into the workforce system the same way I know the folks at the state and local level are really working to integrate the four titles of WIOA as well as other partnerships. With the significant amount of funding that we're receiving for RESEA now that's it's permanent funding, how are we really able to make that part of that workforce solution rather than a standalone program that requires its own administration and its own supporting structure underneath it?

How do we help you all pull that into the broader workforce system? I don't want to take up too much of today's call, but I just wanted to let you know where I'm looking and where my vision is for workforce and how RESEA fits into that, especially given the opportunities that we have to serve so many additional people now with permanent funding. How can we leverage that? And how can we really grow the quality and the quantity of services that we're able to provide to our customers?

MR. BURNS: Thank you very much for getting us started and kicking us off. We're also joined here by a few other presenters. I want to welcome Gay Gilbert, administrator for the Office of Unemployment Insurance; Andrew Ridgeway, unit chief at Adult Services with the Office of Workforce Investment; and Chanta Ferrell, grants management specialist with the Office of Grant Management.

We have a jam-packed agenda full of really exciting and new things to talk about. So first off, we're going to start off with a quick background and highlight some of the new features and impact of the new RESEA program.

We're also going to dive into the funding allotments for our fiscal year 2020, and also talk about the transition to formula funding beginning in fiscal year 2021. We're going to walk through the fiscal year 2020 RESEA operating guidance primarily focusing on new provisions, significant changes, and other things that warrant some extra attention.

And we're also going to talk about the RESEA state plan process which is brand-new for fiscal year 2020. This is the first year we're implementing it. And we're going to talk a little bit about some of the new required elements that are new from last year – you haven't used these before on previous applications – the process, how to get the applications and state plans in, and also the timeline.

We've booked this webinar for a little bit longer than usual. We're going to try to reserve as much time as we can at the end to answer questions. Any questions we don't get to today we will try to follow up with either a written frequently-asked-questions or potentially some follow-up technical assistance such as another webinar. We'll gauge what we need to do after that. But we're going to be using the chat feature to capture those questions, so feel free to put those in as we go. And there'll be plenty of time at the end to get into that.

With that, I'm going to hand the presentation over to Gay Gilbert. She's going to kick off with some opening thoughts and help set the context a little bit more before we get started.

GAY GILBERT: Thanks, Larry. Good afternoon, everyone. I do have a few opening comments similar to the Assistant Secretary before we dig into the meat of the webinar. We are now in the second year of our new and permanent RESEA program. And this is a really important one. As Larry just mentioned, this is the first time the states will be submitting the new state plans and statutorily required for RESEA. And they will be doing so almost simultaneously with their WIOA state plans, which I think is really coincidental, but a good thing, I think.

It's also the year that states need to begin their evaluations of their RESEA programs per our earlier guidance last year. And the first year's performance that will be considered – it is the first year where the performance of your RESEA program will be considered for the FY 2021 outcome payment. And I expect a lot of people haven't absorbed that piece yet. But starting now, we will be doing some guidance here very shortly on outcome payments so that you'll understand how we'll be calculating those.

Larry talked about all the things that are going to be covered here. And a lot of it is process, honestly, which is important. I want to also be sure that everyone is keeping their eye on the opportunities that RESEA is presenting us now, and hopefully in your state planning process that discussion is evolving. If you haven't picked up on it in other webinars or presentations that I've made, I'm pretty excited about the opportunities. We have, as John mentioned, the additional funding that enables states to reconsider your service delivery models to include more intensive and more customized services to serve more claimants and to be more creative in how you target those claimants.

We're going to have the ability to enhance the program to more effectively help UI claimants get back to work as quickly as possible to achieve the goals. And we'll go over those one more time here in a minute. And we'll also have the ability to innovate and to continually assess what's working and use the best of the best; and also the ability to integrate RESEA into the broader workforce system and to leverage the broader set of resources that are part of that system.

So I know that many of your states have taken this opportunity to step back and rethink your service delivery models. And I hope that all of you will at some point as you develop, and particularly as you're developing your RESEA and WIOA state plans. As you do so, just a reminder that RESEA and reemployment of UI claimants is a team sport.

The UI program and the broader workforce system jointly own the responsibility to get claimants reemployed and to shape and integrate an effective RESEA program that achieves that goal. So we have a really great attendance at this webinar today. And I'm pretty sure we have a pretty good representation from both UI and workforce programs, which is really exciting.

So I challenge all of you to embrace all of those opportunities as we move forward and with your state planning. But I do want to go through just to levels that you've probably seen some of these slides before, but just real quick to run through before we get down to the process stuff. So RESEA now is permanent.

Although, it is a voluntary program for states to participate, it's not voluntary for claimants, however, when they're targeted. We did have a lot of moving parts with RESEA and as a phased implementation. And I'll get back to a slide here. This one shows each year. But obviously, the evidence-based requirements started immediately, state plan this year, formula funding next year; evidence-based funding restrictions come along in 2023 and beyond.

So back to the goals – these really do, they're repeating I think. First of all, the big one – it's actually reduced benefit duration as a result of improved employment outcomes. So the goal is to get UI claimants back to work quickly. To strengthen program integrity and reduce improper payments, RESEA, like its predecessors, still has an integrity component to be sure that claimants continue to be eligible for unemployment benefits.

And then these next two I think are pretty critical on why this needs to be part of the WIOA state planning – is to promote the alignment with the broader vision of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and also establish RESEA as an entry point to other workforce system partner programs. So really pretty clear goals for this program. New features – the fact that the program is growing I think is important. Although, Larry's going to point out some nuances to that today as we look at our future funding possibilities. The flexible targeting, this notion that we can innovate and evaluate new strategies and the fact that the outcome payments are there to reward states that are performing effectively.

And then also just a reminder why WIOA integration is important is that RESEA as part of UI now is a mandatory one-stop partner program. These are just reminders. RESEA is part of the UI program, but is owned by all of us. The funding is growing. And that really does open all kinds of doors how we can approach service delivery design under this program. And I do want to point out that the paradigm for RESEA has shifted. It's no longer this one-and-done or two-and-done kind of thing where you have fairly short sessions with people when they come in and then send them home and off to do their thing.

The additional money allows us to consider this and the ability to use the money for reemployment service delivery beyond what we used to think about just RESEA does it or REA does it makes it a different program. And this feeds into why you need to rethink your service delivery design. And then this slide really quickly was another look at what happens in each year, state plan obviously being the big one this year. But I would remind you again the performance this year will be considered when we do the outcome payments in 2021. So that's a really important reminder. And with that, I'm going to turn this back over to Larry. And now we can get down to the process stuff.

MR. BURNS: Sure. Thanks, Gay. I want to talk a little bit first about the most important thing that people are interested in, the money for this year. I just want to jump into the fiscal year 2020 RESEA allocations. But they are, as Gay mentioned, the big change for next year will be implementation of the new form. So it's important that we look at both this year and next year at the same time.

So I want to highlight a few things just to keep in mind as you're developing your proposal. So the total appropriation for fiscal year 2020 was 175 million. There's some small set-asides that are required in the appropriations elsewhere so that the total amount going out is a little bit over 174 million is the actual amount that will be awarded.

This year awards are based on states' proportionate share or projected first year 2020 payments. So we looked at our projections for how many new claimants each state is going to have in proportionately – send out the money based on our proportion. But before we did that, we did make some adjustments to keep there from being significant fluctuations, which can occur when you just have one data factor.

So we applied a minimum increase of 10 percent and a maximum increase of 20 percent. So all states are getting an increase that will be somewhere between 10 to 20 percent. And the factor that determines how much of the increase is how many people are anticipated to be first-time payments in your state for the upcoming year.

One of the things that I want to keep in mind for people is when we do those calculations and we determine the funding allocation, as you know, we have some supplemental funds that went out at the end of the year this year that we used for some one-time implementation costs associated with the new program.

Those weren't reflected in our base calculations. I want to just clarify that we're using the amount that's specified in the fiscal year 2019 operating guidance as the base, so the amount on attachment 1. And just like previous years, the total award your states can request up to is in attachment 1 of the operating guidance that was just issued.

And I want to emphasize again that these amounts are up-to amounts. You can request any amount up to that. And there are some factors that are going to kick in next year that you may want to consider when you're doing your actual amount level that you're requesting. So why not jump over from this year and talk a little bit about next year and the formula and what that's going to look like if there's some confusion about how the formula works moving forward.

So next year, looking at the authorized level that's based in our authorizing legislation – and RESEA's a permanent program, but the funding is still appropriated, so Congress has to appropriate the funds each year – 200 million is authorized, but it doesn't necessarily mean we'll get that amount.

But using that as a starting point to this analysis, we're going to stick to the authorized level of 200 million, which is a big increase from the 175 that we got this year. We will be switching to a formula allocation of refunds. The formula includes a whole bunch of different factors. But the main factors that are applied is looking at the insured unemployment rate in the state and the civilian labor force.

We're going to look at the size of your labor force, your unemployment rate. And then we're going to score each state based on that and do a proportion distribution based on your scores. The formula is very detailed. And we do have a Federal Register notice that lays out the entire formula and our reasoning behind it. So I included a hyperlink in the presentation to get you there if you want to take a look at it.

But the key thing I want to emphasize about the formula is that in previous years the total appropriation has just been directly allocated to the states. With the new formula, the statute includes some set-asides that I want to walk through to paint the picture of what the funding levels will look like.

So there's going to be three pools of funding that the formula breaks down. The formula I just described awards the base funding, which is 89 percent of the total funding available. So of the 200 million, that's 178 million. That's going to be the formula grant to go out to states right away. So when you look at that increase it is an increase over 2020, but it's only a $3 million increase in the base funds. The remainder of the funds are going to be used for outcome payments and technical assistance. So 10 percent of the funds will be awarded to states based on their performance. Now we've worked out how we're going to handle that.

We have some guidance that will be out shortly – it's forthcoming – that lays out the entire process for how we'll be using outcome payments. We will be using WIOA data. And we're going to be talking in detail about that a little bit later as our data source for this calculation. So it's going to be really important that you're working on the integration in your data quality. We'll get into that in detail.

But the key point I wanted to make here is that although we're getting essentially a big increase, the actual base formula funds is a little bit smaller than it looks. Like, it's only a small increase from 175 to 178. So just be mindful of that as you're planning ahead for the future that there are these set-asides built into the formula.

The other big thing I want to remind states about is the carry-over limit. Beginning in fiscal year 2021, if you carry over more than 30 percent of your previous fiscal year funds, that will reduce your formula allocation. So going back to 2020 when I mentioned these are up-to amounts, if you have substantial carry-over, you may want to adjust your 2020 request to burn off carry-over and make sure you're realistically spending what you get within the calendar year to prevent that 30 percent carry-over that would impact 2021 funding. So, again, the formula kicks in. It's going to give a lot of stability in the way we allocate funds.

Everything's laid out in the Federal Register. But it's really important that you look at all the different parts of the formula, include the outcome payments and the carry-over limits and some of the other requirements that are in there. So I strongly encourage you to go back and look at the Federal Register notice.

And also just keep in mind the breakout of funding that kicks in in 2021, which is brand-new. So with that, we're going to talk a little bit about the operating guidance. And this is more of the process that Gay mentioned. So we're going to kind of get into the weeds a little bit with the new RESEA program.

One of the things you probably noticed when I did the objectives for today, there is one thing we are not talking about today, and that is the evidence-based requirements. We're not going to dive into detail there because we've covered that in a separate webinar and separate guidance. But if you go to the end of this presentation – which you all have access to – I've included hyperlinks to all of our previous RESEA evaluation, technical assistance, guidance, webinars, so you can go back and check that.

But for today's webinar, we're really going to be focused on everything that wraps around the evidence-based requirements and operations. So that's not covered today. But, as you see, we do have a lot to cover.

Just a quick note – the way we issued the operating guidance this year is different than previous years. We have started doing joint guidance. So we've issued the operating guidance as both an unemployment insurance program letter and a training employment guidance letter. One of the things to keep in mind about that is that these documents are virtually identical.

The only differences are in formatting references. But the content is the same. We've included language in those documents indicating that it mirrors the other guidance to prevent confusion, because I know last time we've done joint guidance states were kind of comparing and tracking to see if there were any differences between the two.

The guidance is identical, but we issued it jointly to reflect the shared responsibility. So it's both a UI program and a workforce program as we're going to get into some of the requirements integration. So we wanted to make sure the guidance is out there for both sides of the program to promote that integration. And also, when we start doing monitoring technical assistance, having a UIPL and TEGL to point to helps with that process. But again, it is joint guidance, but the documents are identical other than references and the formatting changes. So I just wanted to highlight that to prevent any confusion.

This is what I talk about as far as changes and some significant program requirements. The column on the left are the new elements we're going to talk about. This is brand-new for fiscal year 2020. You have not seen these before. So I'll spend a little bit more time on that. But then the column on the right is the significant program requirements.

These are things that we have done before, but we want to do some clarification and also emphasize them because there's been some confusion or there's some new importance with the new program associated with this. So with that, some new definitions regarding program cost limits, the flexibility that John and Gay mentioned earlier about the participants you serve.

We're going to talk a little bit about self-scheduling. And then we're also going to talk about some of the requirements from last year related to supplementing rather than supplanting funds, continued flexibility, and targeting participants. And also we're going to talk about how RESEA and the worker profiling reemployment services program interconnect, or can interconnect if you choose to do so.

And we're going to talk a lot about integration of the WIOA system. So with that, I'm going to start jumping into these slides and drive a little bit more detail. One of the big things – and you're going to see it very early on in our operating guidance – is that this year we've implemented some definitions.

Specifically, we've implemented definitions for initial RESEA, subsequent RESEA, reemployment services, and training. And the reason we did this is because, as Gay mentioned earlier, this new program has a lot more flexibility. So we wanted to make sure with the terminology we use in discussing program design is consistent across states.

When we've done previous technical assistance or previous monitoring, some of the things we've seen is some states may refer to services as a subsequent RESEA, but in reality it's a mixture of reemployment services. So what we wanted to do moving forward is make sure that when we use these terms we're all referring to the same thing. I'm going to introduce these definitions in a minute.

But what I want to clarify first – because this is very, very important – these definitions are going to be used primarily for planning and reporting purposes. But most importantly, the definitions we're providing is a minimum level of service delivery. This is the core of the base, the foundation.

You can add other services into your initial RESEA or subsequent RESEA, or do new reemployment services. This is just the minimum level to meet the definition. You really have flexibility to add and customize and do more things. So please keep that in mind as we talk about the definitions. There are four definitions. And what I have listed here are just the minimum requirements. You can add more services to this.

But for the initial RESEA, the real key thing there is that there's an official notification. The claimant receives a notice telling them they must report. There's also an eligibility review that includes a review of the work search. You're provided customized labor market information. You're doing enrollment in the employment service funded under the Wagner-Peyser Act. You're also supporting with a reemployment plan. This is a little bit different than previous guidance. When you look at the full definition, providing states with some flexibility to use discretion.

If you have a claimant come in there that is capable of doing the reemployment plan using an online tool, you have the flexibility. But you may have claimants and you sit down with and deal with directly and work with them. So we've provided some flexibility in what the reemployment plan looks like and how you support it. But it's still a requirement.

And the other key requirement is information about AJC services and referrals to services. This probably looks a lot like the previous requirements of the initial RESEA because they are pretty similar. We made a few tweaks in the definition of it to provide more flexibility. But this is a basic initial RESEA we've been doing for a while.

The subsequent RESEA is a little bit different this year. The key requirement there is this is a follow-up to the initial RESEA meeting. And the big difference between this and other services is that you include the eligibility review. And that eligibility review must include a review of work search to determine if additional services are needed.

So it's really you're doing some follow-up activities. It's a follow-on meeting to the initial that includes an eligibility review. To promote the alignment with WIOA we're stealing a few definitions from our partners. And for reemployment services, we're primarily using, but not limited to, WIOA career services. And that included the citations there to reference.

So when we talk about reemployment services, it's generally career services, but you do have some flexibility to add additional things. But the core reemployment services are the career services as defined under WIOA. And for training, we are also stealing the definition from our partners and using training services as defined in WIOA Section 134(c)(3).

But you can also include training would include any UI-approved training that's not covered in that definition. So we are trying to align our definitions where we can with WIOA. Now I'm going to jump into some of the new flexibilities. We have some revised cost limits. As you guys know, we have had for the past couple years a limit on the amount of funds you can use for administrative costs.

We have used a modified version of the WIOA definition of administrative costs. Unlike WIOA, we do include IT, is wrapped into it. And for FY 2020, the limit is 15 percent. This is the same as we used in 2019. But you'll see the difference here is underneath in the sub bullet. Last year if states were rejoining RESEA after not participating, we gave states flexibility to request an additional 100,000 above the admin's half for IT and other implementation costs. Recognizing that RESEA is a new program and all states have additional costs associated with its implementation, we've given that flexibility to all states. So in the guidance, we have instructions of how to indicate whether or not you want to use that extra 100,000.

But this is primarily, we envision it being used for IT or other administrative costs associated with it in the program. So we just wanted to highlight that all states now have that flexibility because of the increased cost of transitioning to the new program. In previous years, we've included cost limits on the initial and subsequent RESEA.

We no longer include those caps. Recognizing that RESEA could provide a whole spectrum of services and we want states to really be innovative in trying new service delivery models, we've removed those caps. But we will be collecting information about projected costs as part of the state plan to help us shape TA and also to know what's going on in the system.

So you'll still see it in the RESEA state plan, but as defined in the guidance, would give you more flexibility about the cost of your RESEA services. Another big change previously excluded populations. Earlier guidance, we had a requirement states must exempt in that a claimant could have a definite return-to-work date, secure their work through a union hiring hall or an improved training.

Based on our meetings with states as we were implementing this program, we had a lot of feedback saying that some states have different policies for these populations; in particular, those would return to work. A lot of states have a policy that if the return-to-work date is beyond a certain time frame, that they need to complete work source requirements.

So you are still able to exempt these populations. It's at your discretion to do so. But you also have discretion if you would like to align your policy, so you can align your RESEA participation policy with your state workforce policy. So it requires people with a return-to-work date that's three months away or greater you want to RESEA, you have that flexibility now. We've loosened up the required exemption to give you some discretion here. So that is also a new flexibility brand-new to this year. As Gay and John mentioned, one of the things that we've been doing is really been advocating for innovation in the system.

Based on what I've seen states using their implementation funds for, I know a lot of states have already developed or considering developing or planning to develop self-scheduling. And we really promote self-scheduling because it has proven benefits in reducing no-show rates. It improves customer service for your participants.

We're proponents of self-scheduling, but we have noticed when we did some analysis of performance reports that some dates that were early adopters of self-scheduling had some issues. Particularly what was happening is participants were being selected for RESEA, being notified that they have to participate, but then they were just self-scheduling and rescheduling for weeks and weeks on end.

So when we looked at the performance data, we saw a certain number of people that were selected for RESEA, but when we look at the completion rates it didn't match up as well as we would like.

So what we're encouraging states to do is if you are looking at self-scheduling to look at having some policies in place to make sure that participants aren't avoiding getting the actual services. We've seen in some states they've implemented policies such as having a fixed window such as two weeks where you reschedule as much as you want. But once you go beyond that window, you need to contact somebody in the RESEA program to reschedule beyond that.

Or you can fix the number of self-reschedules people have to a certain number and then beyond you would have to contact somebody at RESEA staff. We just really want to be careful, because what we saw in some of the performance reports were some delays in people receiving services and also some duplication.

So we want to make sure that if you're implementing these policies, we're very supportive of it, but please make sure you make your policies line up self-scheduling to prevent these potential problems. Another big change – not necessarily a change, but a part of the authorization for RESEA is Section 306(h).

This provision is requiring that RESEA funds be used as supplement rather than supplant other funds being used either at the state, federal or local level. And the reason we wanted to highlight this is we know states in the early planning process for their new program, they were looking around doing an inventory of what programs are already in operation. And we have a now permanently authorized program, some states wanted to consider shifting how things were funded. So they may have a program that's already being operated at the state level that they think will be beneficial to RESEA participants that they now want to fund as RESEA.

This is something just to be mindful of that the intent here is that we're supplementing other activities that are already in place. We're not taking the place of that funding. This is one of those things that's difficult to provide blanket technical assistance because each state is structured in a different way and are going to have different ideas. But I wanted to highlight this that if you run into a situation where you think this might be an issue, please reach out to your regional office and ask for technical assistance just to make sure it's not going to be problematic later on, because as we re-review the state plan later in a couple weeks, we'll be looking for this type of thing.

So I just wanted to highlighted that this requirement is part of the law and to make sure as you're doing your planning that you're mindful of it. Again, one of the big things is flexible targeting of RESEA services. As drafted, the current RESEA program is limited to those that are likely to exhaust.

But similar to previous years, the federal appropriations have broadened the authority states have to include any population of regular UI claimants. So if claimants receive UI benefits, you have flexibility to select among them. And so you can take some variety of backgrounds, lengths of time you see unemployment.

The only other thing we ask that in your state plan, if you are doing with your population, that you justify that, explain why you're doing it by providing some labor market information and economic trends for other data to support why you're changing the population. So you do have a lot of flexibility in who you serve with RESEA.

But one of the key components we want people to keep in mind is that RESEA can be used to meet worker profiling and reemployment service requirements WPR. So prior to the new program, WPRS and RESEA were serving the same target population. But now this flexibility you could technically be offering a RESEA program that no longer meets WPRS requirements.

So to meet the WPRS requirements using RESEA, you need to have a program that is operated statewide, so at least one location in every WIOA-designated local area. And you need to be including the WPRS selection model as part of your RESEA program.

Now, if you have the capacity to go beyond that and serve additional populations, you can meet WPRS requirements and include those additional populations as long as you prioritize the WPRS participants. So the thing here to keep in mind is that RESEA is a permanent program. It's authorized under Section 306 of the Social Security Act. But it did not remove the WPRS program, which is authorized under Section 303. So there are two programs on the books.

Now, one of the things that is beneficial to states that do incorporate WPRS in RESEA is to try to streamline things a little bit for you. In particular, if you streamline and merge these two programs, you do in RESEA serving the WPRS population, you're only going to have to submit RESEA reports.

You won't have to do separate WPRS reports. So we just wanted to emphasize that although the program RESEA's new WPRS is still there. It didn't go away. We lay out a little bit more detail in the guidance about the interaction of these two programs. But this is a thing we've had a lot of questions on. We just wanted to highlight that you're mindful of WPRS still being a statutory requirement for states.

With that, I'm going to hand the presentation over to my colleague Andrew Ridgeway from Office of Workforce Investment to talk a little bit about integration.

MR. RIDGEWAY: Thanks, Larry. For someone who works on the WIOA and Wagner-Peyser programs, we're excited about the opportunities the RESEA program provides for enhancing the workforce system's services to unemployed job seekers and integrating those services through the American Job Center network so that we can ensure these workers going through transitions receive the full suite of services they may need through the integration of the RESEA and WIOA programs. In fact, one of the statutory purposes of the RESEA program is to serve as a gateway for jobseekers to access the workforce system.

We're placing a strong emphasis on planning, connecting, and referring across the workforce programs through strong partnerships so that there is no wrong door for the customer. As such, we think it is important to note that RESEA programs must be integrated with WIOA and the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service.

RESEA participants are required to be co-enrolled into the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service. However, states are also encouraged to consider other programs that may benefit the RESEA participant, such as the dislocated worker program. We've studied co-enrollment for a while now. And it has been shown to work effectively across our programs to help people find employment.

So to that end, we want to emphasize how important it is to accurately report the data of the RESEA participants. Generally, the RESEA participant data is submitted as part of the state's Wagner-Peyser file submission. And the way that we're able to know that they are RESEA participants is through the PIRL data element 401.

So the PIRL is participant individual record layout, which is familiar for my workforce folks' side of the house. So the PIRL data element 401 is titled UC-eligible status. So this is really where you identify whether or not someone is a unemployment insurance claimant. And so one of the fields within that PIRL element says that the claimant was referred by the RESEA program, code value 01.

We're really in the weeds here, but it's very important. It's very important that participants who are served through RESEA are coded with this code value 01 that indicates that they were referred because that is how we know how RESEA participants are served in the programs, and so that we know how many you served in the program.

And ultimately, as was mentioned earlier, the performance and outcome-based payments that we're talking about in RESEA will be using the data reported in that code value. And it was mentioned that guidance will be forthcoming on how it is operation wise. But it will be based on accurately reporting this data element.

The Office of Workforce Investment in partnership with the Office of Unemployment Insurance at ETA is working together to provide technical assistance to help improve the accurate collection of this data. And then lastly on this, on January 6, ETA published a final rule removing the state merit stacking requirement for services provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act.

So states can ultimately decide on appropriate staffing models for this program whether it's continuing with their state merit staff, other state staff, or through subawarding the funds to local governments, local boards, nonprofits or other organizations to provide the services.

Similarly, the RESEA program does not have a merit staffing requirement for the services it provides to job seekers. The ultimate determination of UI eligibility must still be done by a state merit staff. While developing your RESEA state plan, we encourage you to consider these new staffing flexibilities. And for more information, we recently did a webinar on the Wagner-Peyser Act final rule of merit staffing. And it's recording will be available soon so we can share that in the future.

We also encourage you to read the final rule. The link has been provided in the presentation and it's available on the slide there. And you can also read Training Employment Notice 13-19 which announced the rule and also how to address it in your state plan submissions for the Wagner-Peyser-WIOA side of the house. So with that, thanks again for the opportunity to speak, Larry. And I'll turn it back over to you.

MR. BURNS: Thanks, Andy. So with that, we're going to transition now to talking about the big new requirement we're implementing this year, and that is the RESEA state plan. So we're going to dig into a little bit about some of the new elements that are in there and also the process for submitting.

So first off, the state plans are due March 16. We've given states 45 days since the date operating guidance was issued to submit that. We will be using similar to last year grants.gov as our hub for collecting the state plans and related documents that need to be included with it. We'll be talking about that in a little bit detail later. A few things to keep in mind about the RESEA state plan.

First of all, it is a requirement of the new law. So Section 306(e) lays out the RESEA state plan requirements. To the greatest extent possible, we've tried to align with the requirements so long. We've tried not to create any undue burden on states by adding a lot more to that. When you look at the state plan template, you're going to see that 2/3 of it are very similar to the grant applications we've been using for the past three years. So the first 2/3 are going to be kind of old hat to you. But we are going to have some really important new elements that are going to require quite a bit of narrative and discussion.

You want to be focusing more so on the new elements rather than that 2/3 that you've probably seen before. What we have done to try to streamline the process as much as possible is created a fillable template for you to use – it's a PDF document that you can go in and fill out. I want to just emphasize one thing is that one of the things you'll see if you look at the law is that it requires states to provide an assurance and also a description of your activities.

So I know we've got a lot of questions already about why we have these boxes to check in addition to narrative. And when you check that box, you're basically giving our assurance that you are going to do what the law requires. And then the narrative just explains how.

So what we've done is we've tried to streamline it a bit. But that's why you're going to see the check boxes mixed in with narrative boxes. And we need you to complete both to meet the requirements of the law. Again, the template's based on previous grant proposal summaries to test the new elements.

One of the things, when you submit by March 16, our deadline to get back to all states is April 15. That is the statutory deadline. We will notify states if we've already got funding status. And in particular, if there are any state plans we have to disapprove for any reason, we'll notify you with a disapproval that includes the reason we disapproved the plan, and also provide you an opportunity to submit a revised, corrected plan.

So if you, for any reason, are disapproved on this first go-around, you will have an opportunity to revise and correct. But I will emphasize one of the things we're going to try to do is we're going to review the state plans and the work grants on a rolling basis. So if you can provide your state plans earlier, we'll take a look and try to move things along faster.

And also, if you provided them early, it will give us an opportunity to provide more technical assistance, if needed. So if at all possible, I really encourage states to come in as earlier as you can with these state plans. We did release the template over the summer. It went out as part of the OMB approval package. So the templates have been floating around for quite a while.

It has not changed from the final guidance. So if you've been using the older document, all the elements are the same as what was released as part of the paperwork we got in a package this summer. So I just wanted to highlight that as well.

With that, I'm just going to jump into some of the new elements we want you to be particularly mindful of. These are brand-new. You have not seen them in previous applications. And there are a couple big buckets of things we want to talk about. First off, is the notification in the scheduling. One of the things the law requires is that all states provide proper notification.

And the law is very prescriptive in that it must be in clear, simple language and include warnings that ensure individuals are fully aware of potential consequences. I think a lot of states over the past couple years – there is technical assistance we've been providing – is asking states to look closely at your notices to make sure they meet these requirements. And we've also done a lot of work about behavioral insights. Had to talk about what have you done to make those notices set the biggest no-show rates to make them more approachable.

So here you could really have an open-ended discussion. You can talk about changes you've made to your proper notification, if you've implemented any behavioral insights, if you've implemented other things, like follow-up or informal notifications that go along with the proper notification. This is really your opportunity to highlight everything you've done to help with the no-show rate and to make sure that those notifications are clear and concise and really explain the benefits and also the potential consequences of not participating in RESEA.

Element 25 is related to the proper notification. One of the things the law requires is that you provide reasonable schedule accommodations. The law clarifies that those accommodations are intended to maximize participation. So a lot of states over the past couple of years have done a lot on this, because we've really emphasized the importance of increasing participation and using no-show rates.

Some of the things you may want to talk about there include if you have or are planning to implement self-scheduling, that could be one of the things you discuss. If you're scheduling offers alternate locations – the past couple years we've limited the requirement that RESEAs must be done and AJCs to allow you to use libraries from other owned locations.

So that could be something to discuss there if you provide multiple employment options as part of the notification. So really you have a lot of flexibility here. And I think most states have been doing work on this.

And this is an opportunity for you to highlight what you've been doing in this area regarding scheduling accommodations. Or if you've developed some new policies you want to highlight, that would also be great there too. These state plans, in addition to being your grant application to be eligible to receive funds, we're going to use these to help collect some promising practice and identify the things we may want to investigate further. So please highlight some of the activities you've done in there.

The other big change here you're going to have to do – and this is more open-ended and provides you an opportunity to provide a lot of narrative – the state plan requirements direct all states to provide narratives explaining how you're aligning with the statutory purposes of RESEA that we discussed early on.

So there's an element there we want you to talk about how you're improving employment outcomes by reducing duration through employment. We've done some technical assistance over the summer where we talked about interventions that are evidence based so far, so you can leverage some of the stuff we've done over the summer. But this is really the core of your model and what you're goals and your vision for RESEA is.

There's also an element where we want you to talk about the strength in program integrity. There, that's an opportunity to talk about what you've done to integrate UI with your workforce partners. Are your UI staff doing a lot of training about detecting issues? Have you improved the mechanisms in which you send potential issues back to the UI for adjudication? So really, what have you done around the integrity part in making sure that those eligibility assessments are really high quality? So we want you to talk about that in that narrative there.

Alignment with division of WIOA – when you look at the state plan, we've included hyperlinks to the WIOA vision TEGL. And we've also included links to a UIPL that it talks about specifically UI and WIOA integration. So in that element there we're really looking for things like have you implemented a common login or common registration? What type of co-enrollment are you doing? Then you mentioned even the co-enrollment with Wagner-Peyser Employment Services require you may be doing things with dislocated worker or other partner programs.

So again, what have you done primarily to integrate the programs? And this is your opportunity to highlight some of those. Or if you have a plan to integrate moving forward. And then lastly – and this is similar – it's establish RESEA's entry point to workforce system. So some of the things you may want to discuss there is last year we've removed requirement that you had to do an orientation to AJC services. You might still be doing that orientation. You may have developed online tools to familiarize your participants with some of the resources that are available. So what have you been doing to make those connections to the other partners?

And really one of the things that's emphasized in both the WIOA vision and also our UIPL, is the importance of customer service and having a positive customer experience where there is no wrong door in the seeking of entry into other services. So this is an opportunity in that field to discuss some of those activities there. So these are all brand-new elements. You have not seen these before in previous grant applications. And this is really the core of your narrative describing your program.

The other big section that's brand-new is the evidence-based standards and evaluation requirements. And I know we're still relatively early on in these requirements. I know things are just starting to kick off some of the evaluations. We want to talk a little bit about these elements and some of the things you may want to put there. Just again, these are all brand-new. The first element is how the state is satisfying the requirement to use grant funds only on interventions that are evidence-based. So, as you guys know, beginning in fiscal year 2019, the requirement that all RESEA activities have to be evidence-based kicked in.

Over the summer – and I have links to this at the end – we did a whole series of webinars explaining directly how the current RESEA program meets evidence-based requirements. So you have some information there. But we really want you to be able to do some analysis of your current program. This is a good opportunity to look at your program – and I'm sure you've been doing this already – figure out what you need to evaluate, what you're doing now, what your interventions are. So that's the current evidence that supports your program.

Element 28(b) is what we're looking at for your plans. What do you have planned to do evaluations? One of the things here is the law defines that you need to provide information about the interventions that don't meet the high or moderate causal rating. One of the things that we've been emphasizing all along with our technical assistance is that RESEA is a new program, so the evidence that is out there is not evidence for the brand-new RESEA program. A lot of it is REA related. So there's not a lot, if anything, that's going to meet that high or moderate causal rating. So this element here is really where we want you to talk about your planned evaluation activities. Are you looking to work on a consortia with the DOL?

Have you started the procurement process to bring the evaluator on board? Have you assessed the capabilities of your own in-house evaluation or labor market teams? Are you looking at the whole program? Or are you looking at interventions? This is really where we want you to lay out what you're going to do evaluation wise moving forward for this year. And again, as you've described in previous guidance, the expectation is that you're going to start you evaluation activity now, because we need to have evaluations that are high quality meet these ratings by 2023 when we have some new funding requirements that kick in. So this is really the key element we want you to outline your evaluation plan moving forward.

The others ones are a little bit more straightforward; element 28(c). Are you planning to hold up to the maximum 10 percent to use to fund evaluations? Or are you going to do a lesser amount? We want to collect some information about how much states are going to plan to use for the evaluations.

And also that last element 28(d), what we're interested in here is if you've done any evaluations in the previous year that has data, we want the whole list of elements related to that laid out in the guidance that we need you to share with us. But one of the things I want to keep in mind, I think when people see this element they're going to think immediately, we did not do a random assignment study this previous year. We don't have any evidence.

But you may have done some other analysis. You may have looked at the data. You may have done a survey. You may have done some other assessment. So this is really an opportunity to share some of your data with us to help us inform our technical assistance moving forward and also to get a better feeling for the RESEA program in your state.

So when you're filling out that field, really think broadly. When you think about the evaluation, think about all the things that can go around it as well, including the survey, the analysis, data. Please answer that question as broadly as you can and provide some detail. Especially with this as a big year of the new state plans, we can move forward with it.

So with that, I'm going to hand it over to Chanta Ferrell to talk a little bit about some of the submission using grants.gov and to highlight the requirements and also some of the things that we've had problems with in previous years. So with that, I'll pass it over.

CHANTA FERRELL: Hello, everyone, and happy Friday. My name is Chanta Ferrell. I'm the grants management specialist with the RESEA UIPL. For the application process, applicants must register with the system for award management, also known as SAM. Applicants must register and be active before an application can be submitted in grants.gov.

Please register early to ensure that you meet any deadline. Again, the current closing date for the application is March 16, 2020, no later than 4:00 p.m. So applications will be received up until that time. Registration is a one-time process. And applicants who have already registered at grants.gov or have an account do not need to register again.

As far as the RESEA state plan requirement, a complete RESEA state plan package includes, one, the SF-424 application for federal assistance. Please keep in mind that the new date is – the expiration date is 12/31/2022. For the SF-424 form, please make sure you have a DUNS number that is not expired and that is the correct DUNS number for your legal name.

The announcement number and the entire award amount must be provided as well on the SF-424. For the SF-424A, the budget information and non-construction program, please also be mindful that there is a new form out with the expiration date of February 28, 2022. Next, you want to ensure that you have a current and direct cost rate agreement.

And lastly, you want to also have elements of unemployment insurance, UI, reemployment service and eligibility assessment RESEA grant state plan, which is also in the PDF format. Please be mindful that anything that is incomplete or has expired, such as the forms or anything, will potentially hold up your award from being processed in a timely fashion. Moving on, some of the common errors that we have seen from previous years or from last year are, one, expired forms. Again, please do not submit expired forms. Please check the dates, which are listed on slide 31.

Next, not submitting a current or correct DUNS number – please make sure you check your DUNS number. Applicants must apply their data universal numbering system on line 8c. Next, not providing the announcement number – for the SF-424, you must provide the announcement number, which can be provided on item line number 12 for funding opportunities. And finally, you want to provide the entire award amount on line 18 of the SF-424. With that being said, at this time I will bring this back to Larry for questions and answers.

MR. BURNS: Thank you. And before we move on, one thing I just want to reemphasize is that when you go to grants.gov, the opportunity number for this is ETA-UIPL-8-20. So I have it laid out here and I put it elsewhere in this presentation. And it's also in the operating guidance. Even though we have a TEGL and a UIPL, we didn't want to have two things in grants.gov, so we located everything under the UIPL number. So that's how you find it. It is specified in the TEGL that you have to use that opportunity number. So just a point of clarification that that's where you need to look in grants.gov. And with that, we'll jump into the Q&A. We've had quite a few questions come in. And we'll try to answer a few right off.

And we might need a minute to regroup on a couple others. There's a couple early ones that came in that I'll field real quickly. There's a question here about the state plan and the question of whether or not this is going to be incorporated into the full WIOA state plan in the future. That is something we're discussing. I don't think it'll be in the immediate future. It'll longer term if possible. But one of the challenges we have is that the law, that Social Security Act is very prescriptive in what has to be included in the state plan. And unlike the WIOA state plan, we do need to collect this information annually according to the requirements there.

At the current time, we are not planning to directly integrate RESEA state plan into the WIOA state plan. But the two plans – and as Gay mentioned earlier, it's kind of serendipitous that the plans are being done at the same time – they should mirror each other and reflect each other. So the RESEA state plan should talk a little bit about the WIOA, especially when you look at the requirements for the WIOA being a common entry, being the gateway to the workforce system. So we do anticipate teams are going to talk to each other. But unfortunately, for the time being, we do require a separate RESEA state plan.

The last quick one I want to answer is just the question about will RESEA continue to be a fiscal year program that operates on a calendar year basis? And the short answer is yes. Our RESEA unlike our partners in the WIOA world is funded on a fiscal year basis. The reason we use a calendar year is because it gives us a little bit of buffer between when the funds become available and when the grant awards go out. And also, there's often delays when the fiscal year funding becomes available, so there's a little bit of buffer there.

But the foreseeable future, we are planning to stick to a calendar year basis. In addition to the presenters today, we have Megan Lizik on the line from the Chief Evaluation Office. And there's this general question about sample sizes. Megan, do you want to jump into that?

MEGAN LIZIK: Sure, Larry. And hello, everybody. My name is Megan Lizik, and I am with the U.S. Department of Labor's Chief Evaluation Office working with OUI on our RESEA projects, including the evaluation technical assistance like we've been involved in. Regarding sample sizes, I think that it's important to realize that required sample sizes for your particular evaluation are likely to vary from context to context, state by state, depending on the kinds of research questions that you have. They'll be likely smaller if you are thinking about evaluating what Larry's been referring to as a whole RESEA program.

They'll be a little bit bigger if you are thinking about evaluating a strong or prominent larger component of your RESEA program. And they'll be much bigger if you're thinking about evaluating the effects of a smaller component.

If you would like more information about what I mean by these different sizes and to get a little more info about general ballparks of what we're seeing that might be appropriate sample sizes to answer different types of questions, you can take a look at the webinar that we did in December on the RESEA evaluation guidance. There's some additional information there, and in some of the other webinars in the evaluation TA series that we released over the course of the last year.

And as always, if you have individual questions, you can feel free to reach out to our RESEA helpline. And that is resea@abtassoc.com. Thanks.

MR. BURNS: Thanks, Megan. And we have a question here about the PIRL elements. Do you want to go over that question?

MR. RIDGEWAY: Sure. Thanks, Larry. So we got a question about reporting the RESEA participants in the PIRL, which is good, mid-year plan. But we're excited to answer it.

The question is if the PIRL – I assume if the PIRL of the participant is already active and they attend the RESEA, do we mark them as referred by RESEA on employment info in the PIRL though their PIRL was not activated through RESEA employment services? I'm going to translate what I think the question is there. It's very possible that an individual could already be a participant in Wagner-Peyser before they're referred by RESEA. That is possible.

And I know a true reading of the element for code value 01 or referred by RESEA says if they were referred by RESEA to being a participant. However, yes. You should go ahead and change their code if you hadn't coded it otherwise or update that to signify that they are RESEA, because as we said, this is how we know that you're serving RESEA participants in our workforce reports.

So for the purposes of accurately knowing how many people received RESEA services through Wagner-Peyser, we do recommend that you code them as 01 even if they already are in the system as a participant for whatever other reason.

So, yes. Go ahead and change it to code value 01 to signify that they are a RESEA participant, and I got them services through the RESEA program.

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. I think it's actually likely that folks may be already registered in Wagner-Peyser because of the requirement to register for work. And frequently in many of your states, you're doing that right at the front end of a claim. And your RESEA targeting may not happen for a few weeks. So I think this is going to be a big number probably in the states.

MR. RIDGEWAY: Yes. So this is very important that you do that.

MS. GILBERT: And I would also say, as we're talking about performance for a minute, we have told them to align the performance measures you're going to hear shortly with the WIOA performance measures. And there were multiple reasons for that. One is it is now an integral part of the workforce system, and we want to be aligned with other workforce programs. But also, it's going to relieve you all from any additional reporting burden.

So this issue of you getting into the Wagner-Peyser, being sure that there's co-enrollment, and that you've adequately identified folks with RESEA is really critical. Also, I mentioned earlier that the outcome payments in 2021 will be based on this year's performance, so really starting to get this down and make sure staff are doing it correctly now is really critical.

MR. BURNS: Thank you. We had a couple short questions. One, there was a question asked about states that did not participate in RESEA and what their funding level is for 2020. And when you look at attachment 1 of the joint guidance, you will see that all states have a funding level included in there. And again, for those states that did not participate, it was just basically a straight-up proportion of their first payment. So even states that did not participate in RESEA do have a funding cap in the guidance that they can write to and were included.

There's also a question about clarifying the deadline. I believe we may have said at some point that the deadline was March 15, but the guidance said it's March 15. So March 15 is 45 days from publication of the UIPL. But that is a Sunday, so we pushed it back to March 16. So the deadline in the operating guidance is correct. It's March 16. Chanta, there was a question for you. They wanted to confirm there's concern about making sure the right forms are used. And they wanted to know if grants.gov, the forms that are uploaded there are the correct ones.

MS. FERRELL: They are. The forms that are uploaded that I've checked at grants.gov are the correct ones. So you are to utilize those forms that are on grants.gov. They are correct.

MR. RIDGEWAY: I saw another question on performance reporting. So the question is, when will we receive further guidance on reporting through the PIRL? Currently, there are possible pitfalls, such as participation periods in RESEA, participation periods not matching up, and other being the values listed in 401 include exhaustee, UI exhaustee.

So when these states report the person is being referred through RESEA versus when they become an exhaustee. And as the participant, as the person mentioned, if you do change them to an exhaustee, you lose them as an RESEA. Yeah. Let me unwind that a little bit. Those are all things that we can talk about.

So the guidance on the PIRL reporting is out there – TEGL 14-18 has a section that covers UI, reporting on UI participants in Wagner-Peyser. So I encourage you to look at TEGL 14-18 for that information.

And then, of course, when a RESEA participant is co-enrolled in Wagner-Peyser, they are also Wagner-Peyser participants, so the rules of Wagner-Peyser apply regarding when they are a participant and when they exit and when they go into the performance indicators. So that is true. I would say similar to what I said before or a little bit different. If they do become an exhaustee after being in RESEA, I would recommend not changing that, because generally for the most part, you report them as they come in.

So if they came in as an exhaustee and not referred by RESEA, you would use exhaustee. But if you get nothing else from the performance reporting side is if they've ever been an RESEA participant, use that code value 1 regardless of anything else, because that is ultimately what gives you credit for serving them as an RESEA participant, and will ultimately be used in form future awards and measures and things like that. So I know it's a little challenging because we're using the Wagner-Peyser reporting to save additional reporting burdens. And so there are a few instances where you just kind of talk through it. So I appreciate the question. And I hope that that addresses it.

MR. BURNS: So we had a general question come in about the funding formula for fiscal year 2021. Earlier on, I talked a little bit about one provision. I mentioned that there is the 30 percent cap on how much you can carry over. And there were questions about whether or not there were hold harmless provisions or other provisions that they should be mindful of. And I want to direct you back to the Federal Register notice because we outline everything in there and talk about our rationale behind it. But yet, there are provisions in the formula include hold harmless provision. There's also a cap on maximum increase. And there's also a threshold to make sure there's a minimum funding level.

So we have added some other criteria into the formula to make sure there's greater stability in the formula from year to year because of the potential fluctuations specifically in the insured unemployment rate and how much it can change from time to time. So we're not using a static IUR. We are looking at has it increased or decreased. So just to be mindful of, I really would recommend all states take a look at that Federal Register notice because we do a much better job than I can do in a few minutes here clarifying how the formula will work.

And if you have any questions, you can feel free to reach out to us and we'll get back to you on that. Megan, even though we're focusing mostly on the operations, we did have a few high level questions about the evidence-based requirements. So you want to take a stab at a couple of those?

MS. LIZIK: Sure, Larry. And thanks. Yeah. It's great to see so many folks interested in hearing more about evaluation and evidence requirements. Again, if you would like specifics, I'd refer folks to the guidance that OUI released later last year and also the webinar that we collaborated on for more specifics.

Generally, I think it's important to think about when you hear the word evaluation that you are thinking about that in terms of using an academically rigorous design. You might have heard a phrase like, random assignment or quasi-experimental design before.

Those are the kinds of academic designs that we're talking about that can give you credible information about the extent to which outcomes you're seeing from your programs like reemployment are actually attributable to the RESEA program and not to other factors or conditions. So if you would like to learn more about what we mean by evaluations, we have some more information in our webinar series. And we are glad to have you reach out to the RESEA evaluation TA team through the helpline to help you with some more specifics.

I would also mention that we had a question come in about when we might see the REA impact study report being posted. And I'm glad to share that that is going to be coming out next week on DOL Chief Evaluation Office website. You can find that on our completed reports web page, and we'll be working closely with OUI to share some more information with you to direct you to where it's posted, let you know that it's out there, and then in a few weeks invite you to a webinar where we'll summarize some findings and insights for you. Larry, anything else you'd like us to cover related to the evaluation today?

MR. BURNS: Well, right now, we're getting a lot of questions all lined up about the definitions we have implemented. In particular, there's two questions I want to pass up to Gay. One is, people are curious about what UI-approved training is; and two, people want to know a little bit more about our thinking around subsequent RESEA and whether or not it's required or what our broad thinking is.

MS. GILBERT: Sure. Let me tackle the approved training one first. So states do have laws that define what approved training is for their state. So this is a conversation you're going to have to have with the UI folks in your state to understand which types of training are considered approved.

The reason this is important is that, generally, if somebody is in approved training, their requirement for them to conduct work search is waived. So that feeds into when you're doing the review of their work search as part of the RESEA. So this is one you're going to need to make sure you get familiarity with your state's law on the subject, and be sure that everybody's trained accordingly.

On that subsequent RESEAs, subsequent RESEAs are not mandatory. But many states over the years have chosen to do them. When Larry showed you the slide that provided you the definition and, quote, "minimum," that was more definitional, because if you do choose to do subsequent RESEAs, that's what you should include. And that's how you should report it to us and in your plan and how you estimate your cost. So it's not mandatory, but a number of states have chosen to do that. And it is permissible. But we're trying to align now our reporting in how we think about this part of the broader RESEA model, if you will.

MR. BURNS: Thanks, Gay. We received a lot of questions about the outcome payments, because we had kind of a detailed discussion about that. And I just wanted to highlight that we do have guidance that we made, forthcoming guidance that will be out that talks about RESEA performance including outcome payments. So we're going to hold off on answering those questions until the guidance is out. And as needed, we'll do TA around that – a webinar or other documents to help support those questions. But we hear you on those questions. And we will get back to you once the guidance is out.

MS. GILBERT: And with performance measures. We will be doing separate UIPLs on those things. And we anticipate doing webinars to follow on, because we know they're technical and somewhat complex so we want to be sure everybody understands.

MR. BURNS: There was also a question here – and I'm glad somebody brought it up because I forgot to mention it earlier – there was a question about whether or not fiscal 2020 funds are allocated, are they available? The answer is yes. We do have the funds here.

But the law requires that, as a condition of receiving the funds, we have an approved state plan. So looking at the timeline, one thing I'm going to emphasize again is if you can your state plan in earlier, it will help us speed along processing in getting funds to your state. But if you come in at the deadline of March 16 and we have a few weeks' review, realistically, the funds may not go out until early May.

So one thing we are entertaining is if you need bridge funding to maintain operations until the state plan is approved, we are willing to take bridge funding requests to get you through mid-May. So if you need additional funds, it's the same process as usual. It's the SF-424 forms and send it to oui.sbr@dol.gov.

So seeing bridge funding as request previous, and feel free to reach out to your regional office. They can give you a little more guidance on how to handle that. But, yes. Bridge funds are available. And the 2020 funds are here and ready to be allocated once we have the state plans finalized.

MS. GILBERT: I was just looking up and saw one of the questions was, will a state get more than one chance to resubmit their state plan if it's been disapproved? First of all, I think our goal will be to try to resolve any issues with state plans within the 30 days required to get to approval. And our goal is to get everybody to approval. If for some reason that doesn't happen, the statute actually has a provision that if you're disapproved, we need to give you, I think, 30 days to correct and resubmit.

MR. BURNS: So again, one of the things just to piggyback on Gay mentioned is though we are going to do these on a rolling basis, so getting your plans in early, getting them approved early does speed along the allocation of the funds.

So we just wanted to highlight that we are going to review these on a rolling basis, so emphasize that. I am going to give everybody a heads-up. Unfortunately, we've received a lot more questions than we're going to have time to answer. We're going to try to do maybe one or two more and then start wrapping up.

But we will be following up when we can with either a FAQ. Or if we need to, we'll regroup with you. Instead of office hours we'll walk through some of these questions. But I really appreciate your questions coming in and your interest in RESEA. I will apologize. We've had a lot of questions come in and we just won't have time to get to them all. But we will follow up on back. So with that, we have two minutes left. I'll see if Andy or Megan have anything they want to take real quick.

MR. RIDGEWAY: I think we've addressed for the most part the performance ones. I know there are some in the weeds on participation questions. I guess I'll just repeat from a performance perspective until we get any deeper in the future after the guidance.

Make sure you use the code 01 and element 401 if they've ever been an RESEA participant during their co-enrollment with Wagner-Peyser. Two, when they are co-enrolled in Wagner-Peyser, they are Wagner-Peyser participants who are also RESEA participants, but the rules of Wagner-Peyser apply. So if they get services in Wagner-Peyser, they'll continue to stay in the system as a Wagner-Peyser participant.

And, as we noted, the services can be the same or supplement each other. So if a person continues to receive RESEA services, they can stay in Wagner-Peyser too based on those services as well.

But technically, when they are reported in 401, they are a Wagner-Peyser participant who's also an RESEA participant. And if they are ever during that time of participation in RESEA or referred by RESEA or involved by RESEA, make sure you flag them that way. Those will be the two most important things I would flag from today's conversation. And, of course, there's more rule to get into in the future.

MR. BURNS: We have two or three quick ones we'll get to and then we're going to wrap up. I apologize. I know Chanta has one quick one she wanted to address.

MS. FERRELL: Just be careful when you're submitting your applications through grants.gov. Like, say for instance, you left something out, or if you received an email that the SF-424 needed to be updated, you don't necessarily have to resubmit the application back through grants.gov.

If there's something wrong with just your SF-424, which is my neck of the woods, you can just email it back to me. Or if there's something wrong with the program side, you could just email it back to Larry or whoever's in charge on the program side.

MR. BURNS: Yeah. So similar to previous years, sometimes when you do multiple submissions in grants.gov, it creates issues. So if we do spot anything wrong with either the supporting forms like the budget documents, or if we need to go back to you on the RESEA state plan, we'll be handling that with you directly rather than using the grants.gov application.

So if for some reason you're disapproved, we'll include clear instructions on what to do next. And also, just be on the lookout that we do view the state planning process as kind of a collaborative effort where we may be reaching out to you for clarifications or to provide technical assistance. So I wanted to highlight that.

And then we had just two other really quick things we're going to highlight. There was a question about best practices. Currently, we are going to try to collect as many best practices as we can for RESEA.

Those will be located – I'm going to share before we wrap up a few websites – and the best place to look for those is going to be our reemployment connections RESEA landing page, which I have a link for. But in the world of evaluations, we've also created a brand-new web page or tab on the CLEAR website, which is our clearinghouse for labor evaluation and research where you can find RESEA-specific things. So I'll have those links at the end.

MS. GILBERT: This is Gay. I just wanted to give a little preview about performance measures and outcome payments. For performance measures, our current thinking and what you'll likely see in the guidance here shortly is that we are going to stay with the original proposal that we had in the Federal Register notice, which is to align to the WIOA measures for employment and earning. So we've done a lot of comments and we did a lot of analysis around alternatives. But in the end, I think we thought that it was critical to remain aligned with the common measures.

With regard to the outcome payment, there are two things that the statute ties outcome payments – well, the primary goal for RESEA is listed as reducing duration as a result of improved employment outcomes.

So that brings into play duration data, and it brings in your performance with regard to the WIOA employment and earnings measures. We don't expect to set targets in the near term because we'll need to do some baselining for a while. But we still will be using the data, which is why it's just really critical that you listen to everything Andy says about what you need to do about being sure the PIRL includes the RESEA information.

So more to come on both of those as quickly as we can get them out the door. And we would anticipate additional webinars on those to really dig deep.

MR. BURNS: Thanks, Gay. And this is going to be our last question and then we're going to wrap up on out and then move on and share some of the resources with you. We had several questions earlier. I mentioned the consortia opportunity is one of the things that you can do for the evaluation.

So as a reminder, one of the things we did in December we posted an opportunity to receive customized technical assistance if you're willing to join a consortia. We had a webinar kick off last Friday. And we've asked those states that are still interested to provide some basic information about what they'd like to evaluate. So those, as a reminder, are due COB today.

And I want to pass it over to Megan to talk a little bit about where those emails can go and also who to email if you want more information.

MS. LIZIK: Great. Thanks, Larry. Just very quickly, like Larry said, we did see a couple questions come in asking what do we need about the consortia, along those lines. And if you were part of those conversations that Larry just described, please feel free to email the information requested to: resea@abtassoc.com. That's our evaluation TA helpline. And in the meantime, we'll also be setting up follow-up calls with the states who have expressed interest already to learn more about the what you're thinking, where you're at.

If you missed this and didn't have a chance to see it, you can follow up with Larry and the other presenters today to get more information. And also the helpline is available for individual questions.

MR. BURNS: Thanks, Megan. And with that, we're going wrap up the questions. Again, we had some we'll get back to in another form. But I want to pass it over to Gay for closing remarks.

MS. GILBERT: Sure. Well, as I can see from your questions and also just from our own experience in working with you to date, this implementation of the new RESEA program is truly an adventure. We are excited to take the next steps with RESEA this year with the state plan, with the performance measures, with the outcome payments coming shortly.

So just really pleased that we had such great participation today and that so many folks are engaged in this process, because we need all of your creative thinking. So I'm really looking forward to seeing your state plans and seeing where that takes us. So thanks very much.

MR. BURNS: Thanks, Gay. And just to wrap up, I'm going to go very quickly to the last couple slides. Please download this PowerPoint, use this as a resource. I've included links to the RESEA landing page I referenced before, which is where we host all of our general technical assistance and promising practices for RESEA. Visit often, bookmark. We'll be putting updates on there. Early on, I mentioned we would not be talking about the evidence-based requirements. So this page here links you to our evidence-based guidance and also the webinar we did following that guidance so you can go back and take a look at that.

And also, we've done some changes to our CLEAR website to make it easier to find evidence related to RESEA. So we have a specific tab for RESEA and we also have a synthesis report of dislocated worker reemployment activities. So I've included links there. And lastly, as a final reminder, we have been very busy.

We've done approximately 15 technical assistance webinars since May on evaluation and how to do that with RESEA. So I've included links to most of them here. There's other ones on the landing page. But if you're stuck with your evaluations, or if you're bringing on new staff and you do some training, we have given you a wealth of resources to go back and check about every step in the evaluation process.

With that, if you have any general questions, I'm always available. Your regional office is usually the best first contact that you can use to get back to people a little bit quicker. If you run into any problems with the grants.gov page, Shawn Hay [ph] is our contact and grant specialist there.

And then, as Megan mentioned, we have a special inbox for evaluation questions that I've listed in the contacts there as well. Thank you, everybody for joining us.

(END)