**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**WIOA Youth Program COVID-19 Session: Working through This Together**

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LAURA CASERTANO: With that, I want to welcome everyone to today's "WIOA Youth Program COVID-19 Session: Working through This Together" webinar. And I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Maisha Meminger. She's a manpower analyst with the Division of Youth Services with the Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor. Maisha, take it away.

MAISHA MEMINGER: Thank you so much, Maher team. Thank you, everybody. And welcome around the country. Good morning to some of us and good afternoon to others. We want to welcome you to today's webinar, "WIOA Youth Program COVID-19 Session."

This webinar was put together based on questions that we received from the field. We asked each and every one of you to please provide us with questions in advance of today's webinar. We received several questions, as well as resources, as well as websites on how we can best serve our young people in this country who are facing this pandemic.

We know that we have challenges right now. Folks are trying to figure out how to serve young people virtually. People are also trying to figure out how to serve young people maybe face-to-face but more in a safe manner. We're dealing with homeless people, young people in foster care, young people who are pregnant and parenting, and young people who are soon to be or may be disconnected from the education system. How can we better connect them to workforce and employment, as well as educational pathways?

With that being said, I want to definitely introduce my two esteemed colleagues, Sara Hastings who is our unit chief of the Division of Youth Services; and Evan Rosenberg, who's my colleague, who we all know is our policy and our performance expert. We have them both here to answer your pre- – again, these are questions that were submitted before today's webinar.

And with that, we want to first take some time to say thank you to everyone on this call, everybody across the country, who are still serving our young people, whether it's on the phone, using a social media platform, using Zoom, using telehealth for case management. Thank you, thank you, thank you. We truly, truly, truly appreciate your innovation. This is a time to meet those challenges where they are. This is a time to be solutions-based. And this is a time to be innovative. And we want to appreciate every last one of you.

Today Sara's going to set the expectation for today's webinar. Again, we're going to be answering pre-existing or pre-submitted questions that we have all worked together as a team with our colleagues in the Office of Workforce Investment, as well as Employment and Training Administration, to make sure those questions are top notch for your consumption and can be also used at a later date.

We also want to make sure that we discuss – we want to hear from you guys. What are you doing out there in the field? What's working? What's not working? How can we provide additional technical assistance in other areas to get that to you all? So we want to make sure that we're learning from you as well. This is our opportunity at the Department of Labor to learn from you.

And we also want to share some information and resources that were shared with us, that we want to make sure that you guys have links to some wonderful webinars and opportunities that are coming up in upcoming weeks and days for learning opportunities.

I want to let you guys know that we have well over 1,000 people on this line and we know that we're all anxious to learn. So I'm going to get out of the way and let Sara take it over. Sara, thank you.

SARA HASTINGS: Thanks, Maisha. And thank you, everyone. I just want to say thank you, as Maisha said, for joining us today for this really important conversation and discussion with you guys. As Maisha said, there was a ton of interest in this webinar and we completely understand why. There's a lot going on right now and a lot of new challenges for us as a workforce system.

Over 1,000 people have joined so far and the numbers are increasing; 2,500 folks signed up in a day. And we know that there are many more that wanted to join but unfortunately couldn't as we reached our capacity. So if you know anybody that couldn't get in, please do tell your colleagues or any others that you know who weren't able to join that we are recording today's session and it's going to be archived and posted on our community of practice within a few days. And we'll try to get that out to everybody as soon as we can.

So as you all know, COVID-19 has been just incredibly hard on so many people in this country and around our world. As our economy weakens, the young people we serve – particularly our youth of color and our youth in rural areas, our opportunity youth – are being hit the hardest.

Even during strong economic times, our young people struggle to attach to the workforce. They face multiple barriers to employment, lacking housing, access to health care and internet and technology, transportation, and of course proper nutrition. And now those issues are really just magnified and increased by the devastation of COVID.

So as we try to find our footing during this challenging time together, it's really critical that we continue to work hard to provide services that will engage youth in meaningful education and employment-related activities.

And as Maisha was saying, those activities may look really different. It's more important than ever that we're there for them and that we're innovating for them. And that's the good news, is that we have all of you.

Youth workforce development professionals – I tell people this all the time – all of you guys listening in today are some of the most compassionate, caring, creative, and hardworking people out there. You're working tirelessly for our young people, building relationships and collaborating wherever possible, and innovating in all kinds of ways. And those are the qualities that we need right now, and always, to help our young people thrive.

So thank you, thank you, again for being here today to work through these challenges times together with us and with your colleagues across the country.

So as we said, there was a ton of interest in this webinar. And we know expectations are probably pretty high today for us. So we wanted to be really upfront about this webinar, about what we can deliver on.

And so as you may have guessed – and Maisha alluded to this – DOL has received hundreds of questions related to COVID and we've been working hard to address them. We've already answered many of those questions and we're going to talk through those today. But we really encourage you all to lean on your existing guidance and regulations to WIOA.

For many of the questions we received, the answers already exist in guidance and regulations. There's more flexibility in WIOA than a lot of folks know, so we really encourage you to work with your state and your local workforce development boards and agencies to identify where there may be opportunities to broaden policies as much as possible in order to meet the needs of our young people.

And so all of the questions we've received over the last few weeks are really important to us and we're doing our best to try to get them answered. But of course, that takes time. And the good news is that a lot of questions we've received are similar in nature, so we've been batching those questions and we can address many of them in one response.

Now, if you don't know, we've been posting our questions on WorkforceGPS.org and we will continue to update them on an ongoing basis. So be sure to sign up for alerts so you stay up-to-speed on new content.

Also, we've received a number a questions for today's webinar. And we know many folks that have questions that you were hoping to ask today. But because of the large amount of people on today's webinar, we had to be really strategic about answering as many of the most frequently asked questions as we can today.

But if there are any questions that haven't been answered in today's webinar, you can submit them to youth.services@dol.gov. And we'll talk about that and share that address again. So youth.services@dol.gov. We may not be able to respond directly to each and every one of those questions, but we'll add it to our list of questions that we're working through. And again, we're going to post all of those on WorkforceGPS once those have been cleared.

Two more things I just want to mention that are not on this slide. One is that when you see the slides on the questions and answers, there's going to be a lot of information on there. So caveat here, this is not good PowerPoint design. We recognize that. So we also know that a lot of you guys want to just know the details; you want to see the words. So we kept the questions and the responses as-is so you could see all that information if you wanted to print out your PowerPoint slides.

But we apologize upfront because we know it's hard to read all of that. You don't need to read all of that. We're going to try to summarize the big points. But just so you say – you can have those slides available and the words and the information available to you after this.

The second thing I want to say is that we have a lot of people, again, on this webinar. And towards the end of the session we're going to do some information gathering from you guys. We're going to ask you some questions. We're going to have you type them into the chat feature. And so we recognize that it's also going to be a lot of information coming in all at once. We're not exactly sure how fast we can read these and how much we're going to be able to digest all of that information as it comes in, but we're going to review all of it afterwards and we're going to try to synthesize what we get from you and then share out in some way that makes sense.

So again, just a warning upfront but we're going to see how that goes. But with over 1,000 people on the webinar, I think – and the numbers are growing – we're going to be getting a lot of information from all of you guys. So those are our caveats.

So let's jump into the questions and responses. We'll start with the questions that have already gotten through our clearance process. And we hope many of these will help clarify a lot for folks. So I'll turn it over to Evan for this first set of questions and responses.

EVAN ROSENBERG: Thanks, Sara. I'm actually going to go back one slide – I don't want to distract you with the first question – and I wanted to just add on a little bit to the context of the questions and responses that Sara and I are going to go over today.

So we know you all submitted lots of great questions. Many of those questions are similar to questions we've been getting in earlier. Just to reiterate expectations, the questions and responses that you're going to see and hear from us on today's webinar, they're going to fall into two buckets.

The first set are going to be already cleared official questions and responses that are on WorkforceGPS. And we're going to talk through those and those are based on previously submitted questions. And many of those are similar to a lot of the questions that we got when we asked you to submit questions for this webinar.

And then the second set are going to be additional COVID questions where our responses are going to reiterate existing flexibility and guidance. And those aren't currently posted on WorkforceGPS but it's more a reiteration of existing flexibility and guidance.

So many of you will not see your questions that you originally sent to us. Some of them will be similar to the ones you see today; I just don't want folks to be disappointed when they don't see their very specific question as part of our presentation today.

And then the other thing I just wanted to make sure folks know is that unfortunately we are not able to do a live question-and-answer through the chat or any other mechanism on this webinar. I know in a lot of past webinars we're able to do that; that's not something we're able to do today. But I think between the questions and responses that are posted on WorkforceGPS that we'll talk through, as well as the questions and responses on existing flexibilities, we will be able to get some really useful information to help you navigate this difficult time.

So with that, I'm going to go into the specific questions and responses. We've received lots of questions as it relates to eligibility. Not a surprise. Even in non-COVID times, eligibility is a topic we often receive lots of questions on. And so one of the questions we've gotten is about how staff can determine customer eligibility remotely or virtually for ETA-funded programs, including the WIOA youth program.

And a couple points here. One, eligibility determination is critical and it is not waivable. And we still need to do eligibility determination before we serve an individual, and they do need to be eligible for the WIOA youth program.

However, you do have some creative ways of flexibility in order to determine and document eligibility. And so we wanted to reiterate that for you. For example, staff could – if you're not working with individuals in person, which we know most of you probably are not – you could obtain and save a screenshot of an eligibility document and then you could add that to participant file.

But we wanted to remind you that whatever mechanism you're using, which may not be a mechanism that you've used in the past, you need to continue to do appropriate information security and privacy must be maintained. Grantees are ultimately responsible for ensuring accuracy and validity of documents. And I'll talk a little bit more about the flexibility you have in documentation.

But the bottom line here is youth still need to be eligible, but there are creative and flexible ways to document their eligibility.

The other thing I wanted to say is that – and this'll be a message you hear from Sara, Maisha, and I throughout this presentation – and I think the bottom line for us is that we want to make sure youth continue to receive services. We don't want the current COVID virus to prevent youth from receiving services. And so that's going to be an overarching theme.

And so we'll talk about eligibility determination, assessments, service provision, within that theme of we want to make sure you keep serving youth. And we're here to help you figure out how to meet the requirements of WIOA in order to continue serving youth. That is kind of our overarching comment here is we want you to keep serving youth.

As Sara mentioned, youth are a particularly vulnerable population ordinarily, in terms of the out-of-school youth we serve; and they're even more vulnerable in this current time. And so we want to make sure you continue to serve them and we're here to help you figure out how to navigate the requirements of WIOA so that you can continue to serve them.

So the second question related to eligibility is, "Can grantees use presumptive eligibility based on self-attestation for programs?"

So what "presumptive eligibility" means is that you're presuming the individual is eligible without getting the documentation, meaning that the individual – the potential participant – attests to their eligibility. And there are multiple forms of acceptable source documentation for WIOA eligibility. Source documentation means that document that you get to prove that the individual is eligible. And self-attestation is one of those acceptable source documentations for some of the eligibility criteria.

So where you typically find this information is in our data validation guidance. We're currently working on WIOA data validation guidance for Department of Labor programs. We have joint guidance published for education and labor programs, but it doesn't get into specifics on WIOA youth eligibility. That will be in our DOL-only data validation guidance, which we hope will be published sometime soon. But until that's published, you can rely on past data validation guidance that discusses source documentation.

And self-attestation shouldn't be the first place you look for documentation. It shouldn't be used as a first resort, as you see on this response. But it is acceptable documentation. So for example, if you're working with a young person, they are a homeless youth – they can attest that they're a homeless youth and that self-attestation is an allowable documentation to determine eligibility.

So again, you have some flexibility in how you get documentation for eligibility. Self-attestation is acceptable. Shouldn't be the first resort, but it is acceptable because we know that COVID is impacting programs' ability to collect physical documentation. And so documentation may be accepted verbally as long as it's clearly documented in the case file.

All right. Now, Sara mentioned before you'll see some slides that don't follow a PowerPoint kind of bulleted, short sentences or short statements. And this is probably the most egregious example of far too much information on one slide. But we did think it was important that you can see the official question and response. I'm not going to read every word of this but I will talk about objective assessment and what that means, particularly during a time of COVID-19 outbreak.

So just as a reminder – hopefully you all know – for the WIOA youth program, to be a program participant four things need to happen: eligibility determination, objective assessment, individual service strategy, and receipt of one WIOA youth service. I talked about the first one a moment ago, eligibility determination; and now I'm going to talk about the second one, objective assessment.

WIOA requires objective assessment of all youth. And in WIOA, it talks about an objective assessment for academic level, skill level, service needs of the participant, including basic skills. And so we've gotten a lot of questions on how to complete that academic assessment or how to complete the basic skills assessment. And so this question and response tries to get at that specific part of assessment, that academic or basic skills assessment.

And we acknowledge that there are challenges in conducting an objective assessment during this time. Typically, objective assessments are done in person. It's highly unlikely that you'll be able to do an objective assessment in person right now, so those assessments need to be done virtually. And when they're done virtually, you just need to do the best you can. It may be harder to get documentation from schools and things like that. So again, just do the best you can based on available information.

And then other piece I wanted to remind you about is you have flexibility in how you conduct your objective assessment, as long as you check those boxes of academic level, skill level, basic skills, et cetera. And we've gotten a lot of questions asking about some of the more formal basic skills assessments, like TABE and CASAS and how you can do those virtually. And there are ways to do them virtually and I'll discuss that in a second.

But I did want to remind you that for the objective assessment we don't have requirements of what type of assessment you have to use for that basic skills or academic assessment portion of the assessment.

Now, if you're talking about the measurable skill gain indicators for the educational functioning level gain, then yes, there are specific requirements for a basic skills assessment for that performance measure. And it must meet adult education's National Reporting System. The other place where it is necessary is if you're using basic skills deficiency for eligibility determination, and then you do need to use a formal basic skills assessment.

But outside of those two things, you do have flexibility on the type of assessment you choose to conduct that objective assessment. And so not all youth are going to need the TABE or CASAS or other more formal basic skills assessment. Some very well may, particularly those out-of-school youth who are high school dropouts. And for those youth, we are learning that some of those more formal basic skills assessments are creating ways to conduct virtual assessments.

I just saw something recently for both TABE and CASAS that they are working on or have already created ways of virtual proctoring. So I'd encourage you to look at test – (inaudible) – guidance on websites for TABE, CASAS, and any other formal assessment. TABE locator is available right now to use virtually. So take a look at their websites if you want to find out more information about that.

But again, the bottom line here is we don't want the objective assessment to be a barrier for you to enroll and serve youth. And there are ways to virtually conduct the objective assessment and meet all of the requirements of WIOA as it relates to objective assessment.

All right. So now let's get into service delivery. "Can grantees shift to virtual services, such as eLearning, phone calls, and meetings? Is there flexibility to offer academic courses and training in a distance learning format or platform?"

Short answer to that is yes. ETA programs have flexibility in how they provide program services. And again, this fits into that theme that I talked about earlier and I'll continue to talk about today, is that we want to make sure you continue to serve youth. And so there is flexibility in how you design your services to make sure youth can continue to be served. You can choose the best method of continuing to deliver program services. Security of customer data must be considered, and ease of customer access.

But what we've always talked about for WIOA youth is it's based on the needs of the participant. And nothing has changed during this time of COVID. It's still based on the needs of the participant. And if they need your assistance, you have flexibility to design your program in a manner that meets those youth needs and is probably going to look differently than it looked in the past. And that you're probably going to be providing a lot of services in more of a virtual environment, at least for the time being.

So now we're going to go into our first poll question, which relates to this subject of service delivery during the current time. So Laura, can you put that poll up for us, please? Thanks.

So the poll question is, "By which means are you providing the majority of your services?" And you don't have to select only one. Select all that apply. The options are: in-person with safety guidelines in place, virtual teleconferencing platform, texting, phone calls, and social media. And by no means are these the only options for the way in which you're providing the majority of your services; they are just the options in the poll.

The numbers are coming in fast and furious. I always have fun watching the numbers. Looks like almost everybody is doing phone calls, not surprised by that. And then texting and virtual teleconference platforms are close behind. You'll see that only a little less than 11 percent are providing in-person with safety guidelines in place, not surprised to see that; there's not a lot of in-person anything that is going on in many states around the country right now.

So this kind of matches what I would have expected. And you can see the majority of you are really shifting to providing services in much more of a virtual environment, which is kind of matching what we're expecting. All right.

So with that I am going to turn it over to Sara to walk you through some more of the questions and responses.

MS. HASTINGS: Great. Thanks, Evan. Thank you guys. That's good to see.

And so speaking of technology and virtual service delivery, we did get a lot of questions about whether or not we can use WIOA funds for purchasing technology. And the answer is yes.

There's a lot of words there; I'm going to try to summarize them. But yes, you can use WIOA youth funds for purchasing supplies or equipment to assist in providing program services and training in a virtual setting. So things like laptops and tablets or hot spots are OK to purchase. And those types of things usually fall within the definition of supplies, which do not need grant officer approval. So you just want to make sure that your program has sufficient internal controls and policies in place to account for them.

And of course, you all don't receive infinite sums of WIOA dollars, obviously, so you're going to want to – you're going to have to determine if and when you would purchase those types of technologies to support your programming and be strategic about that.

So the answer is yes. I know that was a question that we got from a lot of people.

So moving on to discuss one of the other big questions we've been getting a lot about, which is work experience. And so I think this was the most frequently asked about topic. What do we do about providing work experiences for youth? What happens when there are fewer jobs available? What about the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement? Like, what if we can't meet that requirement?

So the first question here, that you can see on the slide, gets at what do we do about the youth who are already in a work experience and who are getting paid wages or stipends, but then they had to stop work due to the COVID? So what do we do? Do we keep paying them?

And the answer here is yes. So I'll first say, this is a specific question – specific to subsidized wages or stipends paid by the program to the participant, right? So obviously, we don't have control over payments made to youth by employers. So this is talking specifically about subsidized wages and stipends that the program pays the participants.

And the response here states that you can continue to pay them if academic or work terms were established prior to the pandemic. So for those youth who were engaged in those work experience activities when COVID hit, they can still be paid for the time that they were expected to be in that work experience placement. So if you have youth in your program that are in a work experience now or in the last several weeks who were supposed to be in one, this answer hopefully helps provide some guidance on how to handle that situation.

We also have here a mention of a recently published Training and Employment Notice, which is 22-19. We published that in early April. And it provides some more information on incentives and stipends. So take a look at that for additional language. We did hear that there are still questions on incentives and stipends and we know that that's the case. We just want to make sure people recognize what's in policy.

And also, as Evan was saying, there's also another sort of theme throughout here, which is a lot of this policy is made at the state or local level. So you want to make sure that your policies are in line with your state and local policies.

Incentive and stipend policies are one of those where you want to be working with your states and your local policies and your folks developing those policies, and have clear policies on those because that's sort of what we look to. So it's not an arbitrary we're handing them out – incentives – at this time but not for this time. And this is something that you would want to change or adapt during our current situation here.

OK. So this next question gets at the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement and whether ETA will provide relief on that. So everybody's breathing – please breathe through this.

Yes. We acknowledge that work experience for youth right now, during this time, is likely going to be much harder to provide and we will take that into account when looking at expenditure data during the months that COVID impacted our work. So please know that we acknowledge this was a very tough time and we want to work with you all.

Some of you – I wanted to mention in case you had heard – NAWB, the National Association of Workforce Boards, had a conference call on April 24th, so a week and a half ago or so, where our assistant secretary John Pallisch spoke to a bunch of workforce providers and basically said, you know, when we look back at these months, everything's going to have this big asterisk next to it that says "COVID-19."

So that's going to go for expenditures and performance outcomes. And we're going to talk about performance in just a little bit. So when we look at our data, we're going to understand why it looks different during this time.

I'll say, in the past when we've had states with some local areas that struggled to meet the work experience expenditure requirement, we provided some technical assistance to help them get there. And so now, the thing we need to focus on is how to be creative and innovative when it comes to providing work experiences for youth, especially when unemployment is high. And really be thinking about how we can use technology in new ways to help prepare youth to be successful, whether that's new types of work experiences, thinking about entrepreneurial skills training.

We're just going to need to rethink our programming a bit here and it's going to be a little bit of new territory for some of us. But I know we can get there and we can adapt.

So today's webinar is not going to get into sort of the how to do all of that. That is a conversation that's going to – we're going to need to have moving forward now and in the future. And frankly, without COVID these conversations around the future of workforce have been going on for some time. And many of the types of challenges and changes being discussed may need to happen sooner rather than later.

So we have some learning and some changing to do, and I think we can all do that together and we're going to need to adapt. And now is the opportunity to start doing that.

So the rest of the slide here is – this response reminds you all that beyond sort of wages and stipends, there are many other activities that programs can count towards the work experience expenditure requirement. So this is staff time working to develop – identify and develop work experience opportunities, staff time working with employers trying to figure out what the work experience looks like.

This goes to – this next slide here is just another reminder of our current policy about what work experience activities can be counting; classroom training or the required academic education component directly related to the work experience, incentive payments, employability skills or job readiness training to prepare youth. Right?

So there's a lot of other activities that can be counted beyond wages and stipends. And we wanted to just remind you of that policy there.

So hopefully this kind of helps folks broaden your notions of what's needed to meet the requirement. And in the end, it's about young people being engaged in activities that are going to help them succeed in work and life. And we're going to need to have that conversation and continue to have that conversation to help us get there.

All right. So the next big topic here we've received has been about supportive services. And I think most of you know that existing policy allows for WIOA youth fund to pay for supportive services. States and local areas have flexibility in determining policies for supportive services. And now, because needs have changed likely, those existing policies can be updated to respond – and probably will need to be updated to respond – to the COVID-19 emergency.

And here are some additional examples of supportive services. And it includes things like linkages to community services, assistance with transportation, assistance with housing, educational testing, reasonable accommodation.

And again, here's some more examples of supportive services. The list is what we have been providing over the years for what supportive services can be. Because we've gotten specific questions related to those services, we wanted you to know that it can also include – and it's underlined here – emergency cash assistance, food – and I'm going to talk about that in just a second – internet hot spots, and voice and data service for cell phones.

So we know that local areas – again, this goes the same as I was saying before – we know that you guys don't have endless amounts of WIOA youth program funds. So you'll obviously need to be thoughtful about how and when to provide these resources and really clarify that in your local or program policies so it's consistent across your programming.

All right. And here's another big question that we've gotten. Even prior to COVID we've gotten this question. Can we provide food with WIOA youth funds? Can we purchase food – I'm sorry – can we purchase food with WIOA youth funds?

And the answer is yes. On a limited basis and in certain situations, food at a reasonable cost may be provided to youth participants as a supportive service. And it goes on to say "when it will assist or enable them to participate in program activities, to help the youth reach his or her employment and training goals."

And so the other – the caveat here – and again, with some of the other policies as well – you want to be sure to have a clear policy in place for when and why food may be provided to youth and really articulate that it should be limited to reasonable and necessary purchases. So we encourage you to have this conversation in your local area.

OK. So with that I'm going to turn it back over to Evan to discuss performance accountability, which I know a lot of people have had questions about. So Evan?

MR. ROSENBERG: Thanks, Sara. All right. So I'll share a few of the questions and responses related to performance accountability. These are general questions related to performance accountability. They're not specific to the WIOA youth program, but they apply across all of the WIOA core programs.

Now, probably the most common question and concern we've received in the last six weeks is related to what will this mean if we see a decrease in performance? And what steps can ETA take to account for such a decrease in performance? Will states be penalized for performance issues? This is a very understandable concern out there and I'll talk about the response.

We have a few points to keep in mind as it relates to performance and concerns around what it will mean if and when we see drops in performance due to the impact of COVID and the ability to provide services and so forth.

And the first part of the response is that you'll see it references both Department of Education and Labor. That's because, as hopefully you all know, our WIOA core indicators of performance are across all core programs, which includes WIOA Title I programs, adult, dislocated worker, and youth; as well as Title II's adult education program and Title IV's vocational rehabilitation program, both of which fall under the Department of Education.

And so we work very closely with Education on these performance indicators and the negotiation process. And the guidance we issue related to all of the performance topics is joint guidance, and so our response is also joint, that both Education and Labor do understand the challenges states may face as it relates to performance.

So a couple things to remind you of. Number one, there is a negotiations process. And that process is negotiating expected levels of performance, negotiating targets between states and Department of Labor, between local areas and state; and TEGL 11-19 discusses that negotiations process.

And then one key piece to remind you of is where we are in terms of the implementation of our performance indicators and negotiated targets. We are still not in a program year where we have that official assessment of performance to determine success or failure against negotiated targets. The very first program year, where we're determining that success or failure as it relates to negotiated targets, is program year 2020. Program year 2020 starts July 1, 2020. So we're not even there yet.

We do know that COVID is going to continue to be an issue in July and likely beyond that. So yes, it will impact PY 2020; but we wanted to at least remind you all of that. PY 19 is not a program year in which there will be a determination of success or failures as it relates to negotiated targets. PY 2020 is the first year of that.

Second point is that we have a statistical adjustment model that calculates adjusted levels of performance. And that model takes into account two things: one, characteristics of participants; and two, actual economic conditions. And so obviously that second point, the actual economic conditions, are going to be very relevant in the coming year. We all know that the unemployment rate is increasing and unemployment rates are one of those economic conditions that gets taken into account in the statistical adjustment model. And so that is all part of the process.

And the last point which is important, is that we will continue to closely monitor the effect of COVID-19 outbreak and its impact on services and performance outcomes. We know it is impacting services and it very well may impact performance outcomes. We are aware of it and we are keeping a close eye on that.

Next question relates to the statistical adjustment model I was just referencing, which is, "Does the WIOA statistical adjustment model address unusual situations such as what we're experiencing now with COVID-19?"

The short answer to that is it's too soon to know. The statistical adjustment model is intended to adjust for changes in economic conditions and participant characteristics, like I said on the previous slide. And there are changes in economic conditions that are currently happening because of COVID-19, but it's too soon to estimate the extent to which the model will address that. But that is obviously something that hopefully the model will take into account; we just don't know the extent to which the model will take it into account yet.

So too soon to tell, but we will closely monitor the impact of COVID-19 on performance and service delivery. And we will take all necessary and available action to ensure objectively fair performance assessments. And I think that last phrase is really key and hopefully offers some reassurance to you all that we will take all necessary and available action to ensure objectively fair performance assessments.

Another performance question, "Will ETA consider delaying negotiations as state offices may be closed?"

Currently, we are not anticipating the negotiations process will be delayed. We anticipate it will proceed. You can see there that we anticipate it starting in May of 2020. Right now we're in early May of 2020 and that negotiation process may very well be underway right now, this week, with our regional offices and states. Department of Education has begun their negotiations process with states.

We are aware that some offices are closed and that we will be as flexible as possible in conducting negotiations, including schedule meetings and times that meet states' needs.

And then the last question on performance accountability. The question is, "Local areas use benchmark timeframes and contract payments are tied to benchmark attainment. Can Department of Labor extend these timeframes?"

So what this question is essentially asking about is performance-based contracts. And that is an issue between local areas and service providers. It's not an issue that the Department of Labor gets involved in in terms of extending timeframes or not. But local areas do have flexibility in this area. Local areas that establish performance-based contracts with their subrecipients, with their service providers, they can renegotiate those benchmarks as long as they follow existing state and local policy. So you do have flexibility there.

All right. So those questions that Sara and I discussed, they are all published on WorkforceGPS and we provided you that link earlier in the PowerPoint. Now we're going to talk about a second set of questions – just a few of them – that cover some existing flexibilities and policies that you already have in place. These questions are not posted on WorkforceGPS. These are questions and responses that just reiterate existing flexibility and policies that are in place that you all have, that hopefully will help you serve youth during this time.

So this first question relates to continuity of services. This is the very thing I've been talking about throughout the presentation, which is we want to make sure services continue to youth. And so the question is, "Should we exit youth if we can't provide services in person to youth?"

The very short answer to that – "Should we exit youth if we can't provide services?" – is no. Please don't exit youth just because you can't provide in-person services. And I wanted to cover two key points here.

One is a point we've already covered, which is you have flexibility in how the WIOA youth program can provide activities to participants and you are able to provide virtual services.

Second key point relates to the definition of "exit" in existing performance guidance. Our performance guidance is TEGL 10-16 Change 1 and it defines exit as "when a participant has not received work services for 90 days and has no additional services scheduled." That last phrase is in bold purposefully because that is the key part of the definition. "No additional services scheduled."

What that means is exit only occurs if 90 days of no service happens and no future services are planned. If programs schedule future services, participants will not exit.

So in your management information systems that you use at the local level, there should be a way for you to input future services. Now, lots of states use different management information systems so I can't speak to exactly how it works in your MIS, but there should be a way to input future services. If you're not aware of how to do that, you should ask your IT folks where that is in your system and how to do that. And the ability to input future services should prevent the participant from exiting.

So this isn't to say that you should just, you know, make up theoretical services they may or may not get in the future to prevent exit. But this does mean that, for example, if there's occupational skills training that they can't participate in right now because the training isn't happening due to COVID, or they have a planned work experience but the work experience cannot take place with the employer due to COVID, then you can enter a future occupational skills training service or a future work experience service and that should prevent the participant from exiting.

That is a really key point that I think will help keep youth active in the program and not unintentionally exited.

All right. I'm going to turn it over to Sara for the next question.

MS. HASTINGS: All right. Awesome. Thanks, Evan. So this is around engagement. Another question that we received was around paying for outreach, such as radio and social media ads. And this question is a question we get all the time even prior to COVID.

You may not be getting the regular referrals from partner agencies or other programs like you do normally, so you may need to be doing some different types of outreach and engagement strategies. And the answer is yes, you can pay for those types of outreach costs.

The uniform guidance does address outreach costs and specifically limits certain kinds of advertising. So you might want to look into that. But we do expect you guys to be conducting outreach to engage our vulnerable youth. And that might look a little different now than what we've been used to doing. But you know that WIOA youth funds can be used for that purpose, so we wanted to clarify that.

Also, we got a lot of questions around unemployment benefits and whether youth who are engaged in work experience are eligible for unemployment benefits. And unfortunately, I don't have an easy, straightforward answer for you all. States have a lot of flexibility in how they implement their unemployment insurance program and what types of work qualify for UI. And obviously, work experiences are different, depending on how young people are paid, et cetera. So there's a lot of variability there.

And so we're encouraging you to take a look at your state's unemployment insurance office for more information. And you can find your office at the link here. So I know that that's not a very satisfying answer, just pointing you somewhere else. But it really does vary and you have to kind of look at sort of the employer-employee relationship and what that looks like, and then determine the length of time that they were in the job, et cetera.

So take a look at that link. See if you can find additional information. But what is coming up is – there's a COVID-19 benefits town hall on Thursday this week, so in a couple days, from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. I'm sorry; I should have Eastern Standard Time there. You can register and it's on WorkforceGPS. DOL is hosting that and they're going to talk about COVID-19-related benefits and resources related to unemployment insurance, emergency leave, and health and retirement benefits. So that may be of interest to folks.

So you can sign up, again, at that link. Just go to WorkforceGPS and look for that. You'll learn about major changes included in the CARES Act – the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act – and the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. And so state and local workforce development organizations may be interested in that.

And you would hear from our Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division and some Employee Benefit Security Administration staff and some of our Employment and Training Administration staff as well. So they'll walk through some of that. That may be beneficial for you guys to learn not only for youth but just for your programs and your own staff as well. So that again is May 7th.

All right. So with that I am going to turn it over to Maisha to take us through some good conversations around challenges and successes.

MS. MEMINGER: Thank you so much, Sara and Evan, for that. Those are really insightful and useful questions.

If you – again, I'm seeing some questions on the side. If you have any clarifying questions for us again, we ask you all to use youth.services@dol.gov. Many of you guys know that email address; that's our email address. And so if you have some clarifying questions regarding any of the slides, please send your questions there and we'll get to you in the next couple of days with clarifying questions.

Secondly, yes, this webinar will be recorded and archived on the same page that you registered for this webinar. You will have the PowerPoint slides as well as this audio and this visual dynamic there. So please make sure in the next three to five business days, that's where you can go to watch this again. And we'll have an executive summary which will allow you to know specifically at what timestamp that your different questions or your clarifying questions you need to come back to are going to be. So yes, we will definitely have this available to you all at that time.

So what we want to make sure we do is we want to do an open chat. And we want to hear from you all what's working for our young people in our country. So we just want to ask this open question. How are you continuing to serve our young people and work-related issues in the field?

So at this time, anybody can type. And we see people are typing fiercely right now. We just want to kind of get a feel for what's going on. Is it face-to-face? We talked to you guys earlier through a poll of what's going on.

And we have some questions going on. Chris, please send your question to us via email.

Corey, I see that you're doing Zoom. Hopefully that's working for you.

Sara, do you see anything?

MS. HASTINGS: Yeah. So phone calls. Oh, here we go. Here we go. My – (cross talk, inaudible).

We hear Zoom. We see Zoom, Facebook, WebEx.

MS. MEMINGER: Nearpods. I've never heard of that before but that seems very interesting. OK. I see phone calls. We know that – phone calls were almost the number one answer. WebEx.

MS. HASTINGS: WebEx.

MS. MEMINGER: Yep.

MS. HASTINGS: Virtual job shadow. I know, Maisha, you have been learning a little bit about the virtual –

MS. MEMINGER: Yes.

MS. HASTINGS: – job shadowing.

MS. MEMINGER: I look forward to sharing with you guys what I've learned so far about virtual job shadowing.

OK. Great. So we are hearing some of the similar answers –

MS. HASTINGS: Microsoft Teams.

MS. MEMINGER: Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts, Zoom. People are using phone calls and FaceTime, texting.

So we are still – again, we thank you all for thinking outside the box. And hopefully for some of you guys, this is something you were already doing before COVID, but now it's just kind of revving up and really working for you now that we cannot get together face-to-face.

Virtual hiring events are really big right now. Thank you for sharing that.

So I'm going to actually close this chat down at this time. And you guys can keep typing if you want to, but we do appreciate you sharing that you guys are using Facebook and other online tools to kind of connect and find where your young people are and how they're doing. Thank you so much.

OK. Next question. So we want to talk to you all and actually ask you guys about your challenges. So we want to know – we had talked in the beginning of this webinar about issues that were affecting all of our young people around the country. And we want to go issue by issue of how you're addressing these challenges. We're trying to be solutions-based here. What is working?

And when it comes to housing, how are we addressing the challenges of housing issues for our young people? Are there any new partnerships or resources that we've found?

And Beth, when you say partner agencies, give us an example of what you're doing there, Beth, there with the partner agencies.

Let's see. Lindsey, you're talking about helping to pay for utilities and rent, working with the landlord, being the advocate. Yes.

Sara, you see anything there?

MS. HASTINGS: Yeah. Looks like lots of referrals, rental assistance. Zoom classes on a variety of issues, including mental health. I think that's – you know. County public housing agencies. A lot of referrals, it looks like.

MS. MEMINGER: OK. Catholic Charities. Thank you, Sheila, for that. Working with our nonprofits to partner to get our young people some housing, emergency housing if needed.

Also we have some – Marilyn, you're bringing up domestic violence. We all know that we're working in an area right now in child abuse where young people may need to have referrals to places where they can be safe. Thank you for sharing that.

Sara, anything you see?

MS. HASTINGS: My eyes hurt, Maisha. (Chuckles.) I'm trying to read these so fast. Our homeless youth from the North Texas Job Corps are living at the Samaritan Inn in McKinney, Texas. Thank you, Laura, for sharing that with us. I know that there are communities that are partnering with hotels that are not being used right now to help support the homeless. So that's great.

MS. MEMINGER: Thank you, guys. Thank you so much for that. We're going to have you guys keep typing and we're getting – this first topic is about housing.

So the second topic we want to ask you all about is food insecurity. As we all know, our colleagues at USDA still are serving young people around the country with free food through the school system if they're under the age of 18. But we do know, a lot of the youth that we serve are over the age of 18 and they're not – they don't qualify for those free lunches or free breakfasts or dinners. So how are we helping our young people with food insecurities at this time?

Only if you're in school. Exactly, Tammy. You actually have to be connected to a school.

So we have food pantries, food banks, church organizations. Second Harvest is a huge one across the nation.

Sara, do you see anything?

MS. HASTINGS: Yeah. Food banks. I'm seeing a lot of food banks. Connections to other partner agencies, giving gift cards for food, churches. Yes, churches and neighborhood organizations are really critical during these times.

MS. MEMINGER: Mm-hmm. Department of – DHS, Amy's saying, linking them back to their service providers that may be able to connect them to possibly food stamps, which is important if they're of age. So yes, food pantries, thank you.

And hopefully you guys all have opportunities to have a proper linkage to your local resources that are going out, and referring our young people to those. Grab-and-Go stations; I see Diana (ph) talking about the Grab-and-Go stations there in Delaware. Thank you for sharing that.

And also, the food pantries that are on college campuses. Kaitlyn (ph), I see you sharing that there for emergency usage as well. So thank you.

MS. HASTINGS: Yeah, I see some farmer's markets –

MS. MEMINGER: Yes.

MS. HASTINGS: – donating food, which is really awesome. YMCA International Service.

MS. MEMINGER: And for a reduced price, right, Sara? So you can get a whole box of great fruits and vegetables for reduced prices at this time around the farmers. So that could be really beneficial there.

And I see – Brittany (ph), I see you have a Facebook page that you guys are using to update weekly to share with your young people in your program any of the opportunities.

We have the dairy farmers – Chantay (ph), I see you there – that are connecting – who are not able to sell to restaurants right now. The dairy farmers and the farmers are really doing a great job donating and getting reduced prices for food. So thank you, guys.

OK. Great for the food insecurities.

What are we doing – now, this was a huge challenge before COVID, but we want to know what's going on with the lack of technology and access to the internet. We know the digital divide in our country was rough before COVID. Do we have any solutions out there with – what's going on with the access to internet and the lack of technology that can engage our young people in opportunities for education, employment, and training at this time?

Oh, yes. So we have Chromebooks – providing Chromebooks. AT&T and other services are providing reduced internet service. Hot spots.

Sara, you – this is coming in fast. Sara, you see anything?

MS. HASTINGS: Yes, I do. I see hot spots and tablets. Grant programs for accessing those technologies. Donated computers. School buses outfitted with Wi-Fi; that is awesome. That's super and I love that.

MS. MEMINGER: Innovative. That is. I love it.

I also saw that Rent-A-Center – somebody just put in a Rent-A-Center is allowing people to use tablets and computers at the Rent-A-Center. Who knew? So these are some things I'm learning today. This is great.

MS. HASTINGS: Great partnerships. Great partnerships with the organizations and companies in your communities. That's amazing.

MS. MEMINGER: Yes. And so we have internet –

MS. HASTINGS: Public spaces.

MS. MEMINGER: Yeah, public spaces. So again, local libraries. I mean, I guess if you could sit outside the local library maybe safely – I'm trying to figure out how the local libraries –

MS. HASTINGS: And it says – in the parking lot, it says.

MS. MEMINGER: In the parking lot. Thank you.

MS. HASTINGS: There you go.

MS. MEMINGER: Staying in the parking lot. There's a question there, please – Timothy, please send that question in for us so we can look into that answer for you regarding payment of that or access to those.

So thank you guys so much again. Please, if you have questions coming in, do not forget to send it to youth.services@dol.gov, because we won't be able to answer any live questions here but we want to make sure we get your questions anyway. So that if we can't provide an answer for you, we'll find a resource for you. Thank you so much. Especially if it's clarification questions.

So yes, so access to internet. So let's look at lack of employment opportunities. We know – before COVID, again, like Sara mentioned and Evan mentioned – before COVID, our young people had challenges that were stacked against them in a lot of ways and we worked together in partnerships and together to make sure that we helped them break down those barriers.

And so what we want to know is how are you guys finding employment opportunities? We see people sharing website addresses, Facebook pages.

I had a great conversation with some folks from GetSchool.com; they're having a huge national, virtual job fair. I'll share that again at the end. So virtual job fairs are new for many of us. I understand the military had been doing those for years. And we're learning about these virtual job fairs and how they're working for you. For those who are using the virtual job fairs, how've they been working for you? Can you let me know in the chat?

Sara, do you see anything interesting popping up?

MS. HASTINGS: Yeah, it does. A lot of virtual job fair, local board website with temporary job postings. And creating an employer advisory council, Anthony.

MS. MEMINGER: I like that.

MS. HASTINGS: Thank you for sharing that. I think there's a lot of new conversations to be had right now, trying to rethink how we can provide these employment and work experience opportunities.

MS. MEMINGER: A virtual expungement clinic; thank you, Anita, for sharing that as well. That's exciting. Try to take care of some of that business while we may be home. That's wonderful.

OK. So we have – (inaudible, cross talk).

MS. HASTINGS: Yeah. I was going to say, working from home with employers, job gateway on career linked site. That's great. Virtual recruiters. Direct referral with partner companies. All right. These are really great.

MS. MEMINGER: Yes. Thank you, guys, for sharing that. And I know Yolanda down there in P.G. County, you're working on paid work-based learning opportunities. Thank you for that, Yolanda. We appreciate you. That's P.G. County, Maryland, everybody. So sharing with you guys. Thank you.

So delivery, good jobs. Again, we also have these jobs that are just now jobs. We call them now jobs. These are jobs that young people just need right now. It may be temporary, but they're also benefitting from an employment experience as well. So they may just be delivery jobs at this time and there is no shame in that as well.

So thank you, guys, for that online service opportunities. We know Amazon is hiring online jobs. So yes, keep those coming.

And so our last question we have here – it may not be our last question. The next question, please? So thank you so much. I mean, are there any innovations that you've implemented that are working well right now that we may not have asked you about? That they're surprising wins during these challenging times? Is there something that you guys are doing you're like, my goodness, we had no idea that was going to work? Or, we were so surprised.

Virtual work readiness training. OK, well – (inaudible). Google Classroom, OK. Thank you, Jonathan, for sharing that. Involvement from parents; Carissa, that is amazing. You know, we have a challenge with parents being involved. Wow!

Sara, you see anything?

MS. HASTINGS: Yep. We're doing a conditional and temporary program and the clients are responding wonderfully. DocuSign. Now, I want to mention that and a couple other questions as well.

People have put DocuSign in. Yes, I know. And we appreciate DocuSign now too while we're working from home. We love DocuSign and we know that it is helpful. You want to be safe and secure with people's information and thinking creatively about how we can do that really helps – makes things a little bit more efficient. So that's great. DocuSign and Zoom, I'm seeing a lot of that. So thank you, guys, for sharing that. Glad it's helpful.

MS. MEMINGER: And we talked about – I think somebody brought up transportation. You know, what's one of our major challenges around the country, whether rural or urban? And now that you don't have to necessarily go somewhere but you can actually have your needs met at home or where you are safe, transportation's not that challenging anymore. It may now be technology or internet access, but at least young people can meet their needs at home or in a safe space, right?

Fillable forms, right? Now we have to these online fillable forms. Maybe walking somebody through those forms on the phone or on Zoom to help them fill those out.

Exactly. Strong relationships. I love that, Briana (ph); I appreciate you saying that.

OK. You guys are bringing it all in. These are wonderful wins and we're happy to hear that there's wins out there, right? During this time people are actually learning. And Karen, I appreciate – I just ran a virtual college tour last week and it was great. Letting people see college campuses, what they have to offer virtually, the beautiful campuses.

Folks are really sharing what their skills and talents and their organizations have to offer new workers, as well as new students on these virtual kind of tours and mock interviews. I see you, MK, on virtual mock interviews.

Thank you, guys, so much. Go ahead, Sara.

MS. HASTINGS: Dee Williams, you asked, "Will you share these answers with us?" And yes, what we're trying to do – I mean, there's so much coming in, so much good stuff. We're going to think about how we can try to package this. We don't want to commit to giving you everything in the next few days, but I do think we're going to try to figure out a way to pull all this together and summarize it for you guys because there's such good stuff coming in, so many great innovations that we want to make sure you guys all see that your colleagues are doing out there in the world. So yes, you're welcome. Thank you for asking that.

And I wanted to share that as well before with folks that we're – this is so much good stuff and we are going to continue to have conversations about effective practices now during this time, and generally, because I think things are going to look different after we go through all of this. And so I think we're going to learn a lot.

MS. MEMINGER: And Marcel (ph), thank you for – thank you for that, Sara. And thank you for sharing the virtual honors day for students. We want to honor our students. We know a lot of our young people were graduating from various programs, various – they were re-enrolled back to high school and college and we want to make sure we honor them.

And so thank you for those folks that are still doing virtual graduations. I said to – (inaudible) – can we collaborate on virtual graduation? Send that to us, see who else is doing it. People are doing great opportunities to celebrate our young people and we want to make sure that they're doing that. So thank you, guys, so much.

So finally, one question I wanted to ask you guys – and you guys pretty much know – I'd like to know if there's any technical assistance you still need right now? We went through a lot of questions. A lot of it was dense. A lot of it was you have to kind of think through, maybe have a phone call with your colleagues, share your notes. But is there anything right now you can think about that you may need – you want some TA on that we can work with this together through? So just think about that – I see you guys are typing – as far as TA needs.

And it could be old TA or stuff that you think you should know, new TA, things that you just say I really still don't understand this. Is there something else we can do?

How to use fillable forms. OK. Oh my god, they're going to fast. Getting this info to our state monitors. OK.

Sara, you see anything?

MS. HASTINGS: Effective assessments that can be done virtually. And we do hope to do some work around assessments – objective assessments, some TA around that.

CASAS testing remotely. I'll just say this, as I mentioned before, I think CASAS and TABE are both working on – and I believe TABE right now already has some of those Locator – the TABE Locator test is available now and they're working on the 11 and 12. Or that may be available already now as well. So take a look on their website, TABE and CASAS.

MS. MEMINGER: Bibiana (ph), we have a summary – Bibiana, we have a list of all three TEGLs and the 110 that just came out on our youth WorkforceGPS page. So if you need anything about WIOA TEGLs and TENs, we have the listing of, again, the three TEGLs and one TEN. And Maher, can you share our youth.workforcegps.org site with everybody? Bibiana, that's right there on the main page.

MS. HASTINGS: And we are going to – it will be on the next – there's a slide at the end, Maisha, when you kind of close us out. It'll be on that second-to-last slide as well.

MS. MEMINGER: OK. Great. So we want to keep hearing from the TA side. OK. Keep typing those in.

MS. HASTINGS: We see a bullet-pointed acceptable PII collection measures. And some of those that we'll have to think about, those policies that can be developed at the state and local level to determine how to have kind of consistent practices and safety and security with PII. I think that's important information and we can talk about that.

Examples of incentives with details. I know we do always get questions around incentives. One of the things we try not to do at the federal level is develop policies that become so prescriptive that then you have no room to do anything with.

So sometimes when federal policies are not written word-for-word, that is maybe a good thing. You can develop your policies and try not to make it more restrictive at the state and local level, right? So when federal policy gives a little bit of a broad brush at a topic, that might not be a bad thing. I'll just say that to folks. Sometimes we don't want to restrict things too much.

MS. MEMINGER: We like flexibility. Exactly.

Mary, you talked about virtual job shadowing. One of my goals I was sharing with Sara is to kind of have a how-to on virtual engagement. And I think that you're bringing up a good point and what – how do you do a virtual job fair? Who do you partner with? How do you do virtual job shadowing? How do we do virtual mentoring?

Mentor.org just did a wonderful webinar last week Thursday on transitioning to virtual mentoring. And how does that look and what are the challenges with virtual mentoring? So we really want to kind of dive a little bit more into that. And if you think you have an exciting virtual engagement program, please let us know on youth.services@dol.gov. We really would like to know that because there's folks around the country who may not be able to – don't know where to start. Just don't even know how to.

And a lot of us want to do – and I see you, Candace, agreeing with me. Yeah, so virtual engagement, how do you do it? So we want to make sure that we learn from each other on how to do it, so we want to facilitate that conversation as well, right?

Tennessee, thank you, Keith, for sharing that Tennessee's operating virtual American Job Center. We appreciate that and your innovation there.

So again – and how do you get a group of kids to get involved with helping out the virtual – (inaudible) – Barbara. Hey, the best way to serve young people is to ask young people, right? So again, we want to make sure that we engage our youth. How do we engage our youth and ask them, what do you need and how can you help us?

These young people know more about technology than we can ever imagine. And I'm learning every day so much from my cousins on what's old and what's new and how to do this. So I think that us asking our young people to help us navigate this would be wonderful. How do we do that? That would be great how-to as well.

So what I want to do is keep – yes, go ahead, Sara.

MS. HASTINGS: That's so great. I was just going to echo that. And I saw Larry from Minnesota was saying that, you know, how do we get employers involved in sort of this virtual world?

And back to your point, Maisha – and others on the chat – bring the youth in. They are the experts, right? As Maisha was just saying, let's bring the young people in and have them help us think about technology and new ways, because they are our teachers when it comes to technology in a lot of ways. And we need to lean on them and their expertise in this. And so we can – these are new times and different times. Let's leverage their expertise.

MS. MEMINGER: Exactly, Sara. So you guys keep typing in there. We're going to go to our kind of concluding slides and we want to share some resources with you that we're learning across the country and across the federal government that we want to definitely share with you guys.

So really quickly, just some highlighted – now this is not everything. These are some things that I found – that we found really useful for us. And we want to make sure you guys have these links. And again, this PowerPoint will be available in a couple days. And you also have an attachment of the PowerPoint right here in our learning room under the "download the PowerPoint."

So of course, the U.S. Department of Labor, we have a wonderful COVID page on our WorkforceGPS site. It's on the main page. There you have a listing of different federal agencies that are providing COVID pages as well. And on the left-hand side you will see a listing of different topic areas that are specifically Department of Labor issues, such as UI – unemployment insurance – adult, dislocated worker, senior citizens, and youth.

In fact, our team has been updating our youth handout often, so we should be having a new update of that soon. But we want to let you guys know that there is a wonderful COVID page there for your usage.

Also, we want to make sure that you all – and I'm sure you guys are all a part of our youth WorkforceGPS community. This is what we're doing every day. We're sharing events and webinars from other organizations. We're sharing tools from other organizations on there. Every day I'm uploading stuff. If you have something you think that I should be sharing, what I normally do is we review it, make sure it's not proprietary, that it's from a .org or a government agency and like this is amazing. And we share it.

We have over 8,000 members and we have almost – I think 80,000 people are on newsletter, I think. So we can share that on a nationwide; we want to make sure that we do that.

We also have our colleagues over at USDA, Department of Agriculture. They have a rural COVID resource guide. So if you're in the rural communities, they have some wonderful opportunities, talking about internet access and how to deal with working in a rural community. And they also – don't forget, they feed our young people if you're in school. So again, look at those resources and how to access for food there for young people and for families.

HHS, our colleagues at the Health and Human Services, they have a COVID page there as well. And we want to make sure that we talk about trauma, substance abuse, and mental health wellness.

So we want to make sure we highlight our colleagues at SAMHSA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. They have some wonderful resources there on talking about engagement with mental health needs and how to do – they talk about how to use telehealth for case management. And those are some wonderful resources as well.

Our colleagues here that are part of the Interagency Council on Homelessness. We are – as the U.S. Department of Labor, we are a partner in the Interagency Council on Homelessness, and they have resources about young people, adults, senior citizens, families who are suffering from homelessness, how different cities are doing different strategic planning and implementation to serve families during COVID-19.

We also have our WINTAC. These are our colleagues from Department of Education. They're talking here about vocational rehabilitation and serving persons with disabilities and other needs remotely during COVID-19. So make sure you check that out if you need that.

We also – we have a lot. So our colleagues at the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, we are one of 23 federal agencies that sits on this Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs. It is an amazing wealth of resource on their youth.gov site. Make sure you check out that site and they have a COVID page where they talk about mental health for young people, as well as resources.

Out of that Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, there is a website called Youth Engaged 4 Change. This website is specifically geared towards young people. It has more of a youth voice. It has young writers that actually write for this page and upload content. And there's a COVID page that's written by young people – young leaders throughout the nation – of how they're dealing with COVID in different areas. Also how to use – they have a resource on there, how to use your stimulus check. What should you do with your stimulus check? So on and so forth.

We just uploaded these two this last week. Our colleagues at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation – FDIC – have a wonderful resource regarding if you don't have a bank account, what can you do with your stimulus check, right? So they also talk about scams that are going done on persons getting their stimulus check and how they can prevent themselves from being victims of that.

And we have our colleagues at the Consumer Protection Bureau again talking about those issues of protecting your identity, protecting yourself during this time of COVID.

Non-federal organizations that we have partnered with and work with and we respect their think tank and their ability to share information. Our colleagues at the National Youth Employment Coalition doing an amazing job collecting resources around the country regarding COVID.

Jobs for the Future – JFF – is doing a great job with talking about responsibility. And they have podcasts, as well as different topics around various issues. But they have some youth-related podcasts as well.

Our colleagues at the Community College Resource Center talking about how to support college counselors during this time. And you may not be a college counselor, but if you're working with a young person you may want to know what those tools are that they're using virtually to connect students, young people, to services. So they have some really great collection of resources there that are really worthwhile checking into.

Also our friends at MENTOR, they had that webinar last week I absolutely loved about transporting or changing your face-to-face mentoring into virtual mentoring. What does that look like? Who's doing it? How is it working? MENTOR is doing a great a job with sharing that with us.

And also, NAWB, which is our National Association of Workforce Boards. These are our colleagues that help to make sure that all our workforce boards are communicating, sharing resources. And we want to make sure that you guys know what's happening around the country with the workforce boards. So please check out their COVID page as well.

We want to make sure – again, we emphasize that if you have any outstanding questions – we did not answer any questions from the chat. Please send your questions in to youth.services@dol.gov. We will be again logging those and trying to do any clarifying questions, if we can, as soon as possible.

We also want to make sure that you guys are all a part of our workforce community. There of course is WorkforceGPS, which is the main site, has that COVID page on there. And then you have the youth.workforcegps.org site, which we have again everything youth. You need to be on there and be a part of that community.

And make sure – when you go on there, I want to make sure you do a second step is we have our YRC – our Youth Resource Connection. It's our monthly newsletter that we email out to everybody who's a part of that community. And that's another wonderful resource that we share a lot of additional resources on. So please make sure that you join our community, get our newsletter, and make sure that that is a part of your daily intake of more information.

Again, this information is here. I just want to say thank you all for joining us. This has been a really, really wealthful (sic) and amazing time to learn from you all. Think about youth voice. Think about youth engagement. Think about partnerships.

And Sara, do you have any closing remarks for our colleagues?

MS. HASTINGS: I do, yes. Thank you, Maisha. And wow, that was a lot of resources. You went through them very quickly and they are great. So thanks for sharing all of those.

And thank you, everybody, for all of your input and sharing around your challenges; but more importantly, the solutions that you've been developing to support the young people during this time and always. I think youth workforce development professionals are the best, as I said before, caring, just awesome, innovative, and great bunch of people. But we loved being here to support you however we can. You guys are out there doing the important work.

So thank you so much for joining today, for sharing with us. We look forward to trying to work through some of the questions. Again, if we can't answer them directly to you, be sure to check out the WorkforceGPS COVID page where we're providing all of the answers. But we are here for you and we want to continue to work. And I know now a lot of the focus is going to be on sort of what comes next. What does the innovation look like?

So again, thank you all. Please stay safe. Thank you again for your work with our young people across the country. And we will talk to you all very soon. Thanks so much.

(END)