

WorkforceGPS

Transcript of Webcast

Apprenticeship State Expansion Grantees

Quality Narrative Reporting Requirements

*Transcript by
Noble Transcription Services
Menifee, CA*

Andrea Hill: Thank you for joining us. Please be aware that information contained in the interim reporting handbook is applicable and a reporting guidance will continue to evolve over the course of the grant period of performance. This webinar was recorded in part prior to the new guidance contained in the grant officer letter of July 13, 2020, but edits have been made to include that information.

Please be sure to refer to the totality of reporting materials through this webinar. They are located at the community of practice at ASE.WorkforceGPS.org.

Marcia Hampton: Welcome to today's webcast for the apprenticeship state expansion grants quarterly narrative reporting webcast. Welcome to today's webcast for the apprenticeship state expansion grant's quarterly narrative reporting webcast. Thanks for joining us.

Andrea Hill: Today, we are going to first review the ASE reporting narrative requirements and expectations. We're going to discuss strategies and approaches for successfully meeting these requirements and expectations, and then we're going to make this webcast available for you to review at your convenience.

If you have any questions that are not answered by the webcast, please email your FPO with a copy to the ASE grantee inbox at apprenticeship.grants@dol.gov.

Let's take a minute to discuss the value of reporting. First, accurate reporting shows our stakeholders, our partners, and our funders who a grant is performing. We are required to report on our outcomes of the performance measures originally established. Accountability and transparency are key to successful grants management.

Reporting also helps us accurately illustrate the return on investment by continually giving us feedback on how many participants are being enrolled. From reporting, we can tell how many -- how much money has been invested in other programs that's directly benefiting our apprentices. It highlights strategic partnerships where grantees have been successful at acquiring funding or resources that they may not otherwise have had access to.

It also creates sustainability of the project and the partnership. And reporting gives us quantifiable and qualitative feedback that can be factored into continuous improvement both for the short-term and also for long-term future investments.

Finally, reporting success -- of high profile programs to Congress, administration, OMB, JAO, etc. is an important part of the national office. So we need this data to make sure that we're accurately showing how the program performs.

Reporting requirements. Each grantee is required to submit a quarterly performance report, along with a narrative report, and the ETA9130 financial report. This webcast will talk about the narrative report, the QNR, and the annual report. We will do another webcast about the interim QPR.

The financial report training is available on Workforce GPS by searching for Smart 3.0 training.

Marcia Hampton: Each grantee must submit an annual progress report. These ASE annual progress reports must be submitted no later than 30 days after the anniversary of the grant award, or by the end of July of each program year. Grantees must provide a report to ETA, including analysis on the industry sectors and occupations participating in registered apprenticeship, progress in grant goals, and update their timeline and work plan to include new or changed key goals and milestones for the coming year.

The annual report can address all apprenticeship activity in this state rather than just be restricted to just this grant and include the interrelationship of -- and wider impact of all grants. It's in a format of your choice, but it needs to not exceed 45 pages.

Andrea Hill: Let's take a closer look at the narrative reporting requirements. The grant agreement requirements all ASE recipients to submit quarterly narrative reports through the life of the grant. The quarterly narrative report, better known as the QNR, is a written report that reflects grant program activities and complements the quantitative data that's reported on the quarterly performance report, or the QPR.

The QNR includes narrative performance information to explain items in the QPR to report other grant information that's not reflected on the QPR and identify any technical assistance needs. It also shows program highlights and success stories.

Marcia Hampton: So first thing's first. We want to be able to get to the reporting templates before you can fill them out and submit them. First, we want you to register for the content updates on GPS by joining WorkforceGPS at ASE.WorkforceGPS.org. Add the website, then you'll also find that there's quarterly reporting references that are available at the link on the screen.

Download the most recent copy of the reporting guidance handbook to your hard drive.

Andrea Hill: Once you've downloaded the handbook to your hard drive, open it from the hard drive using a portable document reader, such as Adobe Reader, to see the embedded templates, which have the arrows pointing to them here on the slide. If the handbook opens in your browser, you will not be able to see the templates.

Please read the handbook thoroughly and understand it, sending any questions to your FPO. Reporting handbook will be updated periodically throughout the period of performance.

Right-click on the chosen reporting template and click save attachment. Then name the template using the first seven digits of the grant number and the end date of the reporting period as outlined in the handbook. Naming of your file is very important. It distinguishes you from other grantees, allows for quick determination of the period you're reporting on, and it simplifies accurate filing for both you and the government.

Marcia Hampton: Looking more deeply at the narrative report, this is standardized across several ETA discretionary grant programs. We've provided it to you in a form format so that text

can only be added in certain places. Although there's rich text formatting allowed in the answer cells, please maintain a purple color which allows you and us to easily differentiate between your responses from the questions.

Again, naming of your file is very important and the naming convention is here on the slide. For the ASE grants, the narrative report will be submitted via email to both your FPO and the apprenticeship grant's mailbox throughout the entire period of performance.

Andrea Hill: To start filling out the QNR, start at the top with the dates. There are two drop-down boxes pointed to here with the arrow. One is the quarter end date and one is the submission date. Be sure to pay attention to what dates you're putting as it's very easy to mix them up. The quarter end date should be the end of the reporting period that you're reporting on and the submission is the date that you will actually submit the report.

Next is contact information. Starting at the top, you'll enter parts of your grant number. The rest of it is filled out as it's standardized across the program. The grant recipient name is the name of the organization that received the grant. Grant project name is if you have a separate name for the project. Please don't leave any fields blank. So if you don't have a separate name for your project that you refer to it as, then please just enter the recipient name again.

Moving down point of contact information should be the individual who can best answer questions pertaining to the grant's activity and the person who's submitting the report. The phone number and email should be contact directed to them rather than a general mailbox.

Marcia Hampton: Section two, summary of grant progress. Item A is where you provide an executive summary of your grant progress during this quarter. Here you will tell us the steps you've taken in the quarter to bring you closer to your goal as stated in your SOW. Include all services supported by the grant, key activities completed, performance improvement effort, and additional activities performed.

Have you forged any key partnerships? Are you achieving your projected goals? How? And if now, what steps are you taking to get on track to bring your goals in alignment with your projections?

Here's an opportunity for you to tell us what isn't working. You may have made a lot of efforts to do something, but you're just not getting the results. We can read this and see if we can identify any technical assistance needs to help you. Also include activities of your subgrantee activities. And item B is a wild space to share additional information about the data provided in your QPR.

Section two, summary of grant progress continued. In item C, please tell us whether you've provided supportive services. If so, what type? How did you deliver these services? What benefit was it to the participant? Please include as much information as you can to let us know what's gone on this quarter in this area.

Section, summary of grant progress continued. Item D. Item D is a space to indicate where there were no changes from the previous quarter and the reasons there weren't any changes to report.

Throughout your report, indicate if there's nothing to report and give any reasons for lack of change. Sometimes there will be occasions when there is nothing to report and it's okay to say that. Just make sure that you document it.

Andrea Hill: Moving on to section three. This section is where you'll update the Department of Labor on your progress against the work plan and timeline included in your statement of work. Provide updates on your program activities, key deliverables, products available, and partner activities during this quarter and updates to future quarters for broad dissemination.

Report the status of the majority activities in your timeline as stated in your statement of work and be sure to include the dates and completion status. It's important that you're working against your timeline work plan and be updating that each quarter along with your reporting, noting the actual dates of completion.

We're interested on the status of project goals, benchmarks, milestones, and special events, but please note that you don't have to formally submit an updated timeline with every quarterly report. That only has to be done with the annual report.

For items E and F in section three, include any challenges or concerns your project has encountered that may have effected or slowed grant progress, and how the project intends to resolve them. You'll also need to describe the next steps or key areas, an emphasis plan for the project in the next quarter. Include capacity building activities here and also the development of deliverables.

Section four is where you'll reflect on how well your approaches and strategies are working to achieve your identified ASE grant goals. We want to hear how your program model is working. Have you achieved any of the goals described in your work plan so far? Are things working out as anticipated? Have you developed strategies that are promising? Please provide detailed information.

Item B is inquiring about lessons learned. Describe here what's been done to incorporate those lessons into your work plan.

Use item C, then, to indicate if there's nothing to report by placing an N/A in the text field. It's important that we know that an item wasn't inadvertently skipped.

Next is section five. Indicate in item A whether you're leveraging funds and/or resources. Let us know about your partners, too. Tell us who they are and what type of resources are being leveraged from their end. Give us details and indicate those resources may be used towards sustainability of your program.

Report in item B any updates to leverage resources previously provided and detailed information in the totals for both. Use item C to report additional leverage resources not previously identified. It's important to remember, leverage resources must be reported on the ETA9130.

In section six, you'll describe key partnership activities. Don't list every partner meeting. Instead, describe the results and outcomes from these interactions and their impact on the project. Completing this section of the report allows you to reflect critically on your partnerships and it contributes to broader discussions among grantees on partnership development and management.

In this section, you might discuss how partners have been engaged during the current phase of the project. Outline specific roles and contributions of each partner during this quarter. You might also identify any challenges encountered and resolved in the development and management of the partnership. And report any new partners that may have been brought into the project or identify any previous partners that might've left the project.

Again, just a reminder that throughout the entire report, please indicate if there's nothing to report and also give the reasoning for the lack of change.

Use section seven to tell us about employer engagement activities specific to this ASE grant. Tell us what other outreach you've done to get businesses on board and detail the outcome of those activities. And also tell us how you're gathering feedback from employers and using that feedback to strengthen your apprenticeship expansion efforts.

Moving on to section eight, use this section to reflect on challenges you've encountered and your resulting technical assistance needs. First, tell us about your challenges in item A. Describe what's been done or what you plan to do to address those challenges and provide updates on challenges identified in previous quarters.

In item B, indicate any questions that you have for ETA or technical assistance needs that you have. In item C, indicate if there's nothing to report.

Section nine is where you'll provide more detail about promising approaches, new processes that you've developed, and also lessons learned. If there's anything else that happened in the quarter that you haven't had a chance to discuss yet in the report, now is your chance. Describe in detail promising approaches, innovative processes, lessons learned, and grant and participant level success stories in this section each quarter.

You can also share a separate document file for this purpose, if that's easier. If you have such stories, please share them. Highlight one or two grant related or participant level success stories from the grant per quarter. Only with the participant's expressed permission, of course.

In documenting success stories, please describe the background problem, issue, or concern prior to project involvement. And then, describe the response or intervention provided by the project and -- which results in the success supported by the project.

For those success story results and outcomes, please include who benefited and what changed or improved and also evidence of the success, including how the data was obtained and the methods used to measure that success.

Marcia Hampton: Section 10, evidence and evaluation. In section, it's intended to provide information to the Department of Labor on how evidence and evaluations are being developed and applied. This information may help the Department of Labor to plan for future evaluation needs. So remembering the importance of evidence-based data in program improvement, describe whether you are using or have used data evidence or evaluation findings to cultivate improvement in your program.

In item B, you'll provide an update on an evaluation activity as required as part of your ASE grant. These have not started yet, so we do not expect to see anything here.

Section 10, evidence and evaluation continued. In item C, describe evaluations or studies that you're involved in that are not grant required. In item D, explain any administrative data sources used or you would like to consider that would lend insight into the grant program or the populations being served.

Andrea Hill: Section 11, additional information. This final section captures anything else that was not captured previously in the QNR or is indicated in the grant officer letter the 13th of July 2020, even some registered apprentices who are not reported in QPR.

Section A. Please report anything else as indicated in this section that was not included earlier in the quarterly narrative report. For example, specific outcomes included in your statement of work that are not included in the quarterly performance report, such as the number of programs or business engagement activities.

In section B, we ask you to report on any specific outcomes in this section that are not reflective of outcomes in the QPR itself. Again, referring back to the grant officer letter, this will be where you would report those who are enrolled in a registered apprenticeship program developed with grant funds who are not participants as indicated in the grant officer letter. And therefore, not be able to be reported in WIPS.

You'd report the same way as you do in the interim report, the same number for the total current quarter in the same way. And then, adding over the quarters the number to achieve the cumulative total of those other individuals impacted by the grant.

These other individuals cannot be duplicative of persons who are included in the QPR. They are only for those people for whom the, "umbrella method of eligibility" is applicable.

If you have any questions about the above, please don't hesitate to reach out to your FPO or send an email to the apprenticeship.grants@dol.gov mailbox. Again, this interim report methodology will be utilized until full WIPS implementation. After WIPS implementation, which we anticipate taking place the first quarter fiscal year 2021. So that would be the report due on February 14, 2021. The QPR will be data uploaded into WIP. However, this QNR that we've just gone over will continue to be the method that you'll report your narrative reports through the end of February.

And again, throughout the webcast, you've seen these reminders. We ask that you not leave any of the sections blank. If you don't have anything to report, please indicate that.

Marcia Hampton: Let's quickly recap today's event and additional information pertaining to your QNR. Quality quarterly narrative reports help the Department of Labor understand the important that you are doing and support your efforts. They are part of good stewardship of federal funds.

We've gone through step by step the process on how to complete this report. Reports should be submitted to your FPO and to apprenticeship.grants@dol.gov. The template for the QNR may be found on Workforce GPS at the link given on the screen. In addition, you will find a companion webcast of the QPR on that site.

If you have any questions about how to complete your QNR, please direct them to your FPO. Additional reporting resources are available on the ASE community at ASE.WorkforceGPS.org or at the specific link given on the screen.

Andrea Hill: Thanks so much for joining us today for this webcast. And just a reminder, if you haven't done so already to please join the WorkforceGPS community. You can now send a customized email alert feature from the community at the first link on this slide.

There is an email alert that you can be notified around specific areas of interest beyond just the ASE grant, types of content and the community at large. You'll also have the ability to set your notification frequency to daily, weekly, or monthly. The second link is to a short two-minute video that will walk you through how to create a custom email alert and its features.

We hope you use this new feature to stay connected and to get the most timely updates from your ASE WorkforceGPS community.

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