

Performance Progress Reporting

Glenna Davis: Hello, everyone, and welcome to Performance Progress Reporting. It is now my pleasure to turn the floor over to Tala Hooban. Tala, the floor is yours.

Tala Hooban: Thank you, and welcome, everyone. I'm trying to see if I can give people a second to trickle in. I see the numbers keep going up. Again, welcome to the Performance Progress Reporting webinar. I want to just thank you all for joining, and I appreciate the time you're setting aside for talking to our team about this. You are doing such important work for our Head Start families and kids, and we just want to make sure that the burden ... We hear you. We know that there's a burden both in a community, personally and in these programs, so thank you again. All right.

As you know, Head Start grant recipients were issued funds under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations, the CRRSA Act, to aid in continued response to COVID. Funds were also issued through the ARP – the American Rescue Plan Act – to support programs in returning to in-person services and other activities. Today's webinar, we will discuss the reporting requirements associated with CRRSA and ARP funding. Thank you again on behalf of children and families for your dedication to the Head Start mission of providing high quality services in safe and healthy settings to prepare children for school and for life. I really appreciate it again. I'm sorry, Gretchen. I didn't stall long enough because the numbers keep going up. I am punting it to Gretchen next. Thank you again.

Gretchen Jurgens: Thanks, Tala. With us for today's webinar are Tala Hooban, our acting deputy director, who you just heard from. Also joining us is Heather Wanderski, director of program operations division; Lizette Lopez, supervisory program specialist; and my name is Gretchen Jurgens. During today's webinar on Performance Progress Reporting, we will review the purpose of the reporting requirements, celebrate first-year successes, and share some examples of how funding has been used in the field. We'll share the CARES Act, CRRSA, and ARP funding from a national perspective, examine the reporting requirements in-depth, including points to consider when completing the appendix B, and finally, visit some questions from the field. To get us started today, I'm going to turn things over to Heather Wanderski. Heather?

Heather Wanderski: Thank you, Gretchen, and thank you, Tala, for getting us kicked off today. I wanted to share with folks a little bit more about the purpose of today's webinar. What we're trying to do is raise up the requirement of the Performance Progress Report as is outlined in the notice of award that was issued for your separate COVID grants in 2021. Specifically, you may recall that the Office of Head Start, as Tala was mentioning, created separate grant awards for grant recipients that were initially awarded for the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act funds or, as I think Gretchen and Tala both mentioned, the CRRSA, and we awarded those funds in April of 2021. Those grants have the HE, HA, and HN letters and their actual grant numbers.

We then turned around and supplemented those awards at the end of May of 2021 with the American Rescue Plan Act funds. And in the terms and conditions of those awards, there was specific language around the Performance Progress Report. What we had said very specifically

was that the award is subject to the Performance Progress Reporting as indicated in 45 CFR part 75.342, and that additional information will be forthcoming as to the reporting requirements and the frequency. Now, today's webinar is now to provide that additional information that you need to complete the Performance Progress Report in order to comply with the terms and conditions of your grant.

But before we want to jump in and talk about all those reporting requirements though, I want to take a minute to just reflect on all the successes that we've seen in the last year with the Office of Head Start and in our programs. We just finished up our 1-year anniversary for awarding the CRRSA funds and are just about closing in on the 1-year anniversary for awarding our ARP funds. And interestingly, at the top of this slide, there's a very interesting fact that I want to make sure folks see. It says, as of March of 2022, 81% of our CARES Act money was disbursed. An additional 45% of the CRRSA funds and 20% of our ARP money has been disbursed, and that amounts to a staggering \$900 million in total COVID funds that our programs have had access to and have used. That is a ... And we're very close to hitting the \$1 billion mark. That is wonderful. We've also seen, I think, tremendous growth in the number of programs that are providing in-person services.

In December of 2020, only 38% of reported enrolled children were receiving in-person services. Compare that to the February of 2022, in the thick of the Omicron, our programs were reported 91% of enrolled children were receiving full in-person services. Clearly making some significant progress and headway into the level of services that we're providing in all levels. I also want to say, and you'll see here on the screen, and we have a page on our ECLKC website – our Early Learning and Knowledge Center website – we have a whole page dedicated to highlighting the successes that we've seen with all the COVID funds that were awarded. And I actually want to take a minute to highlight two of the programs on our website.

In Salinas, California, the Monterey County Office of Education Early Learning Program created safe space for staff and families. Specifically, using their COVID funds, they were able to create a wellness committee to help develop a strategic plan to support them in generating a culture of wellness, positive morale, and respect for staff. The wellness committee comprised of different levels and positions within the program, and they did things like host staff recognition events, special projects, professional development opportunities, and incorporated standing items in their ongoing – to address wellness in their ongoing staff meetings. Those events consisted of self-care strategies like such as paint and relaxation workshops. It hit on wellness activities such as spirit day, food experience days. They developed a new policy to reserve funds for staff wellness, and then they also incorporated other fund resources, thinking about wellness "Jeopardy!" game and bingo. That's my favorite. I love bingo. I had to highlight that one there. But I think the important part is the staff had the opportunity to really engage in and be part of trying to help address a bigger challenge and that they had opportunities, and they made funding available to help support those different types of activities to help really build up that culture and the morale within their program.

Also in California, in the Baldwin Park Unified School District Early Education Program, they used their funds to help improve children's health outcomes. Specifically with their American Rescue Plan funding, they were able to bring on additional medical help – medical health

professional consultants. Thinking about the registered nurses, registered dietitians, and they also brought on a nurse practitioner consultant in order to provide children with telehealth well-child exams. They also were able to support nutrition screenings, growth assessments, and a whole litany of other medical services. And with the support of their family service workers, the health team was able to schedule telehealth well-child exams. The exams were performed in accordance with the periodicity schedule for students that were otherwise unable to get a medical exam at the time. And the well-child exam consisted of a review of health history. It included head-to-toe visual exams. It included risk assessment for anemia, lead poisoning, and tuberculosis. And if there was something identified that required further testing or a more comprehensive exam, they were able to send a referral to the child's primary care physician for follow-up.

And interestingly, as a result of their efforts, they ended up being able to screen 216 students through the telehealth well exam process. As part of those outcomes, it not only improved the interest rate medical services for children, but they also saw a significant increase in the number of children based on their PPR data. For physical exams, that increased by 24% in Head Start, and it increased by 23% for their Early Head Start program. As you can see, we have got a lot to celebrate as we are starting to venture into our 1-year anniversary and all the great work that you all have been doing with these COVID funds. I just ... I needed to take a minute to be able to share those successes. Thank you.

Where are we now as we hit our 1-year anniversary? I just want to share with you guys a little bit more about what's happening with the funds. Since the start of the pandemic, our Head Start program has received a combination of about \$2 billion in COVID funding. The initial \$750 million was awarded through the CARES Act in the spring of 2020. The second \$250 million was appropriated through our Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, CRRSA, in December of 2020, and then we awarded that through separate grants in April of 2021. And then finally, an additional \$1 billion was appropriated by Congress through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and was ultimately awarded to our programs in May of 2021. I want to share with you what our progress for using those funds that were awarded by Congress.

I'm going to start with CARES Act funding that you see here. The Office of Head Start awarded almost 750 million directly to our grant recipients. And as of right now, of the funds awarded, just under 19% remains available to draw. To share a little bit more context, we know that 96% of grant recipients have drawn down at least some of their CARES Act funding, and of those, 57% have spent it all. Congratulations to those of you guys who are on your way. There's only a very small portion – it's about 4% of awards that were made – where there's been no drawdown at all. And we are working specifically with those organizations to identify what's happening in those specific instances to try to encourage and support them as best as we can in using their funds.

The next pot of COVID money that we're tracking is that CRRSA fund. We awarded \$250 million directly to grant recipients, and as of right now, of our funds that we awarded, nearly 48% of funds have been drawn from the payment management system. Again, to just provide a little bit of additional context, 24% of recipients have not drawn down any of the CRRSA funds, but

we are making progress because that's compared to – that number was still at 57 % in the fall. We are definitely seeing some progress in our recipients and using and tapping into their COVID funds.

And then the last set of COVID funds that we awarded was the American Rescue Plan or the ARP money. We awarded nearly \$1 billion directly to grant recipients, and our current data shows that approximately 22% nationally has been drawn from the payment management system. We know that of those awards, less than 1/3 of recipients have not drawn down any ARP funds at all, while we know an active 73% are working on spending. And just so folks are aware, 2% of our recipients have actually completed spending all of their ARP money. We're slowly working on seeing that progress. And this data is not surprising, but certainly we want to make sure that programs are aware of the spending and making sure that folks know that there's a lot of eyes on this data, and we are watching this certainly, and that if you have any issues or concerns with drawing down your funds, certainly you're going to want to make sure that you reach out to your regional grant specialist.

In thinking about the rate of draws that we're seeing with both the CRRSA and the ARP funds, we would be remiss if we didn't take the opportunity to talk about ways that you can use your funds. I think we are hearing at the Office of Head Start loud and clear that our programs are experiencing workforce challenges. While there are limitations with using COVID funds because they're one-time in nature to support workforce activities, you could consider providing incentives to support the retention and return of staff to the workplace. Think of things like hiring bonuses, staff incentives, retention bonuses, child care stipends to support their needs. All those things come to mind. I think it's just we need to make sure that we remind you that you should be careful in any communication with staff to explain that any incentives with one-time sources are not permanent. I think when it comes to staff wellness and mental health, those also, to me, rise to the top of importance. I think specifically as staff are returning to full in-person services, their well-being and the supports that you put in place for them are really paramount. And I think that this is a great opportunity to really enhance supports and invest in your staff just like the program in California that I highlighted earlier.

As you know, enrollment and recruitment obviously are ongoing. Programs can use funds to support services, materials, and technology to ramp up recruitment and enrollment efforts in their communities. Thinking of in terms of family support, programs can partner with families in addressing economic security in the realms of employment, education and career goals, invest in the development of partnerships with local community colleges, apprenticeship programs, and local employers to help families find meaningful employment and career tracks. You may also consider assessing families' nutritional health and wellness needs more frequently, which of course then makes me think about, again, our friends in Baldwin Park, California, because that's exactly what they were doing. You could use funds to ensure materials and resources are available in languages that families understand, or you could think about employing additional family service workers and mental health consultants to assist families with adverse circumstances.

Other areas you may want to think about or consider include cleaning supplies and services for adding that layer of disinfection and sanitation, personal protective equipment, thinking about

face shields, masks, smocks, or just including in your rotation additional toys or other things that need to be sanitized so that you can rotate in different toys and things in classrooms while you take some out for sanitation process. Also, additional classroom space or enhanced outdoor space to allow for social distancing. I think ... I always hear our health specialist, Marco Beltran, always talk about thinking about installation of new HVAC systems or other improvements, certainly want to consider those. And then also any supports for increased costs for transportation, which of course is a necessity to ensure our children get the services that they need.

That really wraps up with where I wanted to spend some time just diving into the where we are now. I want to now turn things over to Lizette, who's planning to go into more details regarding the reporting requirements for our Performance Progress Reports. Lizette, I'm passing to you.

Lizette Lopez: Hello, everyone. During fiscal year 2021, each recipient received an award separate from their operational child serving awards. These awards are identifiable by the awards numbers, which includes either a program code HE for regions one through 10, HA for the American Indian Alaska Nation programs, or HN for the migrant programs. All funds distributed as a result of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations, CRRSA, and American Rescue Plan Acts were issued under these awards. Although CARES Act funds were preliminary used – issued as supplements under operational awards with its own distinct financial account, a few awards were issued under the HE, HA, and HN awards. If a recipient received CARES funds on these awards, it must include CARES activity in all applicable reports. Following the terms and conditions of the awards, recipients are required to submit on a scheduled basis a federal financial report, FFR, SF-425, a tangible property report, real property reports, SF-429, only if any of the funding is used for activities required in this report, as the real property report recipients are accustomed to, the SF-429A, is waived under these awards. And finally, a Performance Progress Report, which is what we are here to discuss today.

Over the next few minutes, this is the report that we will be discussing. All recipients will be required to submit two PPRs for these awards, which will be due 90 days following the reporting period. The first report will be due 90 days following the first reporting period, which is one calendar year from the start of the award. For example, over 90% of the awards issued have a project period of 4/1/2021 through 3/31/2023. For these awards, the first report will cover the period of 4/1/2021 through 3/31/2022, which is the first year of services, and 90 days after this period is June 29, 2022, the due date of when the first report will be submitted. The second report due June 29, 2023, a year after, will cover the period of 4/1/2022 through 3/31/2023. If a recipient gets to the end of his project period and realizes it will not be able to complete all planned activities in time, it must submit a request for a no-cost extension via a supplemental application in HSCS. At this point, additional PPR reports will be required to cover the extension approved for projects extended beyond the initial 2-year period.

Next slide, please. Here we see the PPR form is made available on the ACF website, www.acf.hhs.gov. Once on the website, it is easily accessible by going through grants and post-award requirement menus. From there, you'll click on discretionary grants and then reporting. Also for your convenience, recipients can refer back to the e-blast that was provided in HSCS on April 13, and that e-blast has a hyperlink taking you directly to the form.

Next slide, please. This slide shows appendix B of the PPR form, and this is the section where recipients will use to detail how their funds are being used. These reports complement activities, projects identified in the budget submission, and/or the COVID-19 one-time CRRSA and ARP spending plan amendments. The recipient should use section B-01 to outline successful activities completed during the period – during the reporting period that contribute to the agency meeting the objectives of the award, including each source of funding issued. Section B-02 should be used by the recipient to describe any challenges of areas encountered during the reporting period being reported. The recipient should describe any deviations from the original project plan, any TNTA or support needed from OHS, OGM to complete the projects. Use this section to advise project officers and regional staff if needs or issues have occurred.

Next slide, please. Section B-02 should be used by the recipient to describe any challenges, barriers encountered during the reporting period. The recipient should describe any deviations from the original project plan, any TNTA or support needed from OHS, OGM again, needed to complete the projects. Use this section to advise the project officers and the regional officers as needed, again. Section B-03 of the PPR is also an area where recipients can report significant fines and events to the Regional Office. Section B-04 of the PPR is an area where the recipient reports the dissemination of activities. Briefly describe project-related inquiries and information on dissemination activities carried out by the program. For example, you can add copies of the newspaper ads, newsletters, and other published materials considered relevant to the project activities or used to project information to the public.

Section B-05 is the section where the recipient can add any relevant information OHS should be aware of. This includes actions taken by the program to support the objectives and the completion of proposed funding purposes. Section B-06, this section reports the activities planned for the next reporting period. This should also include expectations for any unfinished projects, estimated timetables. These reports must always complement activities, projects identified in budget submissions, and/or the COVID-19 one-time spending plan amendments.

Next slide, please. Here we have a slide that is showing you the Performance Progress Report, and it must be submitted directly in GrantSolutions and will not be accepted in any other way. The recipient will be delinquent in submittal of the PPR if it is not submitted in GrantSolutions, so please be sure that you provide it and submit it in GrantSolutions. By visiting the www.grantsolutions.gov ... I'll put that link on the chat, or anyone else from the team can do that, please, and click the login link in the upper right-hand corner of the window in GrantSolutions. Next, you must click the login link. This will look something like you're seeing here, the middle of the bottom of the slide here outlined in red. This is where recipient users must have a login.gov account, as this is the only way to access GrantSolutions. If you do not have a login.gov account, you will need to create one using the same e-mail address associated with the GrantSolutions account.

After successfully logging in, the My Grants list will appear, and you'll select the grant in which you're submitting the report and then select the reports tab. For grant recipients with more than one grant, please ensure that the report is submitted to the correct grant number. Next slide. On this slide here, we're showing you a list of PPR guidance available to recipients. As

discussed, the resource documents are available to assist recipients in completing and submitting their PPR in GrantSolutions. You also ... And they are in HSCS under the resource tab. Heather? Moving on to you.

Tala: Heather, we just have a couple of questions that we know are out there in the grant recipient community. Just wanted to pose to you and Lizette just some follow-ups. Can you talk to us, Heather, about why programs are required to complete and submit a Performance Progress Report for HE, HA, and HN grants but not for other Head Start grant awards?

Heather: Good, good, good question. That means brains are ... You guys are out there thinking. I would say that you may be asking, "If this performance report is required in the regulations, why don't we complete these reports for let's say our child serving grants, so those CH grants, I think, that people are generally familiar with?" Well, you actually do. The program information report, or the PIR, meets the reporting requirements for your child serving grants. Therefore, many of our programs out there aren't aware of the reporting requirement unless maybe you received recently in the last couple of years a disaster recovery funds grant or if you were around back when we awarded the American Rescue and Reinvestment Act funds, those ARRA funds, back in 2009. Those also had this reporting requirement. But essentially any standalone grant award issued by the Office of Head Start where a PIR is not submitted, the requirement of 75.342 will be met using the standard ACF PPR report, that Performance Progress Report.

Tala: Thanks. For making that clarification, Heather. I'm sure programs are glad to hear that they don't have to submit PIR for these grants.

Heather: Yes.

Tala: Lizette, question for you. Are separate PPR reports required for the CRRSA and ARP funds?

Lizette: Yeah, it is imperative that grant recipients refer to the terms and conditions included in each award. For FFR-425 reports, you will report CRRSA and ARP funds separately. One report will pertain to the document number ending in C5, which is for the CRRSA funds, and the one report will be for the document number ending in C6, which are for the ARP funds. You will have two annual and final annual reports. A total of four reports serving the 24-month period as indicated before an approval of a ... oh, sorry. That will change, of course, if an approval for a no cost extension has been granted. More reports will be required. For the SF-428, the recipient should use the SF-428S for other items used to support which designates between the C5 and the C6, but the SF-248 is also a single report.

If an SF-429 is required, and the recipient used both C5 and C6 funds to – that requires an SF-429 report, the recipient should break out the subaccounts in line 2A. The recipient should also ensure that line 14 of the SF-429 report support includes a breakdown by subaccount. But also, one SF-429 is required. For all inquiries related to the missing FFRs, FFR due date changes, and incorrect data populated on line items one through nine of the FFR in PMS, please contact your grant management specialist or reach out to the PMS help desk. I'll put the link to the help desk in the chat box. Thank you, guys.

Tala: Thanks, Lizette, we know that those terms and conditions for any award are important for programs to continually refer back to because they certainly do contain a great deal of information. Another question for you, Lizette, can programs submit a budget revision?

Lizette: Sure. Please refer to 45 CFR 75.308 and also refer to ACF IM, Information Memorandum, Head Start 21-01, which has been updated in ECLKC to address prior approval waiver requirements that real estate in effect until OMB memorandum M21-20 expires and/or is rescinded. Budget revision applications should be submitted in HSCS as a supplemental application. I advise the recipients to reach out to the program and grants management specialist, Yvonne Shore, if prior approval is needed.

Tala: That's great. Thanks, Lizette. We certainly know that a budget revision can be helpful as programs continue to identify needs within their programs, and I don't think we can emphasize enough how important those ongoing conversations with Regional Offices are and what a great source of information and resources they can be. OK, Heather, one last question for you, and I know it's one that's come up before. Can COVID funds be used for facilities?

Heather: Yes. COVID funds can be used for facilities. Specifically they can be used for the purchase, construction, or major renovation of a facility or for a modular unit. One word of caution is just to make sure that you're familiar with your notice of award. The CARES and the CRRSA funds, they must be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus. If you want to use your CARES Act or your CRRSA funds for facilities, you have to be able to tie those activities back to the original intent of those funds and that purpose. The American Rescue Plan Act funds do not have the same limitations and, therefore, can be applied to any activities that you would normally carry out under the Head Start Act. These are all referenced in program instruction that we have highlighted there, HS-21-03, on the slide.

And depending on the scope of the request, the requirements of 45 CFR 1303.44 may also apply. This would require a separate application for the purchase, construction, and major renovation of a facility. And at a minimum, if the project was not included in your initial application and the funds were not originally allocated for facility activities, a budget revision would be necessary to adjust funding levels to the appropriate object class categories. Recipients are really strongly encouraged to engage in conversations with your Regional Office early in project planning to talk about the process and understand the program impacts and any considerations that may need to be taken into account as it relates to your request. I think it's also going to be really important for programs to know and understand the definitions around major renovation, minor renovations, repairs, and the like. And all of those are actually outlined in the Head Start program performance standards under part 1305. Just a word of caution that yes, you can, and just be careful that any purchase, construction, or major renovation could potentially trigger an additional application and approval from the Office of Head Start.

There has been a couple of questions that have come in around – just general questions in chat and through the Q&A, and I was specifically honing in on the Q&A questions. There's been a couple around when – what is the time frame that I have to spend my funds? Again, I would make sure for you specifically to be very familiar with your notice of award. It has your budget and project periods that are listed on the notice of award. I would say probably 90% of our

grant awards were awarded with a period of April 1 of 2021 until March 31st of 2023. But, again, there are going to be a number of variances out there, the other 10%. Just be very familiar with your period of availability, which is specified on your notice of award.

The other – a couple other questions I'm seeing is, what are the reporting requirements? What dates do I use? Again, I would say that this webinar or this presentation was prepared for the 90% of awards that fall within the period of time that we have identified for those 90%. But please, please, your reporting requirements for your financial reports, for your Performance Progress Report, all of those are specified in your notice of award, so please make sure to look at ... I can't ... it's like ... I sound like a broken record, but please look at your notice of award because that's what's going to help guide you when it comes to figuring out all of your reporting requirements, whether it be this report or whether it be any of your other financial reports.

Another ... A couple of other questions came in around the – where will this – we've seen a couple places of where this report is referenced – where will it live, payment management system, GrantSolutions? I will say to you that you will access the standard form from the ACF website, and the reason why we don't keep it in HSCS, or we don't keep a copy locally for you is that sometimes ACF can and does periodically update their standard forms, and we want to make sure that our recipients are using the most recent form that's available to them, and that is on our ACF website. As we showed you in the slide, you can access that through the ACF website. You will download the form. You fill it out, and then you submit it and attach it as a report to your specific grant in GrantSolutions.

I think those are generally the questions that look like relatively easy that I wanted to just make sure that I address while I had the opportunity. And I want to – and to say also too that if we do see more common questions come up, certainly we will develop a set of questions and answers that we can help support you with, and we can make sure that those are available through our Head Start Enterprise system in the resources tab. I also want to make mention that some people are asking about carryover requests specifically related to their CARES Act funding and that folks have asked for and maybe have pending carryover applications. Obviously we cannot answer through this webinar where the status is of your individual applications, but certainly feel free to reach out to your program and your grant specialist, who can give you an update on the status of those application requests.

I want to wrap up by giving you what I'm calling now my 30-second Cliffs Notes version of our webinar today in three easy steps. First one, number one, please visit our ACF website at www.acf.hhs.gov to access the Performance Progress Report. Step two, using the guidance that we provided to you today in today's webinar, we want you to fill out that report. And then step three, you're going to upload that completed report in GrantSolutions by June 29, 2022, again, for the majority of our grants, so that you will remain in compliance with the terms and conditions of your grant award. We provided detailed instructions and screenshots for uploading this report into GrantSolutions, and they can be found in the resources tab in HSCS.

I really want to thank everyone for your time and participating in today's webinar. We know that you all are doing some really great things with your COVID funds, and we want to be able to capture all of your successes, as well as identify any challenges you may have in using these

funds. We look forward to reviewing those reports and understanding more about the great things that you are doing and where you may need some additional support. And if you have any further questions or concerns regarding the reporting requirement, please reach out to your assigned program and grant specialist. And again, I just want to thank you guys all today for participating and certainly reach out if you have anything else. Thank you guys so much. Appreciate it.