WEBCAST ON USING THE TANF EMERGENCY CONTINGENCY FUND TO SUPPORT SUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT AND SUMMER JOBS FOR YOUTH

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(Edited Transcript)

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Amy Leslie: Good day everyone. The National Governor's Association, the National Association for State Workforce Agencies, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the US Department of Health and Human Services and the US Department of Labor are pleased to present this online education program.

This program is creating subsidized employment and summer jobs for youth using TANF ARRA dollars. We are very pleased to welcome all of you.

Today's presentation will last up to 90 minutes. After each state's speaker, there will be a few minutes for questions from the audience and there will be a longer question and answer period after all have spoken.

And now it is my pleasure to welcome Susan Golonka, Human Services Program Director, National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices to introduce today's distinguished speakers.

Susan Golonka: Thank you, Amy. And I do want to thank Amy because she's provided a lot of technical support to us here as we've launch this call today and also to the staff here at the National Association of State Workforce Agencies who are also providing the backup technical assistance that we need for this call.

And I want to welcome everyone on behalf of the National Governor's Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies and the US Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services.

The purpose of the call today is to share state experiences around using the ARRA TANF Emergency Fund to create both subsidized employment and summer jobs for youth.

With the opening day today of baseball here in Washington DC, it certainly seems like a very timely event. Because I think with the advent of baseball season it's also when youth are -starting to look for summer jobs and employers are looking for youth to hire for the summer.

So we also know that it means that there's not a lot of time. So to the extent that states are wanting to use the TANF Emergency Fund for Summer Youth Program, it's really time to roll up your sleeves. Batting practice is over. We're ready for the first pitch.

Also as of the end of March we know that of the $5 billion of the emergency fund, close to $2 billion has been pulled down. And, about half the states have used the funds for subsidized employment.

I know that for some states who've not drawn down the funds yet, there's some concern that they're not going to have enough time, that in other words, when October 1 comes around or keeping in the baseball parlance-- when we reach the division championships --that they're not going to have had enough time to launch a subsidized employment program.

Well I have two bits of good news about that. First, it is s that it appears at least hopeful that the TANF Emergency Fund may be extended. Kacie Winsor will tell us more about that.

But also we have on the line today some states that will share with you the benefit of their experience in creating subsidized employment programs in a fairly short timeframe.

We have a full panel of presenters today. First we will hear from my colleague, Kacie Winsor who is Senior Legislative Associate at the National Governors Association.

She'll introduce our federal partners today. And then after they make their presentations I will introduce the state speakers.

We have presenters from Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas. And also on the line to also add additional information are folks from Georgia.

As Amy had said, we are going to have a short time for a few questions right after each state speaker, but largely we will hold the questions for the end of the session at which point you can address your questions to any of our speakers.

With that, Kacie, I'll turn it over to you.

Kacie Winsor: Thank you Susan. Again, I just want to welcome everyone on the phone and thank you for joining us. We do have a variety of different state and federal partners.

I do want to reiterate that the importance of this is to make sure that folks from across the state working in different programs and different agencies are all on the same page when we try to look at how you can use the TANF Emergency Fund for subsidized employment.

The Emergency Fund was enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. That's Public Law 111-5. And it provides up to $5 billion to states and territories for fiscal year 2009 and fiscal year 2010.

The Emergency Fund reimburses states for 80% of their increased TANF expenditures in three categories -- basic cash assistance, non-recurring short term benefits which is defined as four months or less, and subsidized employment. The third is what we'll be focusing on today.

An increase in expenditures is measured against a base year which can be either FY 2007 or FY 2008. Many states are applying for funds in all three of these categories.

And I would note that you can determine which the base year works better for your state separately for each of the individual categories.

The TANF Emergency Fund is currently set to expire September 30 of this year. And as Susan mentioned, there has been some momentum around trying to get that extended. And I'll speak about that in a moment.

But first I want to just highlight a map that we have courtesy of the Center for Law and Social Policy. This will show you -- it's a color code -- where your state is in terms of pulling down the TANF Emergency Fund.

This is as of March 25, 2010. And as you can see, 41 states plus DC have accessed the Emergency Fund in either one or all three or a few of these categories A totally of $1.89 billion out of $5 billion has been allocated.

I would also add to this that there are a number of state applications in process. And so these numbers only reflect those applications that have been approved and the money that has been awarded to date.

The last thing I just want to talk about is the recent congressional action on extending the TANF Emergency Fund. It was included in the President's proposal. I won't speak about that.

And there were a number of bills that were introduced that haven't moved too far. But I'm going to focus on two that have received the most recent action.

The first is known as the Murray-Kerry Amendment. And it was attempted to be added to the Senate Tax Extenders Bill.

This Amendment was introduced by Senator's Murray or Washington and Senator Kerry of Massachusetts. And it would have extended the TANF Emergency Fund for an additional six months.

It also would have added a fourth category called Work Supports as a claimable expenditure. That was also included in the President's proposal. And it would have provided $1.5 billion for summer youth employment activities under WIA.

The status of this amendment actually is it failed on the Senate floor. I won't get into the budgetary process but because there were insufficient offsets to pay for the extension (and avoid increasing the deficit) the amendment did not pass what's called a Point of Budget Order.

More recently in the HR 4849, the Small Business and Infrastructure Jobs Tax Act of 2010, there was an amendment that passed in the House of Representatives on March 24 by a vote of 246 to 178.

It included a one year TANF Emergency Fund extension, actually a TANF Emergency Fund Program at $2-1/2 billion for FY '2011.

Some people have called it an extension. Actually what would happen is the emergency fund that currently exists would expire and then the new fund would be created which then moves to the third point.

Under this fund, states would be allowed to receive up to 30% of their state block grant. And that would include both TANF emergency contingency fund and the regular TANF contingency fund that currently exists.

Additionally this amendment would make any individual eligible who is needy and who has exhausted or will soon exhaust their unemployment insurance benefits. They would be eligible for the subsidized jobs regardless of whether that individual's household includes a child or not.

And the current status of this as I said, it did pass in the House. The Senate obviously is currently on recess but is expected to take up the measure as soon as they return.

So we are hopeful that this will move forward in the Senate. I would certainly encourage all of you to reach out to your congressional delegation. If this is important enough, then you should pick up the phone and call them and make sure that they know that this is important for your state and that they know what amazing things you all are doing currently with these dollars.

And the last slide that I have is just some additional resources. This Webinar will be available on-line. So you can always go back and access these. It's not exhaustive but there are a few that we wanted to draw your attention to.

And with that I want to introduce our first federal speaker, David Hansell. He is the principle Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families at the Department of Health and Human Services. David?

David Hansell: Good afternoon to everyone. Thank you for joining us. I want to begin by expressing our appreciation particularly to Susan and Kacie for arranging this important session, for including us in it, but also for all of their wonderful collaboration with us on this issue and so many others.

I also want to thank our colleagues from the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, especially Deputy Assistant Secretary Gerri Fiala who's with us today who have also been wonderful partners on this.

AFC is committed to helping families achieve economic success. And job preparation and employment are central parts of our strategy for doing that. And they are indeed core purposes of the TANF program.

And the TANF Emergency Fund offers substantial funding available to states that can be used among other purposes to help promote employment and a culture of work.

By working with the Employment and Training Administration's Summer Youth Employment Programs, we can combine resources to create and expand job opportunities for low income youth.

In January our two agencies issued a joint letter describing the benefits of subsidized employment for young people in encouraging state workforce and human services agencies to work together toward that goal.

And now as summer and the baseball season are approaching and now here, along with the approaching end of funding availability under the TANF Emergency Fund, it is even more urgent that we begin our work together on this effort.

To date to give you some update, we have awarded just over $2 billion now of the $5 billion in TANF emergency funding to states, territories and tribes.

So at this point, substantial funding remains available for states as a whole. And almost every state has substantial funding still available within its individual cap.

But barring extension by Congress and as Kacie just told us, we're hopeful but not certain that that could happen. Expenditures must be made by September 30 of this year in order to claim emergency funds. So time is of the essence.

Let me touch on a few of the details of the emergency fund as it applies to subsidized employment programs in general and specifically to summer youth programs.

First of all it's important to note that TANF Emergency Funds can be used to provide services to needy families. And states have very broad discretion to determine how to apply that standard based on their own circumstances. And that includes in the summer youth employment context.

Funding can be used to provide summer jobs in the public sector or in the private sector in for profit companies or in non-profit organizations.

Program costs that can be 80% reimbursed with emergency funds can include wage subsidies, staffing and development costs and employer supervision and training. And again, states have very broad discretion with regard to the particular employment program approaches that they wish to utilize.

And it's important to note that we can permit certain employer supervision and training costs to be treated as program expenditures without special documentation from states.

Now what's most important, you're going to hear some examples of programs that states are implementing on this call. But we are happy to work with states individually as needed through our regional office staff.

And you'll see the contact information on your screen to determine how the factors and the options that I mentioned apply within the context of the particular program model that you have already implemented for summer youth employment or that you are interested in implementing this summer.

Many of you we know have already started planning your summer youth employment programs. But if you haven't and in particular, if your Workforce and Human Services agencies aren't already working together on this project to blend funding streams, we strongly urge you to do so.

If you have started but you've run into obstacles, we will do our best to give you information that may help you to overcome them.

And I have colleagues with me today who will help us answer questions during the Q&A session later. But our - the resources of our central office and regional staff are available to you to help you work through any issues or concerns that you have.

If you are ready to go, I hope that during and after this call you'll share your experiences with your colleagues.

This call will provide you with some examples of how other states are teaming up to promote subsidized employment. But we both in HHS ACF and in DOL ETA stand ready to assist you however we can.

But I want to emphasize again, the window of opportunity is closing. And our youth and their families are looking to all of us for help. And we hope you will work with us to provide it. Thank you very much.

Kacie Winsor: Thank you David. So the next person we'll move to, our next federal speaker is Gerri Fiala. Gerri is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training Administration at the US Department of Labor. Gerri?

Gerri Fiala: Thank you very much. I want to say thank you to the National Governor's Association and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies and the National Conference of State Legislators for organizing and hosting what we think is a very, very important educational program.

And of course I want to acknowledged David Hansell and the Administration for Children and Families at HHS for a partnership that is strong and deep. It goes beyond what we're going to be talking about today using TANF Recovery Act dollars with WA dollars to make a true difference in low income family's lives through the - their young adult and young people.

I think David has covered a great deal of what I would say. Let me just offer this. Partnerships are absolutely critical and essential at the state level with both the Workforce and Human Service Agencies and at the regional and local level as well in terms of implementation.

Last year in a very short timeframe programs were mounted by states and local areas to serve over 315,000 young people. And although the time is short if you haven't started and you are willing and eager to expense and leverage services using both the subsidized unemployment funds along with WIA funds, there's time to do that.

WIA can bring a very strong connection to their employers both private and public in this planning and delivery process.

I would just point out to you before closing that we have provided you with what we hope are a number of useful resources. They are listed on the Web. And we hope that you will take advantage of them.

David mentioned the Training and Employment Notice. That is a joint notice that the two departments have put out.

Another resource is an evaluation of lessons learned from last year's summer program that I think provides both the lessons of what worked, but also what didn't and what needs to be improved.

In addition to that you'll find other suggested resources that talk about snapshots of programs -- over 100 from the local level as well as clearinghouse that may be useful or that you may want to refer your local areas to.

And lastly to sort of cull from the experiences across the country, we've had two summits to again, listen to people who had implemented programs and take from them lessons learned.

And we hope that you will make good use of all of those resources so that we not only start on the same page, but we can enrich and finish on the same page as well.

Thanks very much.

Kacie Winsor: Thank you, Gerri. And next, I'm going to turn it back over to my colleague Susan to coordinate for the rest of the call.

Susan Golonka: Okay thank you. And I think the partnership that you have now between DOL and HHS is similar to what is occurring at the state level between their Workforce agencies and their TANF agencies.

And we hope these partnerships continue well beyond the life of the Emergency Fund.

If I could just ask one clarifying question that we have from some text messages that came in.

And that is can you clarify what is the base year and how it is determined whether or not a state has increased its spending? Either David or Gerri?

David Hansell: Yes, the two base years that states can choose from in looking at increased expenditures are federal fiscal year 2007 or federal fiscal year 2008.

There's some legislation under consideration in Congress that would add a third base year might, federal fiscal year 2009. But currently that's not available.

So states much compare their expenditures in a given quarter to their expenditures in either one of those base years. And then the - whatever the increase is in one of the three allowable categories, 80% of that can be covered with TANF Emergency Funds.

Susan Golonka: Thank you. And just one other point I'd like to make in terms of the proposal that has passed in the House which all for a state to draw down is 30% of its block grant.

For those states that are close to meeting the current maximus which is 50 percent- and there are a handful of them. --that 30%, it's a new clock if you will or so those states who've spent - who have availed themselves of their maximum amount or close to it, in a sense they get to start over as do all states. And I think that's an important point to understand.

Okay well with that we're going to begin with our state folks. And we will have speakers as I said, from Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas.

And our first speakers are from Mississippi where we have representation from both the Workforce Department and the TANF Agency.

We have Barbara Hicks who is Director of Customer Relations with the Mississippi Department of Employment Security and Vera Butler who is the TANF Director for the Mississippi Department of Human Services.

Welcome to both of you. And I believe Vera was going to begin.

Vera Butler: Yes I'm up first. Thanks Susan.

Susan Golonka: Okay, thank you.

Vera Butler: Basically I'm just going to talk to you a little bit about how we set the program up and participant eligibility.

The Mississippi Department of Human Services has a sub grant with the Mississippi Department of Employment Security to implement our STEPS program which is Subsidized Transitional Employment Program and Services.

And this is a win-win situation for both agencies because our TANF SNAP and UI recipients now have access to subsidized employment.

We submitted our first application in September of 2009. And through many revisions we finally received approval. And we started our program on December 8, 2009.

And as everyone knows, it’s going to end September 30. So we’d love to see ECF extend it.

Applications are taken and processed at the Mississippi WIN Job Centers. And these are located throughout the state.

Mississippi Department of Human Services determines the eligibility for the STEPS program for our SNAP and TANF recipients. And the Mississippi Department of Employment Security determines the eligibility for all other individuals who may be eligible for the program.

Eligible participants for the program must be a citizen of the United States, be a resident of Mississippi, be at least 18 years of age, have one verified dependent child who is within the specified (group) relationship, is also a US citizen under the age of 18 living in the home. And the family’s total income cannot exceed 250% of the federal poverty level.

These placements are expected to last six months. And employers are encouraged to retain the person after the program ends.

Employers are reimbursed on a step-down level for the first month at 100%, the second month is 100%. Third month is 75%. Fourth is 50%. –The fifth month is 50% and the sixth month is 25%.

And right at this time, I’ll let Barbara talk a little bit more about how they go out to recruit employers and market the program.

Barbara Hicks: Okay this is Barbara Hicks. Any employer that is for-profit or private non-profit employer or a public hospital can participate in the Mississippi STEPS program as long as they’re in good-standing and in compliance with the laws of the Mississippi Department of Employment Security and carry a current Worker’s Compensation policy or have proof of a self-insured plan if the law requires it.

Employers must commit to retaining the person after the subsidy period ends. In order to participate in the Mississippi STEPS program, an employer must have a work site that’s located in the state of Mississippi.

The participant eligibility, as Vera had already stated, was that the person must be a resident of the state of Mississippi and at least 18 years of age.

They must have at least one child in the home under the age 18. And their total family income cannot exceed 250% of the federal poverty guideline.

And just to give you a little detail about that, a family of four in the state of Mississippi, 250% of the poverty guidelines is $55,125.

Our goal is to enroll and employ 3500 people in this program. We market - well we don't want to say market. We have an educational awareness program that we have that's been going on for the last six weeks in which we have billboards and radio spots and television spots all across the state, newspapers, local newspaper and our larger newspaper here in the state of Mississippi.

So that anyone that is leaving and breathing in the state of Mississippi knows about the Mississippi STEPS program.

The lessons learned and the challenges, Vera and I talked about this this morning. And really we couldn't come up with lessons learned.

But our challenge is that we're afraid that if this program is not extended, then we won't reach our goal of 3500 people working in the state of Mississippi.

So it is very important to us that this program be extended, not only so that we can put people to work, but also to take people off the TANF rolls and off unemployment insurance.

So that's all I have.

Susan Golonka: Thank you both. Thank you, Barbara and Vera. I'm going to pause for a moment and ask if folks have questions that they'd like to ask Barbara and Vera and to dial star 1. And then the operator will see that you want to ask a question and she'll open the line up for you.

In the meantime, while we're waiting to see if any questions come in, I'd like to ask - I'd like you to talk about also one of the reasons I discovered that you all were doing this program was that your governor had announced it and I'm wondering if you could talk a little bit about that and what it has meant to your governor.

I think the opportunity for states - for governors to be able to say they're going to create jobs and this is the way they do it I think is a great one. So can you talk a little bit about Governor Barbour's involvement?

Barbara Hicks: Well Stan McMorris is one of our Deputy Directors here, and I call him the Godfather of STEPS. He's sitting here with me so he can speak on that part.

Stan McMorris: Thank you Barbara. It was very important that Governor Barbour be involved with this. His office encouraged the use of these funds. They've asked us to be creative in what we were looking at.

And he basically gave us a challenge to create a program that would create jobs in the state. From that came this great partnership between the Mississippi Department of Human Services and the Mississippi Department of Employment Security.

We created a framework of a program we thought would be good to do so. The Governor's office was very supportive of this, promoted it.

And then once the program was approved, Governor Barbour used his ability to access the media. He has been on radio, television doing spots for us to promote this program.

And also it helped us get into many of the employer forums across the state, the Mississippi Economic Council, the Mississippi Manufacturer's Association and other employer outlets where the information was provided to the employers of the state to take advantage of this program.

And it's - you know, we've been in operation now for three months really in promoting this program. And we've got over 600 employers under contract.

We've got 500 or so people now working on jobs in Mississippi. We've got another 1600 that are pending approval and placement in jobs.

And we're beginning to see now the successes of this program. And we're very hopeful that we get an extension to this because I think if we get the extension we'll provide - be able to provide the total number of jobs that we set out to as our goal and even more possibly if the additional funding comes about.

Susan Golonka: Thank you. I understand we do have some calls on the line, some questions. So - I'll ask the operator to open that up and ask that folks identify who they are and what state they're from and I just also reiterate right now we are taking calls to ask of our Mississippi presenters.

Female: Yes. I have a question about the reimbursement of wages. You said that you reimbursed the wages up to a certain - so it's like an OJT where you reimburse the employer? It's not like a work experience where you pay the wages to each participant…

Stan McMorris: Correct.

The - we develop a contract with each employer. It is not training as you say on the job. It is providing them a job. But we do use a framework very similar to OJT in that we contract with the employer and we reimburse that employer for the wages paid to that worker during that, each month as they employ that person.

Female: Okay, and then am I correct then, they do not have to be a TANF recipient?

Stan McMorris: They do not. But they must meet the overall eligibility criteria that was outlined-- a member of a family. Family must have a verifiable child under the age of 18 and must meet the 250% poverty guideline.

Female: Okay. And I hate to ask you to do this again, but can you repeat the number that you've enrolled so far?

Stan McMorris: We've got 608 employers under contract. We've got right at 500 now working. We've got 600 and some few numbers of participants that are in process of being referred on jobs so that, you know, it's a work in progress. So that changes daily but...

Female: That's great. Thank you.

Susan Golonka: Well that is a wonderful accomplishment that - you all didn't have a subsidized employment program is my understanding prior to this initiative.

Vera Butler: That's correct.

Susan Golonka: ...Another question we have coming in is how - you have met the 20%. In other words if the federal reimbursement is 80%, the state has to come up with 20%. Can you talk about how you've done that?

Barbara Hicks: Yes. To start off with, since we were just beginning the program, we used TANF up front for our 20%, to meet the 20% requirement.

And we also received approval to count 25% of the employee's time, times their wages towards our 20% as well. Because we're going on the assumption that the person's going to receive up to 25% of his time is going to be supervised.

So we basically look at that employee's wage and take 25% of that wage and count it towards our 20% match.

And Employment Security, they've developed a form that the employer fills out and submits to them so we can track it.

Susan Golonka: Thank you.

Female: Okay I have a question about the match - you said you use TANF as part of the 20% match?

Barbara Hicks: Yes.

Female: I thought you couldn't use federal funds?

Barbara Hicks: You can use TANF...

Female: I'm sorry, I can't - thought you couldn't use federal fund as the match?

Susan Golonka: The exception is that you can use TANF.

Female: Oh you can? Okay, sorry. That's my mistake.

Susan Golonka: No that's fine. That's the exception. TANF or MOE is where you have to show that you've increased spending.

Let's see, do we have any other question on the phone that we would open up?

Male: Okay I was going to ask this question that I typed in also, the question about how the 20% non-TANF - well non-federal match. And that whole subject is pretty complicated. But I'd like to ask each of the presenters to please tell us how they are meeting that requirement as they make their presentation.

Susan Golonka: Oh okay. And so you understand they just mentioned that. And this is a ruling that came down from the federal government that you can ascribe the value of the supervision costs and training costs of an employer to be 25% of the wages paid. And that becomes the in -kind, contribution or federal match.

Male: Someone earlier said that the 25% that you're talking about is the the proportion of the total TANF expenditures that can be charged to can be charged to TANF for supervision without documenting the amount. That doesn't sound to me like that is what's used to meet the 20% non-federal but possibly TANF matched requirement.

Could you be - could you guys figure that out and explain it as clearly as possible?

Susan Golonka: I'm going to ask HHS --David and company to respond to that to help clarify.

David Hansell: Yes let me begin that. And also my colleagues can chime in if I get this inaccurately.

But states have several options. It is not technically a match requirement. The requirement is what the statute allows is the TANF Emergency Fund to reimburse 80% of the increased expenditures or in a case like Mississippi where it's a new program, 80% of the cost of the program.

The other 20% obviously has to come from some other source. But states have several options. They can use their own funds.

They can use other TANF funds or they can use third party funds, things that would qualify as maintenance of effort under TANF which can include funds from third party entities, non-state entities under certain requirements. There have to be agreements with the state and so on. But those also can be used.

It's in that context that a state can deem the value of supervision and training provided by a third party employer, a private or public employer, as qualified expenditures that could count and could satisfy that 20% requirement.

So that it would satisfy it as meeting one of the ways in which the state can fund that 20% of the program that can't be funded with the TANF emergency fund.

Male: But you mean, to use state funding you mean state money, not WIA money that the state administers for example?

David Hansell: That's correct. WIA money would not qualify, but the state...

Male: It has to be non-federal money.

David Hansell: Other TANF funding would qualify or third party funding if it meets maintenance of effort requirements.

Male: You know, this whole thing has been the real bugaboo that prevents the use of these funds is this -

meeting this 20% match - I know it's not match, but this 20% requirement.

Let me say that a California WIA that has very actively participated in this program is under the impression that money that has been claimed, –that has been presented to the federal government --as meeting a maintenance of effort requirement cannot be used to meet the 20% requirement. Is that - are they wrong in that?

David Hansell: That is incorrect.

Male: I'll tell them that.

David Hansell: I would also just mention -- this goes back to the legislative proposal in Congress -- the President's budget actually would propose to increase the reimbursement under the TANF Emergency Fund for subsidized employment programs for 100% for precisely the reason that you stated. However that's again, something that would have to be acted upon by Congress.

Susan Golonka: Thank you. And I want to thank our folks from Mississippi. Folks, we will have opportunities at the end of the call to actually return to questions for Mississippi as well.

But now I'd like to move on to Oklahoma where we have Linda Hughes who with the Division of Family Support Services in the Oklahoma Department of Human Services. Thank you, Linda.

Linda Hughes: Good afternoon everybody. I will start by saying that our subsidized employment program began for TANF recipients in August of 2009.

We basically started with TANF because we had an infrastructure by which to pay employers based on an old program that we had called Works Up and it had pretty much become obsolete because employers weren't interested. It just wasn't worth the money.

So we revamped that program and this is what our current subsidized employment program is.

It is a four month wage subsidy. And it's intended to assist employers to grow their business, to assist Oklahomans in moving back into the workforce and to reduce taxpayer dollars being sent - being spent on assistance benefits.

The criteria is this. An employee must have a child that receives a family support services benefit which would be childcare, TANF or SNAP. And this employee must be a new hire or a rehire.

The employer must agree to pay a minimum of $10 per hour and hire the person full-time, guaranteed 35 hours or plus per week.

This works by reimbursements to the employer. The first month we pay 100% of the wages up to $12 per hour and up to 40 hours per week.

Months two, three and four we reimburse 50% of the wages up to $12 per hour and 40 hours per week. Then if they keep the employee and the intention is to retain employment with the employer, we give them a bonus. And we go back for months two, three and four and we pay the unsubsidized portion which would be 50% of the wages again for those four months. Okay?

We started in October of 2009 by adding what we call a non-TANF category. And that is where we added the people that have a child that receives one of those benefits. They do not have to live with them, but they have to have a child that receives those benefits. So by doing that we picked up non-custodial parents in our subsidized employees.

So that is what we do with our subsidized employment program. Are there questions that you'd like to ask about the Subsidized Employment Program?

And then if not, I'll move into what we're currently planning to do on our Summer Youth Employment Program.

Susan Golonka: Why don't you go ahead with the Summer Youth and I'll just say folks who - if they have a question around the subsidized employment they can start dialing star 1 to get in the queue...

Linda Hughes: We are - we have not submitted an application yet for our Summer Youth Program. But we are intending to do that this month for this third quarter of 2010.

It will be a four month program. It'll be under the category of short term assistance. It's intended to create exposure to new skills and career opportunities, to improve long term employment and earning prospects and decision-making and daily living skills of our summer youth.

It works like this. It is a partnership between TANF, OEFC and the WIA boards and employers that have agreed to participate.

The target service date will begin June the 1st and it will go through September 30, 2010. It will be a six to eight week work experience plus work readiness classes. There will be given priority placement for TANF recipients and youth.

We will receive referrals - or WIA will receive referrals from OKDHS and other outside sources.

The plan is to reimburse wages up to a minimum wage and stipend. The reimbursement will be with TANF dollars.

The estimated youth to be served state-wide is between 1500 and (18) persons. The criteria for eligibility is that they must meet WIA eligibility which is low income and must have one barrier to employment.

They must be youth ages 14 to 21. And the WIA program structure has been approved by OESC. And since we have that infrastructure in place already, that is the mechanism we'll use to do this program, this joint program between TANF and OESC or WIA.

And that's basically as far as I can go with that.

Susan Golonka: Thank you.

Linda Hughes: I do have with me some of our partners from OESC WIA side. I have (Kim Brady) and...

Linda Hughes: (Kiley Smith). I'm sorry. I always forget your name. And I have them here that they can answer questions as well.

Susan Golonka: Okay, thank you. As I said, if there are other folks who want to call in, you can dial in star 1 if you have a specific question for Oklahoma .I'll start with a question. I'm wondering -- –and Mississippi could answer as well - how are you tracking your outcomes? Are you going to be looking at retention? Over what period of time?

I'm just sort of curious if you are tracking outcomes in that fashion if you have specific measures?

Linda Hughes: Well originally we would have been tracking them for ten months to - 10 to 12 months because we were not going to issue the bonus for subsidized employment until the tenth month from the beginning subsidy date.

But to extend the program longer we decided to pay the bonus up - right after the four months of employment.

I mean we would have had to start - stop almost before we started to be able to pay that bonus ten months out.

Susan Golonka: Okay.

Linda Hughes: Because they would not let us, say that that money was encumbered for those four months, the 50% that was not paid at that time, that it would be paid in the tenth month. You see what I'm saying?

Susan Golonka: Yes, yes. Good, thank you. I understand we have a question on the phone. So operator, can you open up the line?

Male: It's California again. Could Oklahoma please tell us how they're meeting the 20% requirement?

Linda Hughes: We're meeting it with the 25% supervisory cost of the employee.

Male: Okay.

Linda Hughes: Plus we did set aside some TANF funds as well.

Male: And the other question is what - how does Health and Human Services feel about the employers receiving funds and paying the wages?

And the other question I have about that is that seems like a very intriguing strategy. I wonder though how the various entities have addressed the kinds of concerns employers would have in putting someone on their payroll. And then of course they - that creates some responsibilities on the part of the employer.

Has that been a barrier at all in getting employers to participate? Thank you.

Linda Hughes: It has not. As a matter of fact, we have a contract that we sign with the employers. And basically the contract says is that you will, you know, that you're hiring them as a traditional employee. You will pay them and they will have benefits like any other employee.

We simply reimburse them those wages for those four months. And as far as they're concerned, that's like four months free employee. It is...

Susan Golonka: Thank you.

Linda Hughes: It's been - it's worked well. I should say that.

Susan Golonka: We have another question here. Will youth participants in the summer youth program be expected to meet WIA youth performance measures?

So I guess really what's the connection between the WIA performance measures and the TANF ARRA funded?

Linda Hughes: Okay.

(Kim Brady): Hi. This is (Kim Brady) from Oklahoma. We are in the process of finding out about that. We've actually applied for a waiver to - for those participants to fall under the Work Readiness indicator similar to ARRA.

Susan Golonka: Okay. And Gerri or David, any comments on that question?

Gerri Fiala: This is Gerri Fiala. I'm going to turn it over to my colleague Evan Rosenberg.

Evan Rosenberg: Yes hi. This is Evan from Department of Labor. As Oklahoma referred to, Oklahoma and some of the other states are in the process of submitting waivers if they're using regular WIA youth funds to use the Work Readiness Indicator as the only measure. And Department of Labor will consider those waivers and make a determination as quickly as we can.

But aside from those waivers, the rules for performance and reporting that apply to each funding stream would apply.

So if states like Oklahoma are using regular WIA youth funds, unless they receive the waiver, then the regular performance measures would apply.

If they're using Recovery Act Funds, then the Recovery Act youth performance measures would apply.

Susan Golonka: Okay, thank you. And a question here about has any state been able to capture young people 19 to 21 without dependents?

So I guess the question is with respect to summer youth, what is - who's a youth? How old can we serve a youth who does not have any dependents? I guess that would be...

Female: Ages 14 to 21.

Susan Golonka: Okay. And that's confirmed by Labor folks?

Female: Yes.

Susan Golonka: Okay. And we understand we have some more questions coming in through the phone. So we can open up a line again.

Female: I have a question on the Summer Youth Employment Program. You say that you reimburse the wages. Are you reimbursing the employer or the participant?

Female: Yes, for the Summer Youth Employment Program –it’s similar to what you have already heard. We have contracts with the employers. And we pay the wages for that participant.

Female: Okay so the employer hires them and puts them on their payroll?

Female: No. No, no, no.

Female: Okay, so it’s like the old Summer Youth Program under WIA then where we pay the wages?

Female: Right, correct.

Susan Golonka: Right. It seems to me as much as you can replicate or use the structure of your Summer Youth Program, all the better in terms of getting things up and running.

Female: That’s what we thought because if we didn’t there was no way we could run a program on our own at OKDHS for summer youth.

Susan Golonka: Another question from the phone line?

Steve Nelson: Yes, this is Steve Nelson from Minnesota. I’ve got a question on the TANF side as far as TANF youth without children. Is there a statutory age limit on that category? And how are foster children treated?

Susan Golonka: I’ll ask HHS folks to respond.

Female: They would receive the same priority as TANF children. And again, the youth that would meet eligibility as summer youth are between age 14 and 21.

Steve Nelson: Do they have to live at home as they do under TANF rules?

Female: No.

Steve Nelson: Okay. So how are you funding them? With TANF or with non-TANF funds?

Female: With TANF, ARRA... With this program only.

Mark Greenberg: Hi. It’s Mark Greenberg joining in and joining in to provide a clarification on the issues relating to older youth and TANF.

What we have provided clarification on is that -- and this will be more meaningful we know to the TANF people -- is that under the first purpose of TANF the state has discretion in its definition of child, can define a child to go up through the age of 24 if it chooses to do so. Or it can make a lower definition if it chooses to do so that does make this an allowable use of TANF funds for needy children.

At the same time, there is actually under the regulations there's a restriction that effects maintenance of effort.

And the specific restriction that does effect maintenance of effort is that maintenance of effort funds under the TANF regulations have to be used for, in addition to other elements, have to be in circumstances in which a child is residing within a custodial parent or other caretaker relative.

So we do understand that this means it's a different rule for TANF and MOE. We do appreciate that that makes it more complex than it would otherwise be.

But we've looked very closely at the existing regulation on maintenance of effort. And based on the language of that regulation we didn't see any discretion here.

So in any case, so that does mean that there's broader ability to use TANF than to use MOE in this context.

Susan Golonka: Thank you. I think what we need to do now is move on to our next speaker. So I want to thanks our folks from Oklahoma.

And, you know, I think it just goes along where we're both learning more and also getting a little bit more confused too. So certainly it's complex but it's been my observation as well that folks at HHS and Department of Labor are very willing to answer questions and respond to any issues that you raise.

So with that I'm going to turn it next to Larry Temple who is Executive Director of the Texas Workforce Commission. Welcome Larry.

Larry Temple: Thank you Susan, appreciate it. Real quick, our legislature put in our budget $15 million of general revenue in our last session (we meet on odd years) to promote a wage subsidy program.

And then when we saw the opportunity to do this, we're joining forces with the TANF dollars and this general revenue which I'm glad I'm on the call because I just got an answer to a question we've had our - for about eight weeks in there. So thank you Mark. I appreciate you clarifying that on the older youth.

Next slide - what we're proposing are two different programs, one a youth program, one serving UI claimants and the exhaustees.

We're targeting those who came out of wages of $15 an hour or less. Our program pays a fixed wage subsidy over a four month period of $2000.

Our local workforce boards administer it. They can pay it in $5 equal installments. They can pay it any way they want to do it. They administer it at the local level.

The subsidy is earned if the worker's retained for the full 120 days. Employers must express an intent to hire. And we utilize the provisions of the 25% of worker earnings as a match for the program.

Now obviously that just got changed with what Mark Greenberg just told us as it relates to people in the older group that we're working with.

One of the reasons we looked at our wage subsidy the way it is, we did not want to recreate the CETA program. We wanted to make sure that our employers had more skin in the game than we did.

Employers don't have time to spend time with someone when they've got the majority of the wages in place. We thought this would be a better job retention strategy. So that's why we limited the subsidy to only to a total of $2000.

We proposed to serve 22,000 claimants. That's a mixture of the TANF dollars we'll be pulling down as well as the general revenue that we had in our appropriation.

We're also proposing a Summer Youth Program, trying to capitalize on momentum from last year. We served about this many kids last year.

We're proposing as we were encouraged to in the joint letter to serve, 16 to 24. Obviously now we may have a bit of an issue on the older kids. We'll sit down and have to work that out.

We'll utilize work sites in public and private sector providing eight week employment at minimum age, minimizing administrative requirements using the eligibility criteria already in place, much less difficult than WIA when you're just looking at the means test -- SNAP, TANF -- whatever.

And then again, we're going to utilize the provisions of the 25% of the employer oversight is the match. And again, we'll have to readjust that now that we got, I guess, official guidance now from ACF.

Challenges, by the way ACF, David, Mark, Q&A Number 9 is still on your Web site saying that you can serve single individuals. So you all may want to pull that one down.

Serving youth at 24, we thought was allowable. Now we've got the kink in there about what's MOE, what's not. So determining age of child, these are some issues.

And the MOE, obviously that's going to mean we're going to have to find some money for that or revise our program.

We're trying to serve these older youth. A lot of these will be returning veterans. And we think it's a great opportunity to help these men and women.

The younger ones who by the age definition itself are going to be those with little to no education other than what they got in the military. So we're going to see if we could. We were going to try to concentrate on them as well as a priority population.

If we can find the money now for the MOE that's going to put a kink in that. We've been waiting a while. So guys, we've been waiting eight weeks now.

If you're going to do a Summer Youth Program, you've got a month and a half before the kids leave. I think we probably need to know from those others if you can get you're approval in a month and a half. Because once the kids go home, it's pretty tough getting to them.

But the approval process does take a long time. And I know we're probably serving some folks that maybe some other people haven't thought about serving is what I've heard today. But we were going on guidance that we had and whatnot.

But and I would want to add that the proposed extension's not going to be very helpful for us on the UI side. It's limited to those people who are 60 days from exhausting.

Well right now an individual can qualify for 92 weeks. So I've got to wait until somebody gets to the 84 week period before I can serve them with this. And I hate to see somebody sit on UI that long when I can get them in and out of here quick in a couple of weeks.

The reason we're not serving our TANF population, in what we call our choices program, we're putting those individuals to work in about 30 days. So we did not see that there was a need for a wage subsidy when - I mean that would be leaving money on the table in our eyes.

So we're not as excited about the extension as we were when we first heard about it once we looked at it because if they get the extended benefits when the Senate comes back from recess, it's going to put that thing even further out.

So but that's kind of where we are. And be glad to answer any questions.

Susan Golonka: Thank you Larry. I've got a question here. Let's see.

And folks who have questions for Larry and what Texas is doing, remember to dial in star 1.

Based on Mark Greenberg's statement about state's defining children, can a state have a different definition for children in Summer Youth Program than children receiving TANF cash assistance?

And well (Mark) I'll let you answer that one.

Mark Greenberg: Yes. And in fact for purposes of TANF cash assistance, the statute is clear that TANF cash assistance has to be for families that include a minor child as defined in the TANF statute.

And that's a child who is under the age of 18 or 18 and still in school. So the only exception to that are pregnant women. But other than that, the family has to have a minor child in order to qualify for TANF assistance.

If there is a minor child in the home, it's possible to extend assistance to other family members that could include an older child who is in the home. But the minor child has to be there.

Larry Temple: And so just to reiterate Mark's earlier point is different from the standard that's applicable to Summer Youth employment programs where states can use the TANF funding to serve if they choose Youth up to age 24.

Mark Greenberg: Right. And, you know, and to further reiterate and again for the TANF people on the call, this is - in the TANF jargon this all (sic) because summer jobs like other subsidized employment are non-assistance. So they are not subject to the requirements that do apply to TANF assistance. But the minor child requirement is an explicit statutory one for TANF assistance.

Susan Golonka: Okay, thank you. Larry sort of raised the point that I'd like to follow up on. I, the issue of how long it takes to get a program approved and is a state feeling perhaps at some financial risk if it moves ahead with a program and yet it hasn't received approval from you all?

I'm wondering as states try and initiate these Summer Youth Programs funded with the TANF Emergency Fund what sort of commitment can you give in terms of a turnaround or a review process for that?

David Hansell: Well the commitment we'll give is that we will try and move and process the applications as quickly as we can. We can't give you a specific timeframe.

The reason why the - Texas's proposal has taken as long as it has -- and we've been in constant communication with Texas about it --is that Texas had raised some issues in its proposal that we hadn't addressed before.

It was proposed to go further than other states had previously done. And that has forced us to resolve some issues that we hadn't resolved before including the ones that Larry was just talking about. So Texas's application has taken longer than most states have.

The other thing that's available to a state is to take an application apart. We're happy to accept multiple applications from a state for different program components.

So a state can for example - and we're only talking about employment here. But a state can submit to us applications for other TANF Emergency Fund reimbursable services or even for one employment program versus another if there is a piece of it that is an issue for us, our first impression it's going to take longer for us to resolve.

So we're - our commitment is to work as quickly as we can. And we have - we've done our best to be in constant communication with states at both the regional and the central office level. And we will continue to do that.

And now as we - what's happening is now that we have quite a number of state subsidized employment and we're beginning to have youth employment applications in through the approval process, that makes it much easier for us to approve subsequent ones because we will have resolve the issues that we have to resolve in order to make decisions about what's allowable.

Susan Golonka: Right, thank you. Yes we understand that it’s sort of a whole new game here that’s being played and one we appreciate for sure and you all I know have had to wrestle with a lot of tough questions. And I would always expect that Larry would give you a lot of tough questions.

So we’re happy to have Texas out there leading the way. And, you know, as these things get clarified other states will be able to benefit from that initial...

Larry Temple: Susan just to - I mean it’s - we weren’t that innovative. We were just going by what guidance we were finding in the TINs and what we were finding on the Web sites.

So it just I think - and I I'd love to be known as this innovative bear over here. But quite frankly we were just going on what we were finding posted and trying to take advantage of what was out there.

And on David, you know, in defense of David they found some things, damn attorneys David. We got too many attorneys going on don't we, but found some things that they weren't aware of when they first were talking with us. But so I think, you know, that’s one thing.

And I will bring back, you know, just there are things that are still out there that if someone started from scratch you can't really go on everything that’s posted on these sites and things in communications you've got because there are other - there are nuances to this that just don't make it as easy.

So hopefully with the Mississippi and the Oklahoma’s and other states and hopefully some of the stuff that we've done will maybe pave the way so people can get approval quicker.

Susan Golonka: Thank you. I'm going to ask a question that in some ways it’s been answered before but in different - in many ways so it’s sort of like let’s clearly get this out here.

Under exactly what circumstances can the TANF Emergency Fund be used to pay subsidized employment for needy person without a child in the home?

So I guess why don't we ask HHS for that one? And let me just say at this point we’re going to open up the call for all questions for all panelists and presenters either you can call in star 1 or send a text as well, but, (Mark), maybe if you could sort of layout again clearly maybe both in terms of subsidized employment and then specifically a focus on youth employment?

Mark Greenberg: Sure. But let me answer then invite other ACF colleagues if there’s anything I'm missing. But so the specific question is the use of funds for subsidized employment when there is not a child in the home?

Susan Golonka: That’s correct.

Mark Greenberg: And the three categories that come to mind would be the circumstances of the noncustodial parent, the circumstances of a pregnant woman or a child up through the age of 24 when using TANF funds.

And let me just ask ACF colleagues is there a category I'm missing?

Male: No.

Susan Golonka: And does that child up to age 24 have to reside with a parent?

Mark Greenberg: When using TANF funds there is not a requirement that the child be residing with a parent. It can include children who are living independently...

Susan Golonka: Okay. Thank you.

Mark Greenberg) ...at state discretion.

Larry Temple: But you have the MOE issue on those correct?

Mark Greenberg: That's right. That's right that's only when using TANF funds.

Susan Golonka: Right.

Larry Temple: One of the things that we proposed and looking at census data and they're going to look and add in our NCPs, the Non-Custodial Parents of this, but we're looking at about 50% of people in this income bracket that we're targeting $15 under, having minor children in their household.

And so just to try to get at some easy way to determine eligibility without having to ask a lot of stuff that you don't ask, and like (said) now, we're targeting our unemployment insurance population which you don't have to get family makeup.

And we're proposing a cost allocation if you will, eligibility formula that we would charge against a TANF grant for 50% or whatever these numbers workout. And then we would pay the other with the general revenue we had.

So that's one of the things were looking at, one of the things that are proposed with David and his staff now.

Susan Golonka: Thank you. We also have some folks from Georgia on the line who they have had a long-time Youth Employment Program that was funded with TANF dollars. And now I think they're going to be expanding that.

I'd like to invite them for a few moments to tell us a little bit about their Teen Works Program. And that would probably be Crystal?

Crystal Culver: Yes. I'm Crystal Culver, Program Manager with the Georgia TeenWork Program. Currently, well initially, we normally did our TeenWork Program t, for kids that were in foster care. However with the stimulus funds we were able to expand this year. And we are looking to hire 15,000 youth this summer.

And we will be partnering with the Department of Labor. And just today's registration we have a little over 18,000 kids that have applied.

And our eligibility process, I mean our eligibility was youth that are in foster care, youth with grandparents, youth that have IEPs or special needs, youth –in households that receive TANF and food stamps, and also youth who fall within the 300% poverty level income.

And this is a state-wide program only for residents of the state of Georgia. And it's for youth ages 14 to 18. And our program starts June 1 and it ends July 31.

Susan Golonka: Thank you.

Evan Rosenberg: This is Evan from the Department of Labor. We just wanted to say that's great. We're really impressed with what Georgia' doing.

Crystal Culver: Thank you.

Susan Golonka: We have a question here if Mississippi could provide the reimbursement percentages; again in other words your steps as you step down?

Barbara Hicks: Okay. For the first and second month we reimburse 100%. The third month it is 75%. The fourth and fifth month it's 50% and the sixth month it's 25%. And that's wages plus benefits, what we - is FICA and Medicare.

Susan Golonka: And I guess one question to all the states. I know that you approach this and talk with the employers in terms of it being about a permanent job and not temporary even though the subsidy is temporary.

What is your sense of how that is working, how employers are understanding that? Do you have a sense of how many or retain the employees? It may be a little early but I'm kind of curious about that.

Crystal Culver: This is Crystal from Georgia. Generally because we've dealt primarily with the youth that are in foster care, several times we've had a lot of the employees that go ahead and keep the kids on after the summer. And they go ahead and take care of the wages and kids get full term benefits.

And so now we're, actually I'm almost certain that out of 15,000 youth hired in the summer that I'm definitely sure that we can attest to say that we will have some youth that will be hired as full-time staff.

Right now we are paying 100% of the wage for the youth. And all of our youth and employers just go to the Web site at www. georgiateenwork.org.

And generally a lot of the employers, they really enjoy working with the youth and mentoring the youth.

And after they have developed and coached a youth through the summer they tend to want to keep them on. So we've had a great success and we’re looking for greater things this year.

Susan Golonka: Thank you. Others? Oklahoma, Texas, Mississippi?

Linda Hughes: This is Oklahoma. And out of 452 contracts that we have currently since actually most of those since October the 1st, we've had 16 people or 16 contracts that were terminated before the end of the four months.

But those 16 employees have been placed in other subsidized employment. So it’s a little early to say that, you know, that they’re going to retain them forever. It’s just...

Linda Hughes: ...too early to say. But we've had really good success in them keeping them, you know, just those four months. I mean I'm amazed that that’s as few as it is.

Susan Golonka: Okay. That’s great.

Linda Hughes: ((Inaudible)) then the option that, you know, if they’re not working out let us know and we'll terminate the contract. So it’s easy to stop.

Susan Golonka: Thank you. I know we’re getting close to the end of our time here. Two questions have come in sort of related to the same thing and which is what can be reimbursed?

Is it just gross wages? Actually we've heard mention of FICA. Someone has asked are you allowed to be reimbursed for the cost of Workers Comp? So some clarification with respect to that ,either HHS or DOL?

Male: I think this was mentioned earlier. You can reimburse wages, other employer-related costs whether it’s fringe benefits or to offset employer related taxes. You can incur expenses for development and administrative costs. Those are all allowable.

Susan Golonka: Great, thank you. Now I'd like to take a question or two from the telephone line.

(Mary Vesch): Yes. This is (Mary Vesch) from New York State. I heard Larry Temple mention something about his concern with the legislation on the TANF piece, something to do with the date. Can you elaborate Larry?

Larry Temple: Well my understanding is that it does say we can serve UI claimants and we can serve, you know, single individuals. But we can only serve the UI claimants when there’s 60 days - within 60 days of exhausting their UI benefits and currently, I think - for Texas it’s 92 weeks with all the federal extensions. And I think nationally right now it could be up to 99.

There’s another seven weeks that Texas doesn't qualify for yet and hopefully we won't get a higher unemployment to qualify.

So you’re looking at almost 100 weeks before - I mean you’re looking at, you know, 80 weeks or so before you'd be able to help someone who just came on UI today get a job. So that is kind of a hollow gesture when you’re trying to get people off of UI.

Susan Golonka: Thank you. One more question from the phone lines.

Male: Yes, this is Minnesota; can you hear me?

Susan Golonka: Yes.

Male: All right, I've got a question on the maintenance of effort side of TANF. And to what degree are we able to work around the new spending test?

Youth programs have been around for quite a while. And it may be quite a burden to go back to ‘95 to figure out what we were spending and what we’re spending on wages. Is that going to be a difficulty?

Perhaps can we claim this under the pregnancy prevention purpose of the act and get around a new spending test altogether?

Male: For state money?

Male: For state money yes, state and local money.

Male: Used for wages and kids.

Susan Golonka: Yes, I suspect that a lot of folks on the line are totally puzzled about this. But for the TANF folks I would invite someone from HHS to respond.

Female: Yes. But they’re not going to.

Mark Greenberg: Sure. So the reference is to the new spending test that is part of the 1996 law that basically says that in order for an expenditure to count towards maintenance of effort, if it was not part of the old ASDC structure that it by state or local government, it needs to be an expenditure above what the entity was spending in 1995.

So and that is statutory so it does apply. You know, we do understand that 1995 was a long time ago, but it is statutory and we don't have discretion around that.

So it is when you’re looking at identifying your expenditures it is a consideration that you have to bring into it. And (Peter) I think would add something else?

Peter Germanis: But many states didn't have subsidized employment expenditures at all. And I think in many cases we need to review these on a case by case basis.

So you should contact the regional office and we should look exactly at the types of expenditures you had to see whether or not they would fall into that category.

Larry Temple: Susan could - this is Larry.

Susan Golonka: Yes?

Larry Temple: ...Purposes three and four do not require a needy family definition in order to receive those services.

And if we were serving and this goes to our application. We were looking at Urban League and several other studies that were showing the value of work and promoting marriage and preventing out of wedlock births.

And if we serve these single individuals from 18 to 24 - under purposes three and four not having to meet the needy family, would not the oversight of those employers count as MOE?

Mark Greenberg: So the broader question I think that Larry is raising is would it be possible to count expenditures for a subsidized employment program or for a Summer Youth Program under purposes three and four?

And under purposes three and four in TANF there is not a requirement that those receiving the benefit or service be needy.

But purposes three and four, purpose three relates to reducing and preventing out of wedlock pregnancy. Purpose four relates to the formation and maintenance of two parent family.

And we have not made a determination that one of the - that the subsidized employment programs or a summer jobs program have a sufficient nexus to be able to be considered to further TANF purposes three or four.

So the focus for state efforts around this really does need to continue to be (purposes) one and two.

Larry Temple: Yes that's a shame because I - there's a lot of research. I mean nobody wants to marry an unemployed person. So it would certainly help.

But I'm like WC Fields reading the Bible. I'm looking for loopholes, so...

Susan Golonka: Well no, I think that's a good question. And actually, you know, several other folks have raised the issue of whether or not you could tie the program to some other purposes, the other purposes of TANF.

We have a lot of remaining questions but actually this call's gone on for an hour and a half.

For the questions that have come in online we will try to respond to them or route them to the appropriate state or federal official. And so I think we will stop with that.

I know that we had at least 300 plus folks involved or on the line on this call. And so we know there was no lack of interest. I'm getting messages here. We don't want to ignore all of those questions so we will respond to them.

We will also have this call archived and online right away, and a transcript in three to four days.

I want to thank all of our speakers both our federal partners and our state partners for a lot of great information, a lot of good ideas. And I hope folks feel a little bit inspired, have a sense of urgency as well. And we look forward to working with you all as we all go forward. And I'm trying to ask my partners here if there's anything I've left out at the end to say.

Okay and also to thank Amy - who has really kept our call moving along very efficiently in terms of the technology. So thank you everyone.

Amy Leslie: Thank you.

Susan Golonka: Okay. And Amy I guess I'll turn it over to you at this point.

Amy Leslie: Thank you. And with that we must conclude today's online seminar. If you have any additional questions or comments for our presenters you can send them to (em@nga.org). Please note that the archive of today's program will be available for viewing within two to three business days following this event.

Thank you for your participation in today's seminar. We hope to see you here again soon. Thank you.

Operator: This concludes today's program. Thank you. You may now disconnect.

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