

ELL Co-Enrollment Pilot Program Quarterly Stakeholders Brief

April – June 2020

Quarter 5
Upcoming TA



All Grantee
Webinar, July 2020



Virtual Coaching
Session with Each Site,
August 2020



Community of
Practice Call,
September 2020



Quarter Four Activities At-A-Glance

ELL Co-Enrollment project teams spent this quarter adapting their programs to fit COVID-19 response guidelines. All teams had to revisit both how to deliver services effectively within a COVID-19 response framework as well as what the most pressing needs of their ELL clients were. Despite the challenge of a rapidly changing environment and unprecedented levels of economic retraction, each grantee partnership team was able to adapt in order to continue providing services to their ELL clients throughout this time. Adaptations included new creative approaches to service delivery, targeted assessment of client needs, and the provision of additional supportive services in order to be responsive to the most urgent and important needs of clients. Highlights include the following.

- With support from state partners, IRC hosted a **Webinar for grantees on [Overcoming Digital Literacy Barriers and Best Practices for Remote Client Case Management](#)**. This call focused on providing practical strategies and tools grantees can use to engage ELL clients remotely through a variety of technology platforms in order to continue service provision during the COVID-19 response.
- The TA Team created and delivered **[Delivering Quality Services Remotely Resource Packet: A Toolkit for Case Managers and ELL Navigators](#)**. This toolkit, consisting of six resources, seeks to provide practical real-time guidance to direct service staff for effective program delivery during the pandemic.
- ELL Co-Enrollment case managers and ELL Navigators engaged in the pilot project's second **[Community of Practice call](#)**. This call both introduced the Resource Packet and provided direct service staff on this project the chance to engage around shared challenges and experiences.

Delivering Quality Services Remotely: Spotlight on the Case Manager's Role in Supporting Client's Economic Wellbeing

The *Delivering Quality Services Remotely Resource Packet* consists of six unique tools that direct service staff working with ELL clients are able to leverage in order to better meet client needs during COVID-19 response efforts. Each of these tools focus on addressing a new service delivery challenge that has been brought on by implications of the coronavirus pandemic. For example, **two of these tools, the *Making Financial Choices in a Time of Economic Hardship* resource and the *Client Economic Wellbeing Assessment Checklist* are focused on supporting ELL Navigators and case managers with understanding and meeting the changing financial needs of clients during this time.**

During this period of severe economic disruption, more than 40 million Americans have experienced layoffs and this hardship has disproportionately impacted low-income workers and communities of color. English Language Learners remain particularly vulnerable, making up a significant portion of California's workforce in the hardest hit industries such as hospitality, food service, and tourism. **As a consequence, ELLs are facing unprecedented levels of threats to their economic wellbeing including their ability to pay rent, bills, and meet basic needs.** As WIOA-funded service providers serving ELLs, grantees are on the front lines of supporting clients through these challenges by assisting with applications to local emergency assistance funds, deploying additional supportive services, working with clients to create adapted personal and family budgets, enrolling in public benefit programs, providing referrals to partner organizations that specialize in financial coaching, and more. Working with ELL clients to understand and support their urgent economic needs during this time of uncertainty is of central importance to maintaining their ability to participate in and benefit from skills training and career supports going forward.

ELL Navigators are able to use these two economic wellbeing focused tools either together or independently to assess the financial situation of their clients. The checklist tool specifically provides a guide for case managers to use in assessing the economic wellbeing of a client and understanding what actions to take. **It outlines specific next steps and guidance for each answer a client might provide on the tool, effectively creating an economic wellbeing action plan tailored to each client that completes it.** This tool can be particularly effective when used both during an initial intake, as well as with clients already engaged in services, especially if the client or a family member experiences a job loss or significant reduction in work hours or pay. The *Making Financial Choices in a Time of Economic Hardship* resource provides case managers with specific guidance to share with clients who may be struggling to pay bills and make ends meet in difficult financial circumstances. **It outlines which bills are most important to pay, which can wait, and which might be able to be forgiven.** It also shares specific advice for dealing with debt collectors with respect to prioritizing bills.

Together these two resources aim to equip case managers and ELL Navigators with further knowledge and guidance for supporting their ELL clients during this challenging economic time.

Client Name	
ELL Navigator	

Part A: Financial Capability Questions

Are you currently employed?	Yes	No
If employed would you like to work more hours or search for a higher paying job?	Yes	No
If unemployed, would you like to obtain a job?	Yes	No
Have you lost your job due to COVID-19, become the primary caregiver to a family member ill with COVID-19, have no childcare options due to COVID-19, been required to quarantine for 14 or more days due to COVID-19, or otherwise had your ability to work directly impacted by COVID-19?	Yes	No
Do you currently have a personal budget, spending plan, or financial plan?	Yes	No
If you had an unexpected expense or someone in your family lost a job, got sick or had another emergency, would your family be able to come up with money to make ends meet within a month?	Yes	No
Do you currently have a savings account that you regularly add money to for future use?	Yes	No
Over the past month, has your family's spending been less than total income?	Yes	No
In the past month have you been charged a late fee on a loan or bill?	Yes	No
Do you expect to be able to pay your rent or mortgage next month?	Yes	No
Do you expect to have sufficient income to cover your basic necessities such as groceries and essential medicine next month?	Yes	No

Part B: Additional Screening

Are you currently receiving TANF Cash Aid?	Yes	No	Monthly Amount: \$ _____
Are you currently receiving CalFRESH/SNAP?	Yes	No	Monthly Amount: \$ _____
Are you currently receiving Unemployment Insurance or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance?	Yes	No	Monthly Amount: \$ _____
Are you currently receiving any other state or federal benefit?	Yes	No	Monthly Amount: \$ _____

The Economic Wellbeing Checklist Tool in the "Delivering Quality Services Remotely Resource Packet"

Re-Opening RichmondWORKS & COVID Response

On March 16th of this year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the RichmondWORKS team, much like other grantees, was ordered closed by a comprehensive Shelter in Place Order initiated by Contra Costa Health Services. The RichmondWORKS facility is comprised of a two story, 16,000 square foot building, staffed by 30 employees. On a typical day their team serves between 50 and 100 clients, including ELL Co-Enrollment clients, supporting them with job searching and career building assistance. Despite their office closure the Richmond team was able to carry forward program and service delivery to clients through creative and adaptive means. Throughout this effort **the Richmond team began immediately planning for additional adaptations and changes to both their physical office space and program operations that would be necessary in order to re-open their office and re-start in-person services.**

Richmond began this work by creating internal teams to identify and assess each service they provide in terms of its adaptability to local social distancing guidelines. Each team selected a leader and created a plan for researching potential program adaptations that might be needed and setting deadlines for updated program design proposals. Health and safety measures related to COVID-19 along with the provision of quality, client-centered services were the foundational principles guiding this work. Four teams were central to this process – the Safety and Logistics Team, the Triage and Services Team, the Eligibility and Intake Team, and the Business Services and Career Planning Team. Key adaptations and recommendations made by each team are detailed below.

Safety & Logistics

- Plexiglas barriers installed between client and staff meeting places
- Hand sanitizer stations placed at strategic points throughout the RichmondWORKS building
- Staff schedule for hourly sanitizing of the facility
- Appropriate masks, face shields, and thermometers provided to staff for regular use
- Signage installed throughout the RichmondWORKS building to direct both clients and employees to maintain social distancing, use the hand sanitizer stations and wear masks
- Crowd control barriers set up to maintain distancing between clients both within and outside of the building



RichmondWORKS staff highlight the new Plexiglas barriers installed between client and staff meeting places.

Triage & Services

- All client engagement set to be through appointment only with no more than 20 people, including both clients and staff, to be in the building at one time.

- A greeter meets clients outside the facility and checks them in for their appointment using an iPad. This new triage format was inspired by the DMV and Kaiser Permanente. During check in, each client is given a color coded slip indicating the purpose for their visit (i.e. career center, meeting with a career planner, etc.) to allow the RichmondWORKS staff to easily funnel clients to the appropriate personnel once inside.

Eligibility Determination & Intake

Processing

- All eligibility assessment and intake processing to be completed by phone remotely with clients using electronic signature technology whenever possible
- When hard copies of eligibility documentation are needed, clients are supported in making an individual appointment or talked through the process of scanning and emailing necessary documents to the appropriate program coordinator or case manager



RichmondWORKS team members set up to meet clients outside of their office building with social distancing measures in effect.

Business Services & Career Planning

- Shift to using social media to broadly share job openings and program service opportunities with clients
- Computers in the RichmondWORKS career center have been adapted to include digital signage to showcase open jobs and opportunities
- Career coaching and job readiness trainings shifted to take place remotely via Zoom, YouTube, and other digital means. Career coaching that must take place in-person/ is conducted in a newly designed room that divides the case manager and the client with a Plexiglas barrier
- Basic skills testing now taking place using TABE testing on-line or in-person by appointment only

In order to ensure effective implementation of these COVID-19 response guidelines the Richmond team has created a new set of written policies and procedures to align with these adaptations and extensive staff training has been conducted.

The Richmond team shared that by working together on creating these project adaptations to maintain the safety of clients and staff, they built greater camaraderie and strengthened their working relationships. The adaptations have also alleviated stress and panic around the pandemic from their working environment. Richmond believes that their building and program modifications demonstrate to clients their commitment to providing a safe and healthy environment for everyone to engage within.



The RichmondWORKS team celebrates the partial reopening of their office space.

A Message From The Evaluation Team

Dear Grantees,

Thank you so much for making yourselves available to have a conversation with us about how you and your teams have been engaging in grant activities after Shelter-In-Place (SIP) orders went into effect. During these conversations we learned that, albeit at a slower pace, many of you continue to provide services either in person, or remotely, via phone, e-mail, mail, and some virtual platforms. We heard that even though enrollment and co-enrollment have slowed down significantly and that some relationships with Title II/CAEP partners have been disrupted, you, along with your core partners, have begun major adaptations to continue providing much needed services for ELLs. Adaptations have been wide-ranging, from physically adapting spaces to follow social distancing guidelines, to leveraging many types of tools to continue engaging with clients remotely.

During the month of June, we will be getting in touch with some of your Title II/CAEP core partners to schedule one-hour phone interviews. We are especially interested in learning whether and how their educational and training services have continued since SIP began and how ELL participants have been engaging with course content. We are also wanting to learn about potential promising practices and challenges they have encountered in trying to make continued learning for ELLs possible and how co-enrolling and co-case management activities have supported these efforts.

Over the coming months, the evaluation team will be preparing summaries and pilot profiles to share with all of you, as well as with state partners, regarding what we have learned over the course of the grants and describing the seismic changes that have taken place amid the COVID crisis. We look forward to your comments on those documents.

If you have any questions about upcoming evaluation activities, please feel free to get in touch with any of us on the evaluation team: Mahika Rangnekar (mailto:Mahika_Rangnekar@spra.com), Kate Dunham (mailto:kate_dunham@spra.com), and Renatta DeFever (mailto:renatta_defever@spra.com).

Resource Link Library

The Annie E. Casey Foundation blog post [Strategies for Helping Low Income Workers During Uncertain Times](#), published on May 27, 2020, shares 12 case studies and recommendations for how lawmakers, employers and education and workforce development professionals can better serve and improve conditions for workers in the face of a rapidly changing economy.

The Delivering Quality Services Remotely Resource Packet can be found [here](#) along with the Community of Practice [slide deck](#) and [recording](#) that introduces and discusses the tool.

[Cal/OSHA and Statewide Industry Guidance](#) provides workplace safety and health regulations for the State of California in multiple languages across multiple industry sectors.

The National Partnership for New Americans [Resource Library](#) shares links to a multitude of resources helpful to organizations supporting immigrants during the coronavirus pandemic.

The [Adult Basic Education Resource Site](#) is a compilation of resources, put together by the [EdTech Center](#), that include tips, strategies and tools on rapidly putting together an effective virtual adult basic education program.

[Building a Digitally Resilient Workforce: Creating On-Ramps to Opportunity](#), is a report by Digital US that discusses the central importance of digital skills to workforce success and proposes several approaches to building digital resilience.