

**Performance Reporting FAQ #1:
ARRA High Growth and Emerging Industries (HGEI) Grants
December 2010**

The following is a list of answers to frequently asked questions regarding the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-approved forms and instructions that ARRA High Growth and Emerging Industries (HGEI) grantees are required to follow for their quarterly progress reports. This document should be viewed as a supplement to other technical assistance materials that have been and will be disseminated to ARRA HGEI grantees for performance reporting.

ARRA HGEI grantees are the following:

- State Labor Market Information Improvement grants (SGA/DFA PY-08-17)
- Green Capacity Building grants (SGA/DFA PY-08-21)
- State Energy Sector Partnership and Training grants (SGA/DFA PY-08-20)
- Energy Training Partnership grants (SGA/DFA PY-08-18)
- Pathways out of Poverty grants (SGA/DFA PY-08-19)
- Health Care and Other High Growth and Emerging Industries grants (SGA/DFA PY-09-01)
- Category 1-Health Care Virtual Platform Grantees and Category 2-Enhancing the Ability of Community- and Faith-Based Organizations to Deliver Virtual Career Exploration Services, Including Health Care Careers grants (SGA/DFA PY 09-09)
- ARRA of 2009 Health Care Pilot grants

Required OMB Reporting Form and Instructions

All ARRA HGEI grantees are required to use the OMB-approved Reporting Forms and Instructions for quarterly progress reporting and to submit these reports through the Recovery Act Data (RAD) system. Quarterly reports and records must be submitted no later than 45 days after the end of each reporting quarter, unless otherwise specified by ETA.

ETA has received OMB-approval for a three-year extension with revisions of the current reporting package and to revise the reporting package to incorporate a small number of changes to the basic quarterly progress reports for ARRA HGEI grantees. **These new OMB-approved quarterly progress reporting requirements will take effect on January 1, 2011, and grantees must follow them starting on that date and for the report that is submitted for the quarter ending March 31, 2011. Please note that grantees do NOT need to follow these new requirements for the report that is submitted for the quarter ending December 31, 2010.** Changes include minor updates to the quarterly performance report (ETA-9153 Form) and to the Reporting Glossary and Guide. These changes are detailed below:

- A change in the format of the “Ethnicity/Race” section of the 9153 Form to make it clear that “Ethnicity” and “Race” are two separate categories and that the “Hispanic/Latino” category refers to ethnicity, not race;
- An update in section C.1c of the 9153 Form to clarify that grantees should report specifically on apprenticeship activities that are registered;
- An update to the Reporting and Glossary Guide to help grantees understand the difference between sections C.1d (Participated in Pre-apprenticeship Activities and C.2 (Participated in Basic Skills Training) on the 9153 form;
- Minor formatting updates to sections C.1a and D.1c to clarify that certain industry categories are subsets of other categories;
- An update to section D of the 9153 form to emphasize the importance of credential attainment and clarify that degrees and certificates are examples of credentials; and
- A minor formatting update to section B of the 9153 form to make it clear that grantees should report “Education Level” categories by type of credential attainment.

None of these updates will impact the burden for respondents, and all improve the clarity and effectiveness of these reporting materials.

Reporting Exiters

The term “exit” should not be confused with the term “completion.” Unlike completion, exit is reported for all participants, successful or not, after 90 consecutive days has passed from the end date of the latest grant-funded service. Participants are auto-exited in RAD after 90 consecutive days have passed from the end date of a participant’s latest service. Participants should not be exited immediately following the end of a grant-funded service or completion of a program (e.g. after drop-out or the last day of class/graduation) – 90 consecutive days without receiving a grant-funded service must pass before the participant is exited. Further, grantees should not “manually exit” a participant in RAD, unless they meet one of the manual exit exceptions identified in RAD, which include: institutionalized; health/medical; deceased; family care; member of the active reserve force; or retirement. All participants that do not meet the criteria for a manual exit are auto-exited in RAD after 90 consecutive days have passed from the end date of a participant’s latest service.

Note, retention and follow-up services may be financed with grant funds (in accordance with grantees’ Statements of Work), but for performance reporting purposes are not considered “grant-funded services” and do not extend the “date of exit.” Refer to the *Reporting Glossary and Guide* for additional information on retention and follow-up services.

Reporting Performance Outcomes: Real-time Performance Measures and Common Performance Measures

Grantees should note that two separate types of outcome measures are used to measure success in ARRA HGEI training grants: real-time performance measures and common performance measures.

Real-time Performance Measures

“Real-time” performance measures are performance measures reported by all grantees for the quarter in which the activity occurred, as aligned with their Statement of Work. For example, participants should be reported in D.1c.i Number Entered Employment in the quarter they obtained unsubsidized employment, regardless of their status that quarter as a participant or exiter. Real-time performance measures include: began receiving education/job training activities (data element C.1); completed education/job training activities (data element D.1); received credential (data element D.1a); entered employment (data element D.1c); and employment retention (data element D.1c.ii).

Common Performance Measures

Common performance measures are exit-based, meaning the tracking of these employment-based outcomes begin after a participant has exited the program. Common performance measures include: entered employment rate; employment retention rate; and, average earnings.

ETA will calculate these common performance measures on behalf of the grantee for all participants served with grant funds and provide common performance measure outcome results to grantees, once calculated. ETA will work with its state partners to match SSNs with employment data available from state Unemployment Insurance (UI) and other administrative wage records (e.g., Federal and Military employment). Please note: grantees do NOT report individual participant outcomes on the common performance measures; they provide specific data elements for participants to ETA, and ETA calculates these measures on behalf of the grantee.

Reporting Entered Employment

When reporting participants in the “Entered Employment” data element in ETA Form 9153 (data element D.1c), grantees should note that data element applies to participants who complete education/job training activities and who obtain unsubsidized employment. Participants who complete education/job training activities and enter full-time or part-time unsubsidized employment, or are self-employed, can be reported as “Entered Employment” for this data element, assuming the participants satisfy the criteria for this data element as specified in ETA Form 9153 and related materials. Grantees should pursue placement opportunities consistent with the placement activities and strategies described in their grant statements of work (SOW), which may include placing participants in part time employment. Grantees who have participants having difficulty securing full time employment and that find that part-time employment opportunities are more prevalent should note this information in their Quarterly Narrative Report, section F.1H Additional information, so that ETA can work with the grantee to provide technical assistance in this area, as appropriate.

Reporting Incumbent Workers as Entered Employment

ETA’s definition of Entered Employment (data element D.1c) includes individuals who are employed when they begin training and enter a new position of employment after program completion, even if the new position is with the same employer, as long as the

individuals utilize the competency or competencies they acquired through grant-funded education/job training in their new position.

If Incumbent Workers complete grant-funded education/job training activities and retain employment, but do not meet ETA's definition of Entered Employment (data element D.1c) for the purposes of reporting on the ETA-9153 Form, then these outcomes should be reported in the Narrative Report portion of the Quarterly Progress Report, section F.1H Additional Information, if the grantee has identified outcome projections for these activities in their Statement of Work.

Reporting Employment Retention

When reporting participants who have retained employment (data element D.1c.ii), this data element applies to participants who complete education/job training activities, who obtain unsubsidized employment and were previously reported as Entered Employment (D.1c. Number Entered Employment), and have retained unsubsidized employment in the 1st and 2nd quarters following the quarter of initial placement. Participants who retain employment during this period in a job different than their job of initial placement, or participants who are employed in self-employment or part-time employment during this period, can be reported in Employment Retention (D.1c.ii) for this data element.

Grantees who have participants having difficulty retaining full time employment should note this information in their Quarterly Narrative Report, section F.1H Additional information.

Verifying Self-Employment for Participant Employment Status

Individuals who are self-employed can be reported as employed, entered employment (data element D.1c), and as retaining employment (data element D.1c.ii) for the purposes of performance reporting. Grantees should identify appropriate documentation for the purpose of determining and documenting self-employed status. Some acceptable forms of documentation to verify self-employment could include written verification of self-employment (such as tax records, business records, or self-employment verification forms), as well as self-attestation if written records are not easily accessible.

Recovery Act Data (RAD) System

A RAD FAQ is now posted on your SGA's Community of Practice Web page.

For technical assistance with the RAD system, grantees may contact the EBSS help desk at (202) 693-2682 or appsupport.ebss@dol.gov. Be sure to include your grant number, grant name, and specific details regarding your request. For non-technical performance

reporting questions, grantees should contact their respective Federal Project Officer (FPO).

Security of Social Security Numbers within RAD

It is important to note that grantees are required to collect Social Security Numbers (SSNs) for all participants served with grant funds. USDOL/ETA, on behalf of the grantees, will work with its state partners to match SSNs with employment data available from state Unemployment Insurance (UI) and other administrative wage records (e.g., Federal and Military employment). This matching procedure is necessary in order for USDOL/ETA to collect consistent and reliable aggregate outcome information for each grantee by calculating a set of Common Performance Measures that includes entry into employment, employment retention, and six-month average earnings. Please note, grant-funded services cannot be denied to individuals because of failure to disclose an SSN.

After a grantee has input participant SSNs into the RAD system, SSNs are blocked from view in the RAD system by a secure format (XXX-XX-XXXX) and stored and transmitted in a protected format using strong encryption techniques that are mandated by Federal Law, and are approved by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). DOL/ETA staff do not have access to participant-level information stored in the RAD system (which includes SSNs, name, birth date, etc), and are able to only view performance data in aggregate format after the Grant Signatory has certified and submitted performance information.