



**SCSEP Peer-to-Peer (P2P)  
Session 2 – Skills Training  
February 24, 2021  
Workgroup Notes – Breakout Room #3**

**Question #1**

**How are you delivering your virtual/remote skills training for your participants? (e.g. online learning, pen & paper)?**

- ✓ [Grantee] When we started, our only option was remote. We couldn't do pen and paper. Our state had a pilot with [Coursera](#) providing free training for all SCSEP participants. Through the American Job Center, (AJC) they got a free account. Coursera provides 8000 free courses. Lots of technology training and literacy skills, communication skills, self-help, and psychology courses. We also ran a pilot to provide health insurance program through "Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone (SHINE).

- [Facilitator's comment] I know there was also a course offered by Coursera for contact tracers.

- ✓ [Grantee] We work with our sub-grantee and COVID-19 has been a real challenge. In the fall, we were gearing up to get people enrolled. We didn't fully realize what we could do. A4TD shared a pen and paper document that we could use. We've been facilitating and promoting virtual trainings. The One-Stop system has really stepped up in terms of virtual training.

There are lots of courses you can audit in Coursera. We are now organizing around creating intervals. Like, a month's worth of virtual training, or a month's worth of pen and paper. Also, if there are restrictions on how many people can be in an office, our time working remote will be much longer. I want to give a shout out to A4TD. It's brilliant how they organized on such a scale to be able to present using pen and paper.

- ✓ [Grantee] We have 25% of our participants back to their Community Service Assignment (CSA's). Some we have been able to bring back to train from home, the majority of our participants are working from home remote.
- ✓ [Grantee] We encounter two types of folk; those that have internet access and those that don't. Even some websites like [TechSoup](#) and [Khan Academy](#) have been helpful sites for our participants. We've been working with them to create a remote Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to document what they're taking and when they took it. For those who didn't have technology, we created workbooks. Creating it was a tremendous amount of work. We found that for many of our participants, Coursera was too hard for them. We found that some people once they got started did not have the skills to continue. For some that have low literacy, they needed to tape it. We've also established a longer technology program. We hope to provide Chromebooks to our participants. We are now in constant contact with our participants.



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**Question #2**

**How have you assessed the participants' abilities and comfortability to engage effectively in a virtual learning environment? Specifically the following:**

- a. Use of computer equipment**
  - [Grantee] For some participants it was easy for us to send an IT guy to our participants to have them get set up and have access using the internet. There were other participants, however, that were highly motivated who didn't have computers but had access to computers and the internet. We were able to capitalize on their initiative.
- b. Internet connectivity**
- c. Access to and familiarity with virtual meeting platforms (Google Meets, MS Teams, Zoom)**
  - [Facilitator's comment] Does anyone else want to share?  
No responses.

**Question #3**

**For those who do not have the necessary equipment to train virtually, how have you mitigated these deficiencies?**

- ✓ [Grantee] We have made some strides. We do online training using American Job Centers (AJC's). Here in Connecticut, we can access them by appointment only. There are job readiness workshops available. We have tried to tier our participants at 3 levels based on Community Service Assignments (CSA's). Example: training on telework that we are hoping to roll out this Spring, we are looking at going the pen and paper route. As you send the packets out its important to confirm they are doing what they say they're doing. Participants are feeling alone and isolated. State University of New York (SUNY) in Connecticut and the public libraries have been very helpful in terms of access.
  - [Facilitator's comment] The care and well-being of participants is very important; remembering to keep that participant at the center of everything.
- ✓ [Grantee] We encourage participants to make the most out of host agency partners.



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**Question #4**

**What types of training are you providing to your participants? (e.g., soft skills, job readiness, or other skills training related to the participant’s goals and objectives)**

- ✓ [Grantee] We are doing a lot with soft skills training and placement. We instituted training on how to do remote interviews and how to take part in virtual job fairs. We are utilizing phone conference training. We have sent out workbooks to do back and forth work – lots of bouncing around. We are at 60% capacity with our host agencies. We have created a Learning Management System (LMS) on a week to week basis, because it fluctuates.
- ✓ [Grantee] We pretty much have the same troubles with pen and paper and using the mail. We mitigate this by calling participants and coming together to work on things as a group. In Oregon, they do a weekly town hall on Zoom. Initially they had a handful of participants, but now they have about 80 people. Our meet-and-greet events are used to highlight anyone that has secured employment. We also have sessions focused on technology that were very eye-opening for me. They also talk about vaccines, tax preparation and other relevant topics. Initially, our participants couldn’t do anything but now they use platforms like Zoom pretty regularly. We are looking to do a technology survey. For us, it’s all over the place in terms of whether people are in-person or not in-person.
  - [Facilitator’s comment - We know COVID-19 has forced everyone to learn technology. It’s good to see participants able to get more involved. If you guys have information you can share, please send it to [SCSEPtechnicalassistance@dol.gov](mailto:SCSEPtechnicalassistance@dol.gov) mailbox.

**Question #5**

**How can the AJCs be more involved in helping you and your participants with training? (e.g., virtual, in-person)?**

- ✓ [Grantee] We are pretty integrated with our AJC’s. Prior to COVID-19, we shared customer agreements with them so it was pretty easy for our agencies to work remotely, since mid-March. We now have weekly meetings with all partners, adult basic education Voc Rehab (VR) services. We all meet for 90 minutes to address urgent issues that come across the “Must Hire Desk.” We try to get people as much help as we can. The AJC’s are completely overwhelmed. Those who don’t provide administrative services are constantly in contact with each other.

If there are any roll-outs of new initiatives, I make sure to emphasize older workers and the importance to remember them. Hospitality industry for example is nonexistent in Massachusetts right now. We are running our first virtual



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information sessions with the local AJC. We will be providing information sessions on Friday and asking additional questions. There are now 30 people enrolled into the information session between the AJC and older workers.

- ✓ [Grantee] it depends on state. We have some areas that are open and accepting clients. There are others that aren't doing much of anything. To that point, there are a lot of non-profits working together to make referrals. It's becoming a recruiting issue for us.

### **Question #6**

#### **How can you integrate your virtual/remote training delivery strategy into a sustainable program model?**

- ✓ [Grantee] It will become sustainable but what it will look like is unknown now. Many people fear another pandemic in the future. Also, the transition to remote work is now here to stay. I think Salesforce converted its staff to all-remote. I don't know what an end-date will be. We are trying to make sure older adults are prepared. I hope the Department of Labor (DOL) will keep this open, remote work for SCSEP format.
  - [Facilitator's comment] – We know this really could be the new normal; remote working. Anyone else like to share?
- ✓ [Grantee] We hope remote training will continue. SCSEP has evolved and that's a good thing. Lots of good promising practices. We developed a peer mentoring program through the demonstration grant that we intend to keep. We are giving Chromebooks to facilitate peers learning from other peers. We have built an infrastructure that allows host agencies to host participants remotely.
- ✓ [Grantee] We hope that remote learning will be able to better reach rural folks.
  - [Facilitator's question] - Have you run into connectivity issues?
  - [Grantee] We have some isolated folks who don't have a lot of remote options.
  - [Facilitator's comment] We look forward to hearing about your outcomes from the demonstration grant.
- ✓ [Grantee] Not sure of the total remote training aspect. In preparation for that, we are now going to train people on using Zoom or other platforms so that if this happens again, we will be prepared. We will keep this as part of our core training going forward.
  - [Facilitator's comment] Maybe this could become a part of your orientation process going forward.



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**Question #7**

**What else is happening that you would like to share? (challenges, successes, and promising practices)**

- ✓ [Grantee] The case management burden during COVID-19 is substantial. The amount of phone calls with people has increased exponentially. And it has really taken up much more time. Given people's isolation it means that sometimes we are the only people talking to our participants. It's showing the value of SCSEP and we hear this regularly from our participants.
  - [Facilitator's comment] We hear that staff were not necessarily prepared to be curriculum developers so we understand the burden sites have had to endure adjusting their service delivery models.
  
- ✓ [Grantee] Given that SCSEP requires in-person participation, what are we doing in terms of policy to ensure that virtual assignments can now be adjusted?
  - [Facilitator's comment] We recognize that this may be the new normal. One of the reasons for P2P is so that we can learn what Grantees are doing and what policies have been implemented that are successful.
  
- ✓ [Grantee] What we identified is that people who got their vaccines were often more involved in virtual learning, that's how they were able to make their appointments online). We need to have more national programs that are reimbursable.
  
- ✓ [Grantee] We now want to offer "healthy aging" programming to address diabetes, healthy eating, etc. We also want to reach out to older Latino populations in other parts of the state. Those are universal programs.

**Shared through TEAMS Chat:**

- ✓ [Grantee] - Individualized virtual training. Online and by phone for those with no access. We've been adding computer skills training to increase virtual participation.
- ✓ [Grantee] We sent out surveys.
- ✓ [Grantee] I would like to hear more about the loner [laptop] program.
- ✓ [Grantee] We are certainly the wheels on the bus.
- ✓ [Grantee] Since SCSEP does not cover CSA training from home what are we doing around policy?
- ✓ [Facilitator's comment] Great question, I will make sure to note this.
- ✓ [Grantee] Thank you for allowing us to learn together.
- ✓ [Facilitator's comment] Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to SCSEP.