

May 2022 Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) Fiscal Year 2022/Budget Period 4 Continuation Guidance Informational Call

May 5, 2022

Call Transcript

00:00:05.460 --> 00:12:10.619

Jennifer Hannah: Good afternoon, everyone I'm Jennifer Hannah deputy director for National preparedness programs branch here at ASPR and it's my pleasure to be with you today as we discuss the HPP Annual Cooperative Agreement FY 2022 BP for non-competing continuation guidance

Next slide please.

During today's call I will provide an overview of the continuation guidance application instructions. As Megan stated earlier, please feel free to ask questions in the chat box throughout the presentation on the specific sections that we are covering and then we'll save time at the end of the call to respond to those questions that have been entered into the chat and, of course, you can always come off mute and you can ask those questions live. Unfortunately, ASPR Grants Management was not able to join today's call, if you have any grants management questions, please contact your assigned grants management specialist. Next slide please.

I'll now begin with a brief overview of the Continuation Guidance Application packet and submission information. Next slide please.

All the recipients that were previously awarded under the FY 2019-2023 HPP cooperative agreement are, of course, are eligible to apply for continuation of funds. The continuation of funds for fiscal year 2022 Budget Period 4, which begins on July 1, 2022, and end June 3, 2023. Applications must be submitted electronically via grant solutions.gov by 11:59pm Eastern time on June 21, 2022. Late or incomplete applications could result in an enforcement action such as delay in the award or a reduction in funds. ASPR will accept requests for deadline extensions on rare occasion, and after adequate justification has been provided, continued funding is subject to the availability of funds in satisfactory progress - which is measured in part by the timely submission of required report. Next slide please.

To be eligible to receive the FY 2022 Budget Period 4 HPP continuation award, recipients must submit the documents on this screen through grantsolutions.gov. I won't walk through the entire list here because it is also included within the application instructions. Next slide please.

Additionally, it's optional to attach the following to your application unless they are applicable. One thing of note is especially the recipient level direct costs waiver request if you will be requesting. For the recipient level direct costs above 18%, you will need to submit a justification and follow the instructions that are included within the continuation guidance as well as those other documents that are listed here if they are applicable, please ensure that you do include those within your application. Next slide please.

Next, I'll review some of the requirements for the FY22 Budget Period 4 Continuation Application. Next slide please.

This slide, of course, depicts the benchmark as well as pandemic influenza planning requirements that everyone should be familiar with, but certainly wants to highlight a few things here. As stated, in the amended section 319 C1 G as a public service act describes the withholding of a statutorily mandated percentage of the awards in subsequent years for which HPP recipients that fail to substantially meet benchmark or to submit a pandemic influenza plan. For the Hospital Preparedness Program, you're not required to submit a pandemic influenza plan, rather we use the data that are submitted as part of the performance measures to meet that specific requirement. Failure will result in the withholding of a specified percentage of the award for either of the two immediately preceding fiscal years effective FY 2019. The possible percent of withholding is detailed in the chart.

ASPR is required to treat a failure to substantially meet a benchmark. A failure to submit the performance measures as part of the pandemic influenza plan to the Secretary as separate withholding action. But keeping in mind that no withholding will be put into place or will be implemented, of course, until substantial technical assistance is provided. One thing that did change from the Continuation Application, you will note here that for benchmark number two, which is the submission of quarterly federal financial reports – that benchmark is now being discontinued. If you have recently accessed the payment management system on the landing page there are instructions or an announcement that states that for HHS recipients, they are no longer required to submit the quarterly cash transaction report, but rather that that information is going to be pulled or rather updated in real time when you are drawing down funds from payment management system. I will confess I'm certainly not an expert on the payment management system, so if you have questions related to that update, please reach out to your assigned grants management specialist. The effective date of that new information or that change in submitting the quarterly task transaction report was April 1 of this year.

Please reach out to your grants management specialist for any additional information. Also pay close attention when you are reading the continuation guidance for any additional clarifications regarding any of the benchmarks that are listed here on this slide. Next slide please.

This is related to the requirements that are included in appendix A. The first pages, pages 15 through 27 in the continuation guidance, provide an overview of appendix A which you should be very familiar with, because it was included in the original 2019-2023 HPP FOA. These are the application requirements and capabilities objectives and activities. Please consider that the requirements outlined in the FOA and those added or clarified in previous continuation guidance instructions remain in effect and continue into the FY 2023 Budget Period 4. Appendix A includes a variety of requirements which are summarized on this slide. The requirements include – maintaining a response plan and developing the Radiation Search Annex in FY 2022 and as stated previously, of course, this is also a requirement that has been carried over from the FOA, as well as previous continuation guidance. Next slide please.

I want to take a moment to flag the following requirements that are included in the Budget Period 4 continuation application instructions and are due in the upcoming budget period. We have outlined dates requirements on this slide and the next slide, which includes the development of a health care system recovery plan and incorporating the radiation search annex into the healthcare coalition response plan. Please note that the requirement for the Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS plan incorporation into a health care coalition response plan was extended to FY 2022 Budget Period 4. I think we can go ahead and go to the next slide please.

Appendix C is for US territories, freely associated states, and isolated hospitals – you should refer to pages 28 through 31 of the continuation guidance for any appendix C modifications. All these recipients are encouraged to address all HPP activities outlined in the HPP FOA, including the use of HPP for coordinating health care situational awareness planning training and exercise that may require flexibility to folks if they're planning training and exercising activities at the health care facility level. Please make sure if you fall within this category that not only do you refer to some of the requirements are included within the appendix A as well as some of the administrative requirements that have been outlined within the FOA. Pay close attention to what is included in appendix C for any modifications for requirements that are also for Budget Period 4. Next slide please.

So next I'll share brief information about the HPP budget and work plan considerations. Next slide please.

ASPR populated the FY 2022 Budget Period 4 work plans and budgets in PERFORMS with recipients FY 2021 Budget Period 3 information, as the recipients request. Please ensure that all required recipient level and healthcare coalition work plan activities are addressed in your FY 2022 Budget Period 4 application based on the FY 2022 recipient and healthcare coalition work plan development checklist in the continuation application instructions found on pages 32-34. Please submit the continuation application input form in grant solutions by June 21, 2022, to ensure that your award is issued on time. Note again the award amount in PERFORMS are planning numbers and are your FY 2021 Budget Period 3 award amount, and we do anticipate in a few weeks that we will be updating those numbers with the final numbers which would allow you to be able to submit your application formally into PERFORMS. Keep in mind that June 21, 2022, is the deadline for submitting for your application. Next slide please.

So now I'm going to turn it over to Dave Csernack who is the Region 10 HPP Field Project Officer as well as one of our acting regional supervisors to cover this slide.

00:12:10.620 --> 00:15:37.709

Dave Csernack: Thank you, Jennifer. Good Afternoon everyone.

So as Jennifer mentioned as a member of the NHPP regional staff, I was asked to provide a brief overview of the recipient and HPP work plan development checklist. As you can see, this section is a new addition to the HPP continuation guidance and is based on feedback that we received from both recipients', healthcare coalitions, as well as our NHPP regional FPO's.

As you're all aware, the issued FOA away covers a five-year project period and is comprised of various requirements that range from overarching federal requirements, programmatic requirements, benchmarks, as well as annual recipient and sub-recipient requirements – some which are required every year and others which are due during specific budget periods. Additionally, other factors such as most recently COVID-19 drive modifications to these requirements and make it more difficult for us to track them from year to year.

So, to assist the recipients, sub-recipients, as well as our staff with developing and viewing BP4 applications, we developed a consolidated list of the required activities utilizing both the HPP FOA and applying the various updates and flexibilities over the past several budget periods. They need to be included in both the recipient and sub-recipient work plans. So, as you can

see, this list is broken down by recipient and healthcare coalition and intentionally includes program requirements, benchmarks, and capabilities specific activities to assist both applicants and reviewers with verifying all BP4 requirements are addressed in their respective work plans.

We have identified a total of 16 requirements for the recipients and 20 for the coalitions. While we may not have specifically included some requirements in your annual work plans in the past, such as benchmarks, we do recommend including these items in your work plans this year to ensure that they are completed within their specified deadlines. Additionally, for each required activity we identified the associated benchmark or capability that it falls under as well as some additional notes, as to whether it's an annual requirement or specific to BP4.

You may have also noted that some of the required activities note that they're not due until BP5, but we decided to include them here for those recipients and coalitions that choose to work on them now in BP4. An example of that is the specialty surge annex tabletops, as well as the Crisis Standards of Care exercise. Additionally, there are several activities for both recipients and coalitions that may not apply to everyone so if you're unsure about any of these requirements please work with your assigned FPO to determine if it applies to you or any of your coalitions.

If there are any questions on this checklist, I'm happy to address them during the Q and A session. I'd like to thank you all and I'll turn it back over to Jennifer.

00:15:37.710 --> 00:15:46.680

Megan Wassef: We will now move into our Q&A portion – I will open the line for additional questions. As a reminder, you may submit your questions in the chat box or raise your hand and ask one live and we already have a few questions in the chat box Jennifer would you like me to read them out for you?

00:15:58.380 --> 00:16:00.090

Jennifer Hannah: Yes, that would be great Megan, go ahead.

00:16:00.690 --> 00:16:16.920

Megan Wassef: So, we'll start with – “for the Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS HCC level exercise requirement, could our efforts and response to COVID-19 satisfy this exercise requirement if documented appropriately, as this has been a constant through the pandemic?”

00:16:20.250 --> 00:16:30.750

Jennifer Hannah: Thanks for that question. At this time, we have not determined all the flexibilities that will be implemented for Budget Period 4, but we'll certainly note this and then communicate it probably shortly after the start of the quarter on July 1. Thank you for bringing this to our attention. We don't have an answer for this at this very at this juncture, but certainly

will take a closer look at this and see if this is a potential flexibility that we may be able to implement for Budget Period 4.

00:16:52.920 --> 00:17:00.900

Megan Wassef: Thank you, Jennifer. Another question in the chat – “if we have not received final budget numbers by June 21, do we still submit in PERFORMS?”

00:17:04.410 --> 00:17:11.940

Jennifer Hannah: The performance module will remain open until the group received the final numbers. You'll note, if you have accessed, the application module – the submit button, I believe, is grayed out currently until those final numbers become available, and then you will be able to submit. If you have not received the final numbers by June 21 which I am almost positive she will have them before then, then you will still go ahead and just submit. You'll be able to download the detailed work plan and those other components that should be included within grant solution as part of the narrative, as well as the budget information and enter that into grant solution so that we can go ahead and make the award. Once we've received the final numbers, then you will be able to, of course, hit the submit button in PERFORMS, you will also be given ample time to be able to make those adjustments to your work plan, as well as your budget to reflect those final numbers.

00:18:16.440 --> 00:18:22.410

Megan Wassef: Thank you so much. Next question is – “Where do we locate the required MCM coordinator training?”

00:18:24.720 --> 00:18:32.490

Jennifer Hannah: The required MCM coordinator training that I believe is included within the section of it's related to the mandatory meetings section, that information will be shared once those trainings become available - we have not identified or pre-identified any specific trainings but rather just wanted to make sure that was included within the instruction.

00:18:52.830 --> 00:19:00.840

Megan Wassef: Thank you - next question. I believe you answered regarding the budget not being final and developing the application, but if anyone has any questions like I said – this will be recorded so feel free to refer to that.

The next question is regarding the recovery plan. “To be clear, the recovery plan is due by the end of BP4, and it will be confirmed in the APR in September 2023 - Is that correct?”

00:19:22.440 --> 00:19:32.790

Jennifer Hannah: That is correct, so just make sure that any of the plans that are required for BP4 are technically completed by June 30, 2023. Then they will be submitted with the APR in September of 2023, once we start collecting that information as a part of the annual progress report.

00:19:49.980 --> 00:19:58.050

Megan Wassef: And I see another question came in – “The performance capability work plan only focuses on the capabilities and doesn't include the benchmarks, how are we supposed to include the benchmark elements in our statement of intended work or are they simply assumed and are not in a necessary element of what's expected?”

00:20:10.200 --> 00:20:16.500

Jennifer Hannah: For some of the benchmarks, we already capture that information as part of your performance measures that you submit at the end of year. For other benchmarks, for example, I know with submitting the healthcare coalition annual work plan as well as one of the budget requirements that is part of sharing your spend plan. We captured that offline with your field project officer. Also, with some of those that may be specific to the health care coalitions we captured that within the coalition assessment tool as well. So, you're not required to. There is a benchmark tab and you're not required to report directly on those benchmarks within the application module.

00:21:03.450 --> 00:21:09.150

Megan Wassef: And as a reminder feel free to come off mute or raise your hand as well or leave questions in the chat. Looks like another one just came in – “have the requirements for clinical advisor changed from two FTE to one FTE? How do you expect us to afford a clinical advisor especially and FTE?”

00:21:54.360 --> 00:22:01.980

Jennifer Hannah: The requirement for the clinical advisor as well as the healthcare coalition response coordinator position, as we said – there's one empty across those two positions and it's at your discretion how you decide how you want to use it. That specific information is still included within the instructions, but the requirement hasn't changed.

00:22:25.620 --> 00:22:34.020

Megan Wassef: Another question just came in to follow up and it says “so, how do we match our budget to the work plan when it doesn't reference the benchmarks?”

00:22:41.280 --> 00:22:42.990

Jennifer Hannah: Sorry folks I was on mute – apologies for that. Just go ahead and match your budget plan to your work plan and you have in the in the past, beginning from Budget Period 1. You don't necessarily have to focus on the benchmarks, we do capture that information and track that elsewhere.

00:23:34.140 --> 00:23:41.460

Megan Wassef: Then looks like another question following up – “so do we not need to allocate all of our budget to parts of the work plan?”

Jennifer Hannah

00:23:47.280 --> 00:23:51.720

You do need to allocate all your budget to your work plan.

00:23:54.450 --> 00:23:59.430

Megan Wassef: And then another question came in – “when is the Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS due?”

00:24:02.220 --> 00:24:10.590

Jennifer Hannah: The Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS is due at the end of Budget Period 3, which is June 30, 2022.

00:24:12.630 --> 00:24:21.270

Megan Wassef: Another question came in – “you mentioned previously in this call that the RLDC rate was 18%, has that been reduced to 15% in BP4.”

00:24:23.670 --> 00:24:25.650

Jennifer Hannah: There is no specific marker for saying that within a particular budget period that you need to be at the 15%. What we noted in the application instructions, from the very beginning, is that the starting rate was 18% with the plan to be able to reduce that to 15% by the end of the five-year project. There's no specific information that's included within BP4 that indicates that we have reduced the RLDC rate to 15%.

00:25:09.270 --> 00:25:14.670

Megan Wassef: Looks like there was a question in the chat about when the recording will become available. As we answered – once the recording and the transcript are published on the ASPR website, I will send out a follow up email from today's webinar with those materials. We anticipate it to be soon. Another question – “can you announce the date again for the Crisis Standards of Care?”

00:26:07.350 --> 00:26:25.980

Jennifer Hannah: Yes, you should be completed with the Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS by the end of Budget Period 3, which is June 30, 2022.

00:26:30.870 --> 00:26:36.120

16157677597: hi I don't have access to the zoom function, I called in – may I ask a question?

00:26:38.100 --> 00:26:38.970

Megan Wassef: Sure, go ahead.

00:26:41.460 --> 00:26:41.730

16157677597: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think the reason that question was asked in the chat at the beginning of the conversation, my understanding was that the CONOPS was extended into BP4, which would mean the due date is 2023 not 2022 or had we misunderstood at the beginning.

00:27:07.230 --> 00:27:32.100

Jennifer Hannah: The CONOPS was extended to BP3, so it is to June 30, 2022. What was extended to BP4 was the actual integration of a CONOPS into the healthcare coalition response plan. Also, for the tabletop exercise as part of the healthcare coalition, that requirement or that due date for that exercise has now been aligned with the other response annexes due date. It just needs to be completed by the by the end of the project period. The CONOPS is due in BP3. I see that John Hallman has listed out all the different requirements and the due dates in the chat, although I know that the color stated that they were unable to access the chat function.

I can restate that for anyone that just may be on call by audio only – BP3 is a due date for the Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS. BP4 is the due date for the Crisis Standards of Care integration and the Crisis Standards of Care tabletop is viewed by BP5.

00:28:38.580 --> 00:28:39.900

16157677597: Thank you for the clarification.

00:28:41.400 --> 00:28:42.000

Jennifer Hannah: Absolutely.

00:28:46.170 --> 00:28:55.590

Megan Wassef: Another question about the Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS – “where is it submitted?”

00:28:57.450 --> 00:29:06.690

Jennifer Hannah: The Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS is a recipient requirement, it will be submitted in PERFORMS. We certainly will clarify this, I don't have the requirements right in front of me at this point, but I believe they will be due as part of the annual progress report.

00:29:18.660 --> 00:29:25.560

Megan Wassef: Another question – “Is the Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS a requirement for HCCs or both HCCs and recipients?”

00:29:26.970 --> 00:29:31.410

Jennifer Hannah: So, the Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS is a recipient requirement. However, the components of the Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS is supposed to be integrated into the healthcare coalitions response plan.

00:29:46.470 --> 00:29:53.190

Megan Wassef: To follow up on that – “are there any waivers are exceptions that one can apply for regarding a Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS?”

00:29:55.410 --> 00:33:41.039

Jennifer Hannah: Currently we don't have a waiver or an exception in place. If you could email us at HPP@hhs.gov and or contact your assigned field project officer and provide us with additional information regarding any specific challenges that you're experiencing in meeting that requirement that will certainly be helpful.

Megan Wassef: Now, as mentioned earlier if you're on the line, calling in from a phone and you can't type in the chat feel free to come off mute and ask a question. To make sure everyone gets an opportunity to ask a question, feel free to submit it and we'll give another minute here. and if there's no other questions, I'll pass it back to Jennifer.

Jennifer Hannah: Megan I'm not seeing any additional questions at this point. We certainly know that everyone is very busy, and has a very busy schedule, so we don't want to go to any longer than necessary. If we could go to the next slide Megan.

I just want to take a moment of course to thank everyone for joining us today and, of course, if you have any additional – hold on one second. We have one final question that came in regarding the Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS submitted - I believe the requirement is to submit it with the annual progress report. We'll certainly check that to make sure that I'm not mistaking it and – one of our field project officers just stated, it has to do with the APR or the annual progress report, thank you for that for confirming that, Angela.

00:33:41.040 --> 00:33:51.000

Jennifer Hannah: So, as stated, you know again thanks everyone for joining us today, if you have any additional questions regarding developing your application, please don't hesitate to reach out to your assigned field project officer for any programmatic questions or your assigned grants management specialist for any grants management questions. I did see one final question did come in.

00:34:06.870 --> 00:34:16.230

Megan Wassef: Yes, it looks like there is another question – “isn't the APR 90 days after the end of the BP, which would not be June?”

00:34:18.420 --> 00:35:44.850

Jennifer Hannah: So, when we provide a June date, meaning, by the end of the budget period, that means that's when you should be completed with that deliverable, that plan, that specific requirement. Then you are given 90 days typically following the end of the budget period to submit the requirement or the required document or the required plan. You should not be completing that Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS on September 30, but rather the intent is for you to complete that requirement at the end of the budget period which is June 30, 2022. Then, there's a reporting period which is usually 90 days after the end of the budget period so that is the official submission date. Specifically for that Crisis Standards of Care CONOPS – it would be around September 30 or when the annual progress report module opens in PERFORMS. You should be completed with those deliverables that have been identified as the end of the budget period, specifically for Budget Period 3, to have those completed by June 30, to submit those with the annual progress report.

And then there was one final question here was regarding the RESPTC award. As many of you may have seen as part of the FY 2022 consolidated appropriations act, Congress did include language for us to expand the Regional Ebola and other Special Pathogens Treatment network by at least three new treatment centers. We are working fast and furious and diligently to develop that NOFO.

We don't have at this point, an anticipated date regarding the release of that, but more information will be forthcoming as soon as the notice of funding opportunity is developed and, of course, goes through internal reviews and clearances and by the ASPR and others. Stay tuned, of course, once that is released, we will include that within our bulletin. It will also be available on grants.gov. Thank you for asking that question, and thanks again Angela for providing that additional information.

With that I'm just going to say thank you again everyone for joining us. We're going to adjourn our continuation guidance discussion. We will certainly be releasing and will ensure that we socialize and get out the recording as soon as it is available. if you have any questions, specific programmatic questions, please reach out to your assigned project officer. For any grants management questions, please direct those to your assigned ASPR grants management specialist. Thanks everyone again and have a wonderful day, thank you.