

FTF MONITORING UPDATE

FEBRUARY 12, 2010

Monitoring is an on-going and consistent process to provide accountability for **grantee compliance** (compliance) with scope of work, financial requirements and standards of practice; **quality assurance** (performance) of program development and implementation; and ultimately progress toward **system development** (system building).

There are two components of monitoring activities, desk based and on-site.

Desk Based Reviews—Monthly or Quarterly

- Off site (not grantee location)
- Review of data, narrative and financial information
 - Benchmarks developed through Strategy Workgroups – and reported on Evaluation Reports to Regional Area Teams – are compared quarterly to actual results, and if discrepancies are noted, confirmed with Evaluation and the Regional Team and then clarifications/corrections obtained through written request to grantee.
 - Narrative Report Review – financial monitoring specialist and regional and/or policy staff review narrative reports quarterly; issues that are identified are vetted back to Strategy Workgroup for expertise/information should follow-up be necessary with grantees. Follow-up is conducted in writing with the grantees.
 - Financial reviews are conducted monthly and consist of a review of a grantee reimbursement request; clarifications necessary are identified and communicated by email or verbally to grantees upon receipt of request so that the appropriate reimbursement can be processed within 30 days of receipt of sufficient financial data. Updates of expenditures for each grantee are provided to each Regional Area Team monthly.

On-Site Compliance—conducted as needed, but with intent to review every grantee at least once during a three year period. These may be prioritized and conducted more frequently for grantees demonstrating compliance issues as a result of desk-based reviews or local observations.

- Physically review documents
 - Financial – consisting of review of internal financial systems & processes, as well as specific verification of selected items that provide documentation supporting prior reimbursement requests are reviewed on-site to ensure reimbursements are accurate.

- Programmatic - specific compliance elements for programmatic components are being developed with the Strategy Workgroup to ensure standards of practice requirements are clearly identified for each program so monitor staff can accurately gauge program compliance (certificates, sign in sheets, personnel files/records, etc). Grantees will be expected to maintain specific data materials that would verify compliance with program performance standards.

Approach to Monitoring – Compliance, Performance, & System Building

Monitoring for Grantee Compliance - Compliance

- Complying with the standard and special terms and conditions
- Conducting the activities outlined in the RFGA
- Complying with the standards of practice
- Complying with the activities in the scope of work
- Complying with effective and approved business processes or use of FTF funds

Monitoring for Quality Assurance - Performance

- Programs funded to implement a particular model of a program are doing so with fidelity to the model chosen
- Programs are providing services to appropriate and identified target populations in timely and appropriate ways
- Progress toward FTF goals is being made at a reasonable rate of expectation
- Data collected and submitted is done in ways which support reliability of accuracy of the data
- Implementation of service delivery follows best practice standards set forth by the type of services (e.g. home visiting, coaching/mentoring, provision of early care and education, etc)
- Programs are collaborating and creating linkages with partners, First Things First, and the community as a whole to show progress toward system development and continuity of service delivery

Monitoring for System Development – System Building

- Progress toward achieving key measures
- Effectiveness of collaborations and linkages in creating seamless systems of service delivery
- Review of program internal and external evaluations

What is Happening with Reporting:

- We are happy that most grantees are having no problem submitting reports on time and using our Partners and Grants Management System (PGMS).
- There have been a few instances where grantees have either been provided templates late or have had issues accessing PGMS and we are not holding grantees responsible for issues that are out of their control; however, we still require grantees to submit reports, just with an extended deadline.
- In the first full quarter – there were 115 grantees; of that number only 7 were non-compliant in submission of the reporting requirements. Of that 7, 2 grantees were provided assistance and the 2nd quarter reports were submitted on time. The remaining 5 grantees were Food Insecurity Grantees and we have made contact with the grantee; however, there has been no expenditure under their grant and no funds have been distributed to them. They indicate getting through the peak holiday period as a problem for the last quarter and we continue to talk with the regional team and the grantee.
- We just completed the second full quarter for reports, but we are conducting follow up with numerous grantees due to a technical glitch with on-line reporting. We are not penalizing grantees while the technical correction is being addressed, but instead extended the deadline. There are still grantees with access issues as of February 11th.
- When a grantee is not compliant for reporting; we contact the grantee and review what the problems might have been with reporting. If a grantee continues to be late or incomplete with their report, we remind the grantee we can delay payment until receipt of required reports.
- The Finance and Regions staff (with Policy staff as needed) discuss reports or the fact that required reports are missing to see what the issues are and how First Things First can work with the grantee to resolve the issues.
- The largest issues right now are helping grantees understand how to submit reports and ensuring our PGMS system and data templates are available to grantees when needed so they can complete their requirements and access the system to submit their reports.