

Manager Questions & State Plan Issues

Discussion Questions:

- As a WAP Manager, what training would you like to receive?

- What do you feel that you need the most assistance with as a WAP Manager?

- How did your State Plan process go this year?

- Is your PAC very active?

- Did anyone attend your public hearing?

- Did any questions or issues arise during the public hearing?

Notes and comments from the group:

- What information would you most like to know from a seasoned State WAP Manager?
 - What is the State Plan process? When should plan be submitted, what are other state experiences with timeline of receiving funding?
 - New project manager- started in Feb with an April 1 start date and did not have a real timeline.
 - Begin middle of December for April 1 start date to make sure it is available to share it with PAC and Subgrantees.
 - Most take approximately 3 months to create plan.
 - What are best practices regarding carryover and reporting unspent obligated funds to DOE, and/or reallocating unspent funds to subgrantees?
 - Most do projections/estimates to determine unspent funds based on actual expenditures at this point.
 - Budgeting – how to develop a budget at the state level
 - Could a template be provided to state managers to assist with budget development?
 - Tips for entering information in PAGE
 - T&TA – what can be included in budget? Can NASCSP trainings be included? Labor, monitoring travel, other allowable costs.
 - Is an extension an option to the DOE grant period?

- What are your biggest issues or challenges as a WAP Manager?
 - Agency turnover – a training curriculum is needed for agency managers (program managers, executive directors)
 - Recruitment is a challenge. We need a strategy to attract young people to leadership roles and retain them in the program.
 - Washington has a curriculum developed that NASCSP could start with
 - Staying current with technical side of program as a state program manager. A technical training for policy staff would be beneficial
 - Losing a QCI kills production. What are best practices for sharing or contracting QCI
 - Subgrantee procurement – it is very difficult to get multiple contractors (or any in some areas of state) to bid on weatherization contracts
 - Could NASCSP assist in any way with data collection or training?
 - Working with utility companies for leveraging activities is challenging. Could NASCSP provide best practices or guidance for collaborating with utilities and administering utility programs?
 - Include program development, implementation and customer intake

- Has anyone procured state level QCIs
- Do people utilize their PAC? Utilize PAC by sending application to review, get their feedback, send plan to subgrantees, then also post the draft plan and Q&A from PAC and subgrantees prior to the hearing. PAC is part of the selection process of subgrantees when statewide bidding process. There wasn't a conflict when PAC helped choose subgrantees- they were not able to vote.
- If info goes to PAC and subgrantees- how far ahead to you send it out? Feb to PAC and first of March to subgrantees for April 1 start date.
- How often does PAC meet? Some states quarterly – some states certainly not quarterly.
- What was the reason for downgrading number of subgrantees? It wasn't feasible to keep that many subgrantees. The subgrantees met and determined the service areas/territories and presented it to the state and they honored it. State looked at performance, financial feasibility.
- Is Feb state plan submission date normal for an April 1 start date? Yes.
- States reserve the right to reallocate service areas or take service area from one area to another in order to ensure program effectiveness and efficiency.
- State receives multiple funding sources- is this common across states? Most have DOE and LIHEAP. Some are offered LIHEAP and do not want it as they are concerned they can't spend it. MI seems to be the only state that is not guaranteed Weatherization LIHEAP dollars.
- One issue with leveraging funds is that the utility funds and LIHEAP funds have a lot more leniency and so they try to keep the funds separate but now are trying to find a way to leverage with DOE requirements and funds.

- In some states the Utility funds go directly to the CAAs and LIHEAP is through Human Services Office and DOE is through Energy office. Finding process to streamline is difficult
- Many issues with fiscal year vs. DOE program year and aligning funds.
- How is it that we were allowed carryover again when last year was supposed to be the cut off date?
- Many of states have contract language or policy that requires they spend so much of their DOE funds each year and if half way through they haven't- then money can be taken back and transferred to another agency that is producing.

Utah Auditor training certification to assist because of employee turnover, so that we get ready with a staff who can step in and become QCI quickly because they have started process through auditor training.

Losing veteran people in states and sub grantees. Sometimes it is good that they leave, sometimes losing the knowledge base is difficult. Something states should look at in retaining employees and getting training started early.

Utah rates for gas electric so cheap, there is little incentive for other weatherization services to compete in a for profit area.

Utah subgrantee gets the rebate that would have gone to the customer. 1.4 million cash rebates comes in as program money, state allows a part to admin.

STATE PLAN

- Georgia, first state plan experience got in early never get funded on time, but used to always get funded on time. Kansas has moved from April to July 1 and that improved timeliness
- System is broken.
- Rounding is an issue.
- Georgia has lost 2 agencies due to the loss of timely funding from DOE (approval of state plan not approved in time).
- Utah has only 1 year had timely funds released by DOE in 37 years.
- July 1 aligns with a lot of states fiscal years.
- Liheap is a key for states and agencies due to delay in DOE Wx rules.
- DOE needs to be more timely.
- Different project officers look at things differently thus non issues for years all of a sudden become an issue with a new po
- ND and Utah getting questions from DOE on PAC composition
- No states are getting such important feedback from PAC that they are changing policies