POPsBasics 20190730

ANSON GREEN: I want to welcome you to a webinar on POPs, understanding Periods of Participation, the basics. My name is Anson Green, the State Director of Adult Education and Literacy at the Texas Workforce Commission. And I want to make sure you see the resources in the Webinars link as well as the Technical Assistance Questions email box that you can find information on more webinars and other resource documents related to performance as well as send questions in.

We have a policy letter on periods of participation. It's AEL Letter 01-19. And this is a pretty comprehensive letter that describes a wide variety of aspects of POPs-- what they are, as well as how do they impact measurable skills gains, exit-based measures, credentials, planned gaps, all of those exciting things. So the AEL Letter is very comprehensive.

This webinar represents the first basic tutorial on POPs. So what is a period of participation? Well, a period of participation in the WIOA is a more delineated segment of time within a program year that participant performance can be measured. The program year is still important. But now within it, there is a more delineated period of time which is called a POP or a period of participation.

The POP begins when an individual becomes a participant and they've reached-- that means they've reached 12 direct contact hours and they've been found eligible for Adult Education and Literacy Services through a pre-test. And then the POP ends every time an individual goes 90 days without a participatory service. And this is true unless the individual is in a planned gap.

So here in the image, we can see that we have an individual that is starting their period of participation in August. And they begin right here, really the 1st of September. They've had 12 hours in a pre-test. The period of participation begins there in August and then ends over here in November. So that period of time is the POP. And the POP is defined as far as an end date by having 90 days occur without a participatory service. So 90 days occur. There's no participatory service. And then retroactively, back to this November date is the exit date for an individual.

All right. So I referenced a participatory service. What is a participatory service? Well, a participatory service in the context of POPs is a direct contact hour, a proxy hour through distance learning, and then training hours, workforce training hours as part of an IET. So as long as a participant is receiving those services and those hours are being logged into teams, the POP remains open. Soon as all of those services cease for 90 days, then the exit date is triggered, like I said, retroactive back to the last participatory service.

So how does a POP relate to a program year? Well, there are really two aspects I want to focus on. One is participants can have multiple POPs in one program year would be the first element. So here we have an image of an individual that is in a POP. The POP-- you notice here they have 12 direct hours and a pre-test. They're found eligible. The POP begins in August. It goes for three months and ends in November.

That's the first period of participation. How do we know that it ends here? Because 90 days, December, January, and February have occurred, and then retroactively back to this November date, the exit is triggered. But the individual comes back in the new year. They come back at the end of February. And we see a second POP begins. This is their second program year POP, and that lasts for three months.

And then we see here in May, the individual exits because 90 days have occurred, and the individual has exited. So here we have an image-- two POPs, one program year beginning here and ending here in July.

The other element of POPs that make them very interesting and can somewhat make things complex in terms of performance calculation is that POPs are based on participation. They're not based around the program year. So a POP can cross a program year, and the contact hours within a POP carry over to the next program year. So let's see what that looks like.

So here is an example of an individual that has a POP crossing over into another program year. They entered participation over here after 12 direct hours and a pre-test at the end of July. They occur for many months, a full year almost here through June, but they continue participation through the end of July. So the POP is beginning here in July of '18, and it crosses into the next program year. Here's the program year start and end date, so the end of program year '18 here, and the beginning of program year '19 starts right there. But the POP continues.

So if you're familiar with performance under WIA, the program year drove everything. And so everyone made a mad dash to finish up work with students by the end of June at the end of the program year, because that's when everything stopped, and then we started anew in the next program year. In WIOA, the POPs continue on through the program year. And so the hours that the student has accrued carry forward, and those hours in terms of testing carry forward into the next program year. Of course, here the student goes to the end of July, and then we have 90 days here, and the student exits.

OK. So let's do some review here and see if we can remember some of these core concepts. So if you look at this image here, the question is, of course, when does the POP begin for this individual. So we have calendar dates that you need to pay attention to across the top. So you notice they start here in July 1st, July 3rd. They go to class 5th, 12th, 15th, and 20th. Then we see they have contact hours generated, and then there are some other services here. They're given a pre-test at the very beginning of the program year.

So when does the POP begin? OK. Well, if you apply your rules to adult education performance, remember that the individual needs to have 12 contact hours and be found eligible with a test. And so we see that the POP actually starts right here on July 15th. So the POP starts here after the 12th hour is generated. So it's not the beginning of the 15th, but it's the end of the 12th hour where a participant's POP actually begins.

OK. Let's look at another question here. And I'll give some time for people to think about it and talk amongst themselves if you're in a group. So here's another calendar. When does the POP begin for this individual? Pay attention to the dates across the top and then the hours.

OK. Well, here you see that the POP starts actually on the 6th of July. Now, why is that? Well, you might have got thrown off if you were looking at this with an old WIA a lens in terms of performance. But what's happened here is the individual starts in June, which is the previous program year. They go the 30th of June, then they go to the 2nd of July, then they go to the 6th of July.

Remember that because of POPs, the hours accrue forward, and they cross the program year. So we actually have 3, 6, 9, 12. And at the end of this 12th hour is when the POP begins. So that's a good example of what I referenced earlier about POPs crossing program years. So as long as there's no exit, the hours will carry across a program year.

So here the dates are very close together, June to July. But you could have had a student that stopped coming in May. They go through June, and then they come back in July, and the POP would have remained open. So they missed a month of class, but it's not 90 days, so they haven't exited. And those hours, the hours that would be needed for a post-test, accrue forward, et cetera.

Let's look at another example. Now, this is another example, and it adds a layer of complexity here, because now you'll notice that we have the addition of contact hours through proxy hours. So we have direct contact hours up here, classroom time, and then we have proxy hours, which indicates there's distance learning happening. So those of you that are listening, you're going to have to flex your distance learning requirement muscles there to see if you can remember exactly what the rules pertain there in terms of distance learning. So I'll let you think about that a little bit. When does the POP begin?

OK. Well, if you remember, proxy hours can continue a POP, but the pop really doesn't begin until the participant has 12 direct hours. So if we look at our next slide, the POP starts on the 20th, because even though we've got some proxy hours that are generated down here in July, we have to only count these direct hours, because the POP is calculated as far as initiation on 12 direct hours, so 3, 6, 9, 12th, the 20th. The 12th hour there is when the POP starts.

These hours will count, but not until the POP begins. And also keep in mind that these proxy hours are-- they're important, but they don't start a POP. But they could continue a POP. So here we have a proxy hour. But if they were now only proxy hours for the rest of July all the way through October, that would keep the POP open. It just will not begin a POP. The POP has to have direct contact hours.

Let's look at the next slide here. True or false? It is possible for an individual to earn fewer than 12 direct contact hours in a program year and still become a participant in that program year. Think about that one. I'll give you a few seconds. It is possible for an individual to earn fewer than 12 direct contact hours in a program year and still become a participant in that program year.

Well, if you answered true, you're correct. You can combine the hours, remember, across program years to accrue the 12 direct hours as long as there's not a gap of 90 days between the provision of hours. So that's, again, that information on how POP continues across a PY, a program year, and the hours continue forward.

So here's one more question. What is the exit date of this individual, and when does the POP end so we have an individual participant. They take a test on the beginning of July there, on 7/1. They accrue contact hours all the way through the end of September.

They take a TABE test on the 5th of October. They take an official high school equivalency exam on October 22nd, and then they have no further services after. So remember the rules of participation. What are participant hours in regards to POPs? What continues a POP? I'll give you a few seconds.

All right. Let's see what the answer is here. The answer is 9/30. September 30th is the exit date, and it's the end of the POP. Now, you might have been thinking, well, maybe that TABE test on the 5th, or the high school equivalency exam on the 22nd. But remember, tests do not continue POPs. It's only direct contact in training hours.

Now, those of you that were very early on in the development of the POP discussions and through some of the performance accountability events we had last year, we were including tests to continue POPS. But after some analysis of that, we realized that might have some detrimental performance effects, so we've changed that guidance. And the original POP letter has-- still includes tests as continuing a POP. That letter is being amended to remove the tests. So it's only the direct proxy and training hours that will continue a POP.

So that's the end of this webinar on POPs. Like I said, it's a basic webinar. We're going to have some other ones that are more complicated coming your way on POPs, because they get very exciting as we start to look at performance measure calculations. Always check the website there for resources and webinars. And any questions you have, please send them in to aelta@twc.state.tx.us Happy listening, and please send us your questions. Bye bye.