



California Department of Aging

Bridge to Recovery for Adult Day Services: COVID-19 Mitigation and Resilience Grant Program

Bridge to Recovery Impermissible/Permissible Items Webinar

WEBINAR OVERVIEW

This webinar was held on November 9, 2023, from 1:00–2:00 PM on the Bridge to Recovery for Adult Day Service: COVID-19 Mitigation and Resilience Grant Program. California Department of Aging (CDA) discussed reasons applications for the Bridge to Recovery were denied and/or received a partial award, permissible and impermissible items for the program, and errors made when completing the application to help guide applicants when applying for future grant opportunities. The webinar ended with a full Q&A session.

The transcript below captures the details shared by presenters. The headers list which slide was on screen as the presenters spoke. A downloadable copy of the webinar, the PowerPoint, and all other supporting documents can be found on the [Bridge to Recovery webpage](#).

TRANSCRIPT

Slide 1

Roxanne McAlpine:

Good afternoon everyone. My name is Roxanne McAlpine and I'm the Project Manager for the Bridge Recovery Grant Program. On behalf of the Department of Aging, I'd like to thank you for taking your time out today to attend this webinar. I'd also like to thank you for applying for this grant and the hard work you do to assist seniors and disabled persons. Your centers are vital to our state and the people you serve and their caregivers. We thank you for fighting the fight to stay open and continue to provide support to our communities.

Today, I'm pleased to say I'm joined by Shawntel Bush, who will be presenting as well. Shawntel is the Health at Home Branch Chief for CDA.

Also joining us today is Mark Beckley. He's the Department of Aging Chief Deputy Director, and also Denise Likar, who is the Deputy Director over CDA's Home and Community Living Division.

In addition, we'll be joined by other CDA leadership who will be assisting with questions as well, and our grant administrator, Public Consulting Group, will also be presenting the application error section towards the end of the presentation.

Just a few housekeeping items: please put all of your questions in the Chat or the Q&A box. We'll address them at the end of the webinar in order to save time, so we ensure we get enough time to get through the presentation.

Please stay muted during the webinar and enter comments and feedback in the Q&A box or the Chat box and a copy of this presentation will be posted on the Bridge to Recovery grant website.

Now, it's my pleasure to introduce Mark Beckley, the Chief Deputy Director for CDA. Mark, welcome.

Mark Beckley:

Thank you so much Roxanne and good afternoon everybody, and thank you for attending this afternoon's webinar.

I just want to express my appreciation and gratitude for all of you that applied for the Bridge to Recovery grants. We did a robust review process of all the applications that we received and we're really happy to see that we were able to award grants to 354 centers in the amount of \$20.3 million.

As Roxanne said, the work that you do is so important to caring for older adults. CBAS, PACE, Adult Day Centers are just such critical parts of our HCBS continuum. So, it's really important that you're also supported and we're so grateful for the opportunity to initiate this process to give you the resources that you need to come out of the COVID pandemic and have the opportunity to recover and to strengthen your services coming out of the COVID pandemic.

And I would also like to thank our partners, Public Consulting Group, for really working with us on this project. It was a large project that had to be scaled up very quickly and we really had the twin goals of ensuring that we conducted a fair and equitable process across all sites, as well as

we did a fairly quick process to make sure that you really got the resources that you needed as quickly as possible. So, it was a large lift and I know and I really appreciate all the hard work that all of you put into developing really thoughtful applications. So, we're really glad that we were able to do the number of awards that we did do.

On this webinar, I know that several of you will have questions, particularly around those expenses that were not approved in your applications. So, we hope to use this time to really go through the criteria that we applied during our review process in terms of determining permissible and impermissible expenses.

We will be conducting a second round of funding so that will give you the opportunity to go back to your applications based on the guidance that we provide, to revise your applications either to provide missing information or correct certain information, or possibly to redraft your grants to really apply to permissible activities.

In terms of the permissible and impermissible activities, I just want to emphasize that that was driven by CDA based on input that we received from stakeholders and designing the initial Request for Application form. So, any decisions that were made here were based on CDA guidance.

And I also want to say that we have been receiving some questions and concerns about items that certain providers have thought were allowable or permissible that have been denied. We're definitely going to look at those. So, if you do have any questions or concerns, use the existing process to submit your questions and we'll definitely go through those. And if we see anything that may have gone wrong or may be an error, we will certainly make corrections to those.

So, I just wanted to start off and kick off the meeting with a welcome introduction and thank you and I'll hand it over to Roxanne now to go through her portion of the presentation.

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Roxanne McAlpine:

Thank you, Mark.

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So, as we mentioned, the webinar is to discuss the impermissible and permissible items and go over application errors, so when you guys are updating your application, you can fully understand what needs to be updated and resubmitted to PCG.

The webinar is hosted by Department of Aging, referred to as CDA. We're going to discuss the goals of this grant, and we're going to do a brief overview of the history of the grant and its current status. We're going to discuss the eligible activities that meet the Bridge to Recovery program goals and discuss permissible and impermissible items and application errors.

We'll have a question-and-answer session towards the end and then also will provide you guys with some resources.

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The goal of this webinar is really to give the applicants a better understanding, as Mark mentioned, of what items are permissible and which are not permissible. And if you feel that something really should be approved, please follow the process as Mark mentioned and either send an email or a phone call.

We're really trying to address every person's questions and we will get to those as soon as possible. But we needed to wait until we had this webinar so that you could have a full understanding of the goals of this grant.

We're going to be posting the guidance document today that will list the permissible and impermissible items after this webinar, so that will be a good resource for you guys to use. And then we also want you to have a better understanding of why your application needs to be updated.

So hopefully by the end of this webinar, all of those goals will have been reached. And again, if you still have questions, please feel free to reach out.

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Now Shawntel Bush is going to go over the history of this grant, and there's no better person to do that because she has been involved in this from the beginning. Shawntel.

Shawntel Bush:

Thank you, Roxanne, and good afternoon, everybody. My name is Shawntel Bush. I'm the Health at Home Branch Chief, and I oversee the operation of our CBAS program and am happy to be a strong advocate for the Bridge to Recovery grant funding.

So, I'm going to go over a little bit of the history. As many of you may already be aware, the Bridge to Recovery grant program is a \$55.84 million grant program that is administered by CDA and it is supported by general funds from the California state budget under the authority of Assembly Bill 178.

The goal of the grant program is to improve the health, safety, and well-being of at-risk older adults and people with disabilities and reduce isolation by supporting a safe return to in-center congregate services.

Eligible providers could request funding up to \$100,619 per site. Eligible entities who were able to compete in this competitive grant process included the Adult Day Healthcare Centers, Adult Day Programs, and the Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly.

These facilities were able to compete in this competitive grant process and, as a requirement, they must have demonstrated eligibility by being in good standing with their license and also by having submitted a Letter of Intent by the May 15th, 5:00 PM deadline. They must have also identified within their Letter of Intent submission the specific facility that they intended to apply for funding towards.

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Roxanne McAlpine:

We're pleased to announce that we received 406 applications. That is a lot of applications as Mark mentioned, and out of those, we were able to approve 354 of those, which is an 87% approval ratio. And we are so happy that we could approve that many grants.

The award letters were sent out on October 20th, and we awarded a little bit over \$20 million which, the good news is, means there'll be money left over for Round Two. So, stay tuned for that. As we get the parameters set for Round Two, we will be posting the eligibility and deadlines and how to apply for that on our website.

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Shawntel Bush:

I'll be going over and reiterating the goals of the grant.

As specified on this slide here and also as supported by Assembly Bill 178, the goals of the grant are intended to address the array of issues that arose from the pandemic, which impacted access to in-center participation and the provision of services.

This funding is intended to mitigate against the spread of infection by helping centers to add or improve their ventilation systems, to support safe distancing practices by repurposing in-center and outdoor space, to continue in-center activities, and additional in-center congregate support for participants.

It is also intended to address workforce shortages with key required positions specific to licensing requirements through recruitment or retention efforts for such staff as transportation drivers and required clinical staff through offering bonuses and wage differentials.

In our efforts to really develop the RFA, we've spoken to the departments that oversee the Adult Day Health Centers, CBAS program, Adult Day Programs, and also the pay sites. And we really recognize that they were all meeting with the same difficulties of retaining staff and critical positions, including their transportation drivers.

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Roxanne McAlpine:

Now we're going to talk about the eligible activities that meet the Bridge to Recovery grant program.

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So in regards to facilities, applicants could use grant funds to invest in the needed infection prevention measures in their facilities.

We've listed a few here. These are not everything, but we wanted to give you an idea of just some of the things that you could ask for. So, you could ask for: building ventilation, adding or improving the ventilation or the air flow; you could modify usable space by repurposing outdoor areas to expand safe, usable program space, or modifying indoor spaces to promote health and safety while encouraging participant engagement; also, sanitation and infection control, increasing sanitation and infection control measures; and also improving telehealth to improve participant access to telehealth services.

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Shawntel Bush:

An additional eligible activity under this grant was the allowability for funding to go towards vehicle modifications and/or the preservation of center vehicles.

As transportation has become a factor for the Adult Day Healthcare Centers, ADPs, and PACE sites to get their participants in-center, the funding it provided allowed the ability for centers to

address this concern by making necessary vehicle modifications to aid towards infection prevention and control, and to preserve their vehicles for continuous use through repairs, and also to take measures to secure their vehicles from theft or vandalism. And this was allowed by them using the funding towards installing surveillance equipment and also fencing to really secure their vehicles from any additional theft.

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An additional activity is staffing and as previously mentioned, this funding is intended to aid with addressing the workforce shortages that this industry has faced.

To address this, applicants can use the funding towards staff recruitment and retention, and this includes costs associated with job postings.

They are able to use the funding towards hiring temporary workers when there is a vacancy or absence in a key required position in order to comply with regulations, licensing, and staffing ratios.

And also towards wage differentials. This will ensure equity among similar roles and skill sets, and to offer a competitive wage that will help to retain staff in key positions. Funding is only for the difference between the previous wage and the new wage.

In addition, this funding is used for staff training. We recognize that there are staff that need to be equipped and provided training in infection prevention and control, health, and safety as it pertains to infection prevention and public health emergencies.

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Roxanne McAlpine:

So now we went over the eligible activities and now we're going to discuss the permissible items to meet those goals and activities.

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So again, we've just listed as many examples as possible, but there could be other examples that we didn't think of or people didn't ask for.

So in regards to infection prevention, centers could upgrade or replace their ventilation systems or their HVAC systems to maximize efficiencies, but they must meet CDC standards. You could install an air filter system or upgrade or replace the duct system. You could install HEPA filter systems or a germicidal system to enhance clean air. You could also purchase and maintain backup equipment for emergencies, portable in-room air cleaners, air purifiers, fans, HEPA cleaners, and filters. You could replace and have on hand carbon monoxide detectors. You could replace or purchase air supply and exhaust fans. And also you could replace carpeting with wipeable flooring. That's for sanitation purposes.

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And continuing the infection prevention, you could hire a cleaning service that was focusing on mitigation of viruses, to clean floors, countertops, doorknobs, exercise equipment, medical equipment, which is all high-touch areas. You could purchase personal protective equipment items such as gloves, aprons, gowns, eye protection, anything that would provide that protection. You could purchase and have a supply of cleaning supplies, soaps, and hand sanitizers.

The cleaning service that you hire must focus on sanitation to mitigate against viruses and the spread of disease. It cannot be for cleaning blinds and windows. That's a general cleaning service that the center should already have.

You could install plexiglass shields in your in your lobby area for social distancing. You could also purchase those signs that we all got used to seeing over the past couple of years at the grocery store. You'd go to the doctor's office and the chairs would be all marked and blocked off and you couldn't sit there. So those are all items that you could have purchased for social distancing.

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Shawntel Bush:

Additional examples of permissible items is the allowability to modify usable space.

Modifying usable space for repurposing outdoor areas or modifying indoor space to promote health and safety for infection prevention and mitigation was allowable by doing such things as: adding or removing walls to aid with social distancing; repurposing existing space to allow for participant engagement during center activities, and some examples of this allowability included pouring concrete for a new patio addition or even extending an existing patio by creating a permanent shade structure addition; also, with regard to outdoor areas, adding permanent fixed benches, tables, patios, coverings or pergola for learning or social distancing.

I did want to emphasize here that we specified permanent fixed benches, which are very vastly different from furniture purchases, which do not meet this funding allowability.

Approval of these permissible items required documentation such as proof of landlord approval for such modifications to the building and/or the structure, or a lease and deed, and a bid or a cost estimate.

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Additionally, addressing workforce shortages is a permissible item, the hiring of temporary workers in key required positions who are eligible for salary, bonuses, or wage differentials.

This is applicable for existing staff and also when there is a vacancy in key required positions pursuant to the facility type licensing requirements and the staffing ratios.

And these positions include such positions as a nurse, registered nurse, a social worker, therapist, and even transportation drivers.

The eligible staff was based on individual center licensing requirements, and CDA did recognize in the review process, along with our grant administrator, that all centers do not have the same licensing and job title requirements. So for example, we focused in on the facility staffing requirements and the specifications of the staff role provided within the submitted application, when there is a distinction in a title and or role.

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Roxanne McAlpine:

Other examples of permissible items is staff recruitment and retention, so costs associated with posting jobs and sign-on bonuses in key positions, as Shawntel discussed, based on licensing requirements.

These costs were areas such as posting job advertisements or Internet advertisements or making banners or flyers, those type of costs. Not hiring temporary agencies, those were not permissible costs. Also costs associated for training, infection prevention and control, and health and safety as it pertains to infection mitigation measures. The training needed to pertain to infection mitigation measures.

You could also do vehicle modifications and/or preservations, but a bid and/or a cost estimate was required at time of application. So, if that request was denied, maybe look to see if you did not provide a bid or a cost estimate. But you could do things such as vehicle maintenance, oil changes, tire rotations, anything to keep that vehicle on the road. You could upgrade cloth upholstery to wipeable surfaces such as vinyl, or you could purchase vinyl seat covers. You can install security fencing around the cars only to protect from theft. You could purchase sanitation, cleaning kits or supplies, HEPA filters for the cars, anything to prevent infection and the spread of viruses. You could install surveillance equipment to protect from theft. So there's just a few ideas that you could do to keep your vehicle preserved or make modifications.

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Shawntel Bush:

So now we're getting to the area of the impermissible item examples.

Some of these items have been part of our review process and I wanted to just go over them, as listed on this slide.

So, one of the impermissible items is to build out for new construction to add on to an existing building. So, this is not a repurposing of a specific area as we outlined in the request for application process.

Also impermissible is: the installation or repair of elevator stairs, ramps, and railings; bathrooms being remodeled or upgraded to touchless sinks, toilets, dispensers, stainless steel stalls, et cetera; kitchen remodel or purchases of appliances; replacements of outdated vinyl or wood flooring—we did provide the allowability to have carpet replaced to a flooring method that could be easily cleaned and sanitized, such as something that can be wiped and/or mopped; remodeling of existing bathroom from several stalls to one—we wanted to ensure that code and health and safety requirements were maintained, as well as the licensing ratio requirements for maintaining with the average daily attendance requirements and regulations.

Furniture, as I previously mentioned, is not allowable, including patio umbrellas and office cubicles.

And also, there's been requests for modifications to come into ADA compliance. We did not consider this a permissible ask for this grant funding.

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In addition, exercise equipment, medical equipment including mobility devices, medical tables, chairs, a pool Hoyer lift, is impermissible. Monthly facility fees, the purchasing or leasing of a vehicle, bonuses that exceed \$1000 per employee and/or bonuses for positions other than licensing required positions.

The installation of a sport court for activities such as basketball, tennis and/or baseball.

Window cleaning services, Roxanne covered that. We would allow it for sanitation purposes, but not for cleaning blinds and just for general cleaning that's not related to sanitation or infection control and prevention.

Also paving or redesign of center parking lots is not a permissible ask, nor is the installation of center perimeter fencing or entrance gates. We did address that we would allow the approval of fencing to secure vehicles from theft and/or vandalism.

Additionally, replacing or fixing doors, hardware, automatic doors, and bumpers is not permissible.

The purchases of new windows and screens or repair of windows, security bars on windows, landscaping gardens, garden boxes, et cetera.

Appliances, hiring contract employees such as trainers, coaches and temporary agency fees, staffing and recruitment service fees, is not an allowable expense. We covered in the prior slide advertisements included such things as billboards and other methods of advertising your efforts to recruit for vacant positions.

Laptops, nor computers and printers, or office equipment is permissible.

And bonuses, salary, and wage differentials for employees that are not in key licensing positions. And we're basing this on licensing requirements and really looking to require clinical staff that we would consider eligible for these particular bonuses, salaries, and wage differentials, and that included kitchen staff, office personnel, office administrators including clerical staff, training staff, executive leaders, managers.

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Now I will go ahead and turn it over to our grant administrator PCG to cover the application errors.

Brittani Trujillo:

Thanks Shawntel.

Hi everyone, Brittani Trujillo with Public Consulting Group. I want to talk about the application errors that we just saw. So, I will say it's possible that maybe you submitted an application that seemed like it had a permissible item and it maybe still was denied. It could be for some of these application errors.

So, Kerin Miller from our team is going to walk through the next couple of slides on what some of those common application errors were, hopefully give you a better understanding about maybe why something that was maybe just presented as permissible was still denied. Kerin's been our main TA person and has got some really good insight into these errors.

So, Kerin.

Kerin Miller:

Thank you, Brittani.

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We do want to note that this is not an exhaustive list, but many of these items you may recognize from your award letters. And our goal with those award letters was to provide some of the most common application errors. But please keep in mind that not all of the bullet points here or items mentioned may have applied to your application. These are just some of the most common application errors that we noted.

So, as you've heard both Shawntel and Roxanne mention, if you did not submit a bid or cost estimate for your contractual work, we did not consider that item eligible. So, for this we mean your HVAC installations, any of your vehicle modifications, anything that really fell into that contractual category. We did send multiple email reminders to all applicants requesting this information.

So, the application deadline was July 17th. We heard that a lot of you were having difficulties acquiring bids or cost estimates and we did accept bid or cost estimates until August 24th.

These requirements were also detailed in your RFA as well as in the instructions on the application. So as you're continuing through this process and filling out additional forms, please pay attention to the instructions on your applications and your forms.

As mentioned, if you did not provide a lease or proof of ownership for contractual work, we did not allow that item. We did accept a letter from the landlord as a good faith effort. For example, if your landlord was acknowledging that you had plans to modify your HVAC and approved those modifications, that was another way for you all to kind of support that that proof of ownership for contractual work.

As we also mentioned earlier in terms of eligibility, a Letter of Intent was required prior to submitting an application. If you submitted an application for multiple facilities or multiple sites, that particular facility or site had to be identified on a Letter of Intent in order to be eligible.

In terms of retroactive funding requests, while this is a COVID mitigation grant program, any costs incurred during the pandemic are not eligible for Bridge to Recovery funds. So, if any of your requests indicated that an activity was already completed or an item was already purchased, we did not honor that purchase. So, you cannot start incurring expenses for the Bridge to Recovery grant program until November 20th of 2023.

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So, Shawntel and Roxanne did give a little bit more detail as to staff titles and who is eligible. So those staff titles came into consideration for all salary requests, whether that was a wage differential or for temporary staff, as well as for bonuses, whether that was a new hire bonus or retention bonus, as well as fringe. Particularly in the salaries and wages and fringe section of the application, the instructions were clear that staff titles were necessary. So if staff titles were not provided, we could not allow or fund that line item.

Another thing we noticed with regards to the level of detail within the application, if there were lump sum requests that were not itemized. For example, on the screen we have a salary increase or purchase of PPE and employee bonuses all under a lump sum of \$8,000, with no way for us to break out those costs or understand how that lump sum amount was determined. We did not allow that particular request.

Similarly, if you had this sort of lump sum bid that included both permissible and impermissible requests, and our reviewers could not decipher how to eliminate the impermissible elements, we did not approve that bid. So for example, if you requested a patio renovation or modification and in the details of that bid there were indications to beautify the space, whether that was adding fences or repainting or acquiring impermissible furniture elements, we again did not approve that lump sum type of bid.

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So again, we also noticed that there were some application directions that were not followed. So, we encourage you all to please read and reread instructions. All language that is on our forms is there for a reason. It is intentional, so please give those directions a read and should you have any questions, please use the avenues available to you to inquire about them.

So, we did mention the absence of staff titles.

If certain requests were not descriptive in how they connected to the goals of the grant—so for example, you requested staff training, perhaps for CPR purposes—that kind of has loose connections to our goal for infection prevention and mitigation. So if your staff training identified whether it was a CDC training or something related to infection prevention, we likely allowed that item while disallowing CPR or other types of trainings that were not connected to the goals of the grant.

We also went over the elements of a lump sum bid, if detailed costs were not broken out. We noticed that this also applied to a lot of the travel components. So in the directions for the travel section, we did ask that you parse out your costs associated, whether it was mileage versus meals versus lodging. So again, if you provided a lump sum that included all of these things without itemizing those various costs, we could not approve that item.

Last but not least, if there was just a flat-out impermissible request, as Roxanne and Shawntel have gone over in detail, whether that was a vehicle or a laptop or a phone. Again, we encourage you to reread the RFA that lists out ineligible items for reference as well.

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So, we are going to review some of the questions that have come through the chat. So for this section I will pass it along to Peter, another member of our support team at Public Consulting Group.

Peter Buzby:

Thank you.

So we've seen a lot of questions come through the Chat and the Q&A. So, we'll spend the next 23 minutes of this webinar trying to move through as many of them as we can.

I will say if we do not get to your question, if it doesn't get answered, please do reach out to us through our technical assistance line either by phone or email and we will absolutely do our best to make sure you get an answer.

So it seems like most people have been posting their questions in the chat. That's totally fine. So, we'll just start in the Q&A. We'll just run through all those questions and then from there we'll just start working our way through the chat. So, turning to the Q&A first, first question.

Roxanne McAlpine:

Peter, before we get there, there was one thing that I did want to address that we've been getting emails on. So if you just give me one second. I forgot to go over this earlier and this may be a question in the chat, but I just wanted to let everybody know we're receiving concerns that people felt like their application absolutely had to be updated and returned to us by November 17th so it could be executed by November 20th and I apologize if that was the message that we conveyed.

We were able to offer a start date for the contract as early as November, so we just wanted to ask people if at all possible if you could get your applications updated and return to PCG, then we could get your award package back to you for execution.

But that is not a hard and fast date, and if that date does not work for you, that's totally acceptable. The applications do not have to be returned by that date. That was just our wish. We wanted to you to be able to start invoicing or tracking expenses as soon as possible and you can't invoice until your grant is executed.

But again, if you can't make that November 17th date, don't worry about it. It's not a hard and fast date, and I apologize for any confusion. So I just wanted to clear that up.

Peter Buzby:

Thank you, Roxanne. I'm sure that'll head off some questions we'll encounter later on.

So first, the slides will be available. The webinar is also being recorded as we speak. So, we'll make sure that is available to everybody if you want to review it later.

So next question: are grant funds still scheduled to be available after November 20th? So, I know grantees need to execute their grant agreement, it needs to be approved, and go through that whole process before they can start invoicing for expenses. Is there any indication Brittani, when the process be under way?

Brittani Trujillo:

So if I'm understanding the question, there will be a webinar at the end of November, early December, that talks about the progress reporting and invoice processes, so you can start incurring your expenses as of November 20th. And then we will later this month, early December, walk through the invoice process so that you can start invoicing as well.

However, I think to Roxanne's point, if your grant agreement is not executed, you cannot invoice until that time, but you can start incurring your expenses as of November 20th.

Peter Buzby:

The next question is about required documents to submit for an HVAC system, but it was denied because they did not send a copy of the lease. They are curious if this decision can be reconsidered.

I know obviously there's no appeal as part of this first round. Decisions have been made. As we said, there will be a second round, so you can certainly submit that, we hope you will submit that again, in that second round.

For training costs, how could we have documented costs related to training on infection control? So I think this is mostly related to the requirements of the application, what's the proper way to document these sorts of costs.

Brittani Trujillo:

So we would have needed information on if there was a cost, a registration fee, to attend the training; if there were travel costs that would be incurred as part of that, so lodging, number of staff for the registration, number of staff for hotel stays; if there was mileage; we would have needed to see all of those costs based off of the type of training you were going to attend or have provided.

Roxanne McAlpine:

And also provide the type of training: what it is, where you're attending it, a description of the training. And we understand the training hasn't happened yet, so just an estimate of hotel costs. You do need to follow the state guidelines for hotel and travel rates, but just provide an estimate.

We received lump sums of \$7,500 with no details, so we would have no idea what that training was, how many people were going, what the training was for, was their airfare involved. There were just no details provided, so there just wasn't any way we could approve that.

Peter Buzby:

So a question about staff: there were staff removed because of the titling they used, but they're wondering if they can re-add those staff in the revised application with the proper approved title.

So I do know you can't request additional funds beyond what was already approved in your initial application. So if re-adding those staff in is a way of requesting more funds, no, you can't do that unfortunately. Anything to add to that answer, CDA or PCG?

Brittani Trujillo:

I don't think so. I think you've covered that. I don't know if Shawntel or Roxanne, if you have a different thought.

Shawntel Bush:

The only thought there, is if it is a permissible staff title. It was identified in the letters that it could be something that could be requested in the second round of funding. So as Peter mentioned, it's not something that you can add to your existing award. You would have to undergo the request for that additional staff title, if it is an eligible title, under a second round, once those conditions and information is released by CDA.

Roxanne McAlpine:

And if you feel like there was an error made, if you submitted an eligible staff title, and we're all human, if you truly feel we made an error, please feel free to go through the resources that we provided you, phone number and email, and reach out and we will take a look at that.

Peter Buzby:

Colette asks about invoicing for indirect costs. I think the easiest thing to say here is, as Brittany pointed out, we will be having webinars on invoicing later on in November. So, we will make sure you get answers to indirect costs and any other invoicing issues during those webinars.

Roxanne McAlpine:

As Peter mentioned, we will be having a webinar to go over backup documents that need to be provided in order to get reimbursed for costs, but indirect costs are the only costs that backup documents are not required. So I'm not sure if that was their question but I just wanted to throw that out there.

Peter Buzby:

So a question from Katie about why social work assistants are not permissible. SWAs are bachelor level workers. MSRs are master level social workers. So why are SWAs impermissible?

Shawntel Bush:

Thank you for that question.

With regard to staffing, where you felt like the staff title was one that should have been funded, we're asking that you take into consideration whether that is something that's outlined in our regulations and you can bring it to our attention through the proper channels. And it's something that we will be able to review through our partners. PCG and we will go ahead and take those into consideration.

So all questions related to staffing, the particular titles as it relates to the various facility sites, as we mentioned in the webinar, the three different facility types that are eligible for this funding do have different requirements and different staff titles and perhaps it was just an oversight in some aspects. But just bring that to our attention and we will take a further look at the request.

Peter Buzby:

Paul, a similar answer to your question. If there's been some sort of math error in the calculation of your award, please do just let us know about that through the technical assistance line and I'm sure we'd be happy to review our numbers.

A question from Christina: the award amount won't change when they make updates to their application, but can they move funds between buckets? Let's say staffing changes, moving it to different positions, that sort of thing.

Brittani Trujillo:

For the purposes of getting your grant agreement executed and getting those revisions in, not at this moment. However, once you've executed, if there need to be some changes, there is the progress reporting and change request update process that we will have that webinar on again in later November, early December.

So for the purposes of executing grant agreement and getting your revisions in, they need to align with what was approved in that award form. But those kinds of changes can be made post grant execution agreement.

Roxanne McAlpine:

And as Brittani mentioned, we will go over that in our future webinar and we will have a form called a change request form where you can move funds from one budget line to another.

Peter Buzby:

Another question about lease or deed requirements within the application. There are a lot of similar questions in chat. So if we could just clarify again what lease or deed requirements were involved in the application, I think that might cover a lot of these questions.

Brittani Trujillo:

So if you were modifying your space, whether the interior or modifying the outdoor usable space, we needed you to show either proof of your lease so that you're renting that building and that property, or your deed that you own that building or property as part of the requirements. So

that again, if you were going to modify the interior of the building or modify your outdoor usable space, you needed to submit your lease, showing that it at least is current, or if you own it, your deed showing that's something that you own. That was a requirement and listed in the RFA as well as the grant application directions.

Peter Buzby

And Brittani, to be clear as well, the second half of their question, it's basically too late at this point. The application's been sent and the decisions have been made. Unfortunately, you can't provide additional materials at this stage. It's.

Brittani Trujillo:

Correct, but I would be on the lookout for information on Round Two and what will be entailed there.

Peter Buzby:

And speaking of Round Two there are a few questions on it regarding timelines, permissible and impermissible items, any sort of updates. I think it's fair to say at this stage we're still working on Round Two and once we have those details finalized, obviously we want to publicize it out to as many of you as quickly as we possibly can. So we'll make sure you hear about that once it's decided.

Roxanne McAlpine:

As Peter mentioned, we don't have a timeline. Our hope is to get that information out in December. For those of you who have applications in and who have already submitted an LOI, the process will be easier because you already have an application submitted and it will be just that you're going to go in and update your application.

You won't have to go through the entire process again, but we are finalizing all that information and we'll get you that hopefully early December.

Peter Buzby:

A couple questions about Round One applications, what percentages were funded that sort of data.

I know we went over some of that already in the webinar. You can also always find that information on the Bridge to Recovery web page. It is also there if you'd like to review it again.

Another question about travel expenses for next week's CAADS conference that will be occurring before the application is fully executed on November 17th. People are curious about the process there, next steps, and how to deal with that.

Brittani Trujillo:

So if you were awarded funding for that training, those funds would be eligible for next year, 2024, because the conference is occurring before that start date on your grant agreement of November 20th. So again, if you were awarded funds for that CAADS training, that would be at least 2024.

Some people asked for multiple years, so those would have been pushed out to 2024 and 2025.

Peter Buzby

Does using a contracted staffing agency qualify as temporary staff coverage? So if you have a contract with a staffing agency who helps fill your open positions.

Brittani Trujillo:

So I believe one of the impermissible items was the fee to contract with that agency. But I think that if there was a temporary worker that came from that agency, I believe—I'm looking at Shawntel and Roxanne to make sure—that would be eligible. But the fee that you pay the agency is not.

Roxanne McAlpine:

That's correct.

Peter Buzby:

Another question about when spending becomes eligible for reimbursement. So can they bill for items they bought after the application but before the award date?

Brittani Trujillo:

No, expenses cannot be incurred until November 20th or later. They won't be reimbursed until November 20th or later.

Peter Buzby:

So Ryan, your question is fairly specific to the employment situation at your agency. Basically, he's wondering, their program supervisors do provide direct care, but they were denied their application on the basis that they do not perform direct care. So again, the grant is focused on providing funds for people that provide direct care. So because this one is specific to your particular agency, I think it'd be better to reach out directly through the helpline so we can get a better feel for exactly what's going on at your particular facility.

A similar question about direct care: would CNAs, certified nursing assistants, be considered permissible in an adult health care center? I think provided they provide direct care, they would be. Please anybody, clarify if I'm off base there.

Brittani Trujillo:

CNAs were not permissible staff in this review, but I think that's feedback that CDA is hearing on this call and something that can be considered or thought about. But at the time of Round One applications and review, they were not considered for funding.

Peter Buzby:

Thank you, Brittani. I appreciate the clarification. Sorry, Kimberly. Fortunately, Brittany was able to correct that and thank you, as she said, for the feedback there.

Are stipends for attending training permissible?

Brittani Trujillo:

Yes, they were. Again, there would need to be some details and information and it would be a true stipend for the training attendance.

Roxanne McAlpine:

And the maximum would be the same as a bonus: \$1,000.

Peter Buzby

So a few people are asking questions about their specific application and why it was or was not denied, particular things they included or did not include.

We don't have time right now to get into questions of that level of specificity. Again, if you have specific questions that weren't answered during this webinar, please do reach out through the TA line and we can try to help you out to the best of our ability and based on the amount of information we're able to provide at this stage of the process.

Brittani Trujillo:

I'll also just add to that, Peter, I know I saw a bunch of those kinds of questions. If you were awarded funding, whether it was full or partial—but if I'm guessing you're thinking about partially funded folks here—if you were awarded partial funding, today's webinar was meant to also help you understand why some of your items may have been denied. I also encourage you, maybe before reaching out to the TA, to look at your Award Form that you got notice of last Friday, November 3rd. It's in your GrantsConnect™ profile.

The Award Form does identify which items were awarded funding and which items were not awarded funding, and so that should give you information to connect today's webinar to your Award Form. So I highly encourage you to look at that and if you still have questions or don't understand, please do reach out to our phone number or email and we can talk with you there. But that Award Form really does show and state what was and what was not awarded funding.

Slide 28

Kerin Miller:

And to add on to that, Louis, if you could just click on to the next slide. We did host one office hour session this week and will host another office hour session on Monday. So I will put a link to that in the chat as well.

Pre-registration is not needed. Come join us when you can. Ask your questions. We will focus mostly on technical assistance to proceed with the grant agreement process.

So like I said, I will post that in the chat and look forward to seeing many of you there.

Peter Buzby

A few questions about the grant agreement timeline and spending eligibility. I think we've covered that already.

Brittani Trujillo:

I know Roxanne said that November 17th is sort of a target date, so that you can start incurring your expenses as of November 20th. There is no hard and fast deadline to get your revisions in so that we can execute your grant agreement. However, you can't invoice again until that grant agreement is executed, so we encourage you to get those revisions in so that we can go through that process with you as soon as possible.

Roxanne McAlpine:

Brittani, I saw a question posted: what if your application needs no edits and how fast can that execution process happen? So I think that's a question for you guys. How soon once they submit that, can you guys get the grant package out to them?

I don't know if you have an exact time frame, but maybe is it a week or is it a couple days?

Brittani Trujillo:

What I would say is that everyone needed a revision, so everyone who was awarded funding would have gotten that email notice. So if you did not get that notice that you needed to revise

your application, please call or email us and we can work with you directly. But you should have gotten that notice to make some revisions.

Roxanne McAlpine:

Sorry, I meant once they get it back to you. How quickly can you get me my grant agreement award package?

Brittani Trujillo:

I would say once we have that and we review and identify that everything is accurate, I would say you'll have your grant agreement within a week. It does get reviewed by CDA first before coming to you for review and signature, so we want to account for their turnaround time in that process as well.

Peter Buzby:

A couple questions about adjusting salary increases. So one person indicated that they had annual increases in their budget and was curious if they could change that to a one-time salary increase instead. Are those sort of changes permissible?

Brittani Trujillo:

I would say similar to some of the other questions, to get your application revised and your grant agreement executed, you wouldn't do that at this point. But once you have an executed grant agreement and we have the change request and the progress report processes, that is something you can provide that information to ask to make that kind of an update.

But for purposes of executing your grant agreement, it does need to align with what is on your award form and those pieces.

Peter Buzby:

Questions about licensing. Are programs with probationary licenses eligible?

Brittani Trujillo:

No, it had to be a license in good standing.

Peter Buzby:

A question from Lena, I think we've covered this, but I'd like to make sure it's clear: will applicants be able to update their application to claim partial funding that was not awarded? So again, you can't modify your application to request additional funding that you did not receive.

How long will it take to get reimbursed for expenses? So, Brittani, I don't think we necessarily need to cover this right now if you don't have an answer. I assume this is something that will be covered during that invoicing webinar.

Brittani Trujillo:

Correct.

Peter Buzby:

This question is a similar question to what we had last week. If staff left their positions and they've been filled with new staff members, can they make those modifications to the application, basically replacing old staff names with the people presently in those positions?

Brittani Trujillo:

Yes, I think those updates can definitely be made during the progress reporting period. We are less concerned with the staff name versus what kind of role they have to make sure that it aligns with those eligible positions.

Roxanne McAlpine:

That's correct. We're not so concerned about the exact name. Just as long as the position and the amount is the same, that's fine.

Peter Buzby:

So that brings us to 3:00.

I know we have a lot more questions. When you have 180 people on the webinar, it's tough to get to all of them.

As I said, you can see now that the grant assistance contact information is on the page. Please do reach out to us.

I know I said as well that we couldn't get into specific questions. We will try to give you, as I said, as much information as we can at this stage of the process, if you reach out to us with questions we couldn't answer right now.

So I'll now turn it over to CDA if any of you all would like to give any final words, any sign offs. I'm sure everybody would appreciate it.

Shawntel Bush:

Thank you everyone for joining. We appreciate your adherence to the request in your letters regarding holding your technical assistance calls until after this webinar. We're hopeful that the questions that we were able to provide answers for today will be helpful for you as you do your outreach for additional assistance to our grant administrator.

And also, please continue to refer to our CDA website. We will have this resource document posted with the impermissible and permissible items that will aid in your discussions. And we appreciate the additional questions and contact that you're going to provide during TA sessions for consideration by CDA around any staffing positions that have raised concerns that were not funded in this round.

Brittani Trujillo:

Thank you, Roxanne.

Thank you, CDA, Roxanne and Shawntel.

Thank you all CDA folks and thank you again everyone for joining me. Appreciate you taking time out of your day to continue working on this grant with us all. Have a great rest of your Thursday.

Roxanne McAlpine:

Thank you everyone.