**Record Overview-20240119\_182954-Meeting Recording**

0:02
Hello and welcome to the Office of Monitoring Webinar that will provide an overview of the monitoring process.

0:08
This session is designed for representatives from organizations who have been selected for monitoring for the FY24 monitoring.

0:16
The webinar is being recorded, so please know that you will be able to return to it as a reference in the future.

0:26
First, let's begin with introductions from our team.

0:29
I will start by introducing myself and will then ask my colleague to do the same.

0:35
I am Marshita Boynton and I am a senior monitoring officer with AmeriCorps Office of Monitoring.

0:41
Kathy, thanks, Marshita.

0:44
My name is Kathy Thompson and I'm also a senior monitoring officer with the Office of Monitoring.

0:50
Thank you.

0:52
Thanks, Kathy.

0:53
So here's our agenda for the day.

0:55
We will first go through the agency's objectives for monitoring activities.

0:59
We'll then move into the process itself by providing an overview of the monitoring life cycle start to finish.

1:05
And after that, we will discuss the next steps in the process in greater detail.

1:10
We will provide an overview of using the Secure Folders, which is our document management system that we will use throughout the process.

1:18
Towards the end, we will show you where you can access support and resources throughout the monitoring cycle.

1:25
If you have questions, feel free to e-mail monitoring@americorps.com.

1:36
First, let's discuss the agency's objectives for our offices monitoring activities.

1:41
So here is the why behind monitoring.

1:44
As a quick reminder, the Office of Monitoring is only a few years old.

1:49
It was born out of the transformation and sustainability plan, which separated out monitoring activities from the rest of our grants management activities.

1:58
Agency wide monitoring is a regulatory requirement and every grantee should expect to be monitored at some point.

2:05
The goals of monitoring are to a assess compliance with all requirements, statutory regulatory and agency policy, B Collect data from across the agency on strengths in areas for growth, C continuously improve agencies monitoring procedures based on monitoring activities and results, and D ensure agency compliance with federal regulations.

2:34
Continuing along with our objectives, I want to spend some time discussing what monitoring is and isn't So what monitoring is.

2:42
It is routine.

2:44
It's targeted, required by regulations.

2:47
It's used to inform training and technical assistance offered by the agency and also applied to the Prime grantee.

2:55
What monitoring is not is a direct result of wrongdoing.

2:59
So you are not selected because your organization is in trouble.

3:03
It is also not an audit.

3:06
It's not related to OIG or PIIA activities, nor is it applied directly to sub recipients.

3:18
Now we have gotten through the why and now we will move into the what.

3:22
Here is the bird's eye view of what our remote monitoring process looks like.

3:27
We have the activities broken up into three main phases, Pre monitoring, Monitoring and post monitoring and close out.

3:34
Pre monitoring includes notifying you of the upcoming monitoring assignment, requesting the required documents and supplemental documents and scheduling interviews if applicable.

3:45
Monitoring includes the review of your submitted documents and conducting any interviews if necessary.

3:51
After the monitoring phase, you will receive a monitoring report which would note any findings.

3:57
If there are findings, the post monitoring and close out phase will include the creation and submission of your corrective action plan or CAP.

4:05
Our offices review of that cap and ultimately your implementation of the CAP.

4:11
Once all findings are addressed and brought into compliance, we will move to close out the monitoring activity on site.

4:22
Monitoring has a very similar life cycle to remote monitoring, so here are some differences that I like to highlight.

4:30
35 to 40 day, 40 business days out from planned visit, grantees have received initial notification.

4:37
Next will be a request to visit on site that would include suggested dates and planning for a phone call with MO to discuss the process and document requests in more detail.

4:47
That call will take place around a 30 to 35 business days out from the visit.

4:53
Additional call.

4:55
An additional call will take place 10 to 20 days prior to the visit to finalize the agenda and interviews.

5:02
And of course a major difference is the compliant assessment itself which will take place on site.

5:08
So you'll see that they are in the green box.

5:10
Please note that the on site portion is an opportunity for the monitoring officers to collect documentation, review it with grantee staff, interview appropriate staff members and to begin the compliance assessment.

5:25
Additional compliance determinations will likely be made after the fact with information and documents gathered during the visit.

5:32
From this point forward, the post monitoring and close out portion of the life cycle mirrors the remote process that we just discussed.

5:43
So this is a graphic presentation of our different monitoring activities.

5:47
Taken as a whole, they are referred to as the Uniform Monitoring Package.

5:52
Many grantees are monitored for one activity, while some, particularly when our monitoring is on site, get the full suite.

6:00
I will go over each one briefly from left to right, starting with the FOFA.

6:05
The activity or activities for which you are being monitored was noted in the letter you received from the Office of Monitoring so FOFA.

6:14
The FOFA activity is the Financial and Operational Fitness Assessment which entails the submission to us of key financial documents such as the general Ledger Match Ledger documentation for selected PMS, drawdowns and an interview with Prom staff who oversee financial aspects of the program.

6:33
Sub recipient oversight activity The purpose of the sub recipient oversight monitoring activity is to determine whether or not the pass through entity.

6:42
Frequently a state Commission is fulfilling its obligations to oversee AMERI Corps funds and activities at the sub recipient level, program specific.

6:54
This is a review of compliance with regulations, terms and conditions associated with the respective grant program operations such as ASN, Vista, FGPSCPRSVP and Days of Service.

7:08
So we will request the initial and supplemental documentation as well as conducting interviews with three members, one site supervisor and a prime staff member NSCHC.

7:21
This is the National Service Criminal History Check Record and policy Review.

7:25
We will check that your checks have been completed and will request information on volunteers and staff and cover positions or those paid for by AmeriCorps funds with directly or through match.

7:38
There are no interviews, however it is a multi layered review that entails first collecting a list of names and then clearance documents if the grantee does not use our preferred vendors true screen and field print prohibited activities.

7:56
This activity reviews a recipient's training policies and procedures related to prohibited activities.

8:02
We conduct a member document review and interviews to determine if prohibited activities are being performed.

8:08
We will interview 4 volunteers, 2 site supervisors and a prom staff member.

8:15
And lastly is the new to Ameri Corps monitoring activity.

8:20
This activity is assigned to first time AMERI Corps grantees.

8:24
It will consist of a review of grantee policies, practices and systems with the intention of confirming that a recipient's foundational practices comply with federal and program requirements.

8:36
This activity will touch on selected items from the FOFA prohibited activities, NSCHC programmatic and sub recipient oversight monitoring activities.

8:52
So we've done the what and why.

8:55
Now here is the win.

8:57
I want to emphasize that this is a very, very rough timeline, and you may find that your organization is starting later or that certain phases take a little extra time depending on your assigned activities.

9:09
It could also go much faster depending on the completeness and speed with which your organization is able to respond.

9:16
In general, though, many of you can expect to receive your initial notification and document requests in the coming days or weeks.

9:23
Some of you may begin later, as we are still adding new staff to our office who will be assigned to your grant.

9:30
Once you receive your notification, you'll then have three weeks to provide the requested documentation, which puts us at about a month or so from now.

9:39
We will review the documentation and then request supplemental documentation if applicable, for your assigned activity.

9:46
I want to quickly explain the general distinction between initial and supplemental documentation.

9:52
Initial documentation is likely to include things like lists from which we will pull samples, while the supplemental documentation is likely to be the backup documentation associated with those samples.

10:03
For example, in the NSCHC activity, the initial documentation requested is a list of individuals covered by the grant.

10:11
The supplemental documentation request is for the actual NSCHC documents.

10:17
Once we have all the initial and supplemental documents as well as interviews on the calendar, we'll review everything and actually conduct the interviews.

10:25
This typically takes about a month but can vary.

10:29
We expect that you'll hear results from that in late spring and early summer when we anticipate you'll receive the monitoring report.

10:37
From there, you'll get started on your corrective action plan and submit that mid to late summer.

10:43
There may be some back and forth at this point, which puts us at a late summer, early fall when hopefully we can move to close out.

10:51
Please note that if your corrective action plan includes items that take some time to implement, you will remain in a status that is approved but not yet closed until implementation is complete.

11:07
On site reviews are slightly different as the bulk of our monitoring activity takes place at the Prime Grants Office.

11:14
As such, the general timeline here is centered around the on site visit itself.

11:19
The first few steps remain the same.

11:22
Then we get ready with the visit with a meeting to go over the draft agenda.

11:26
You will receive a draft agenda for your review and interviewee selections.

11:31
For NSCHC assignments.

11:32
You will receive a separate letter with instructions and the timelines may vary due to due to the sensitive nature of these items.

11:40
We use secure folders to receive NSCHC documentation on site monitoring, assessment and on site visit Usually spans over two to three business days, but timelines may be adjusted as needed.

11:54
The following will be completed as applicable to specific monitoring activities assignments, so the interviews will be conducted on site with members and volunteers, site supervisors, financial staff, and the project director.

12:08
The volunteer and member files, possibly including NSCHD records and financial documentation, will be reviewed.

12:16
Cost testing will also be performed post visit.

12:20
After the on site visit, the MO will return to their Home Office to complete any remaining reviews and compliance determinations and finalize the Monitoring Report.

12:30
Once finalized, the report will be shared with the grantee and the Oro Portfolio Manager.

12:37
If a Corrective Action Plan is required, the time following issuance of the Monitoring Report will be spent crafting the Corrective Action Plan response.

12:46
Having it reviewed by the Office of Monitoring and implementing the proposed corrective actions, I will turn it over to you Kathy.

12:55
Thank you.

12:58
Thank you, Marshita.

12:59
So let's look at next steps of the process.

13:04
So the next steps in the process involve A kickoff notification that you'll receive.

13:10
You will receive the kickoff notification at some point over the next month or so.

13:16
This notification will come from your assigned monitoring officer and will be directed to the authorized representative listed on your grant.

13:24
The Project Director listed will also be copied along with your portfolio and senior portfolio managers.

13:31
Finally, the ASN office will also be included for awareness if appropriate.

13:37
The e-mail that you will receive will include a formal AmeriCorps letter and that letter will summarize the monitoring activity assigned to your agency and the date range for the monitoring assessment.

13:50
It would also describe the deadline for responding to monitoring documentation requested from your monitoring officer, as well as an introduction of the monitoring officer themselves.

14:02
In addition to the formal notification of monitoring, instructions for assessing your secure folder will also be included.

14:10
Please note that the kickoff notification for recipients selected for on site monitoring will be slightly different.

14:16
As Marshita explained, the differences include a request to confirm your physical address and the options to choose and select your visit dates.

14:31
The Secure Folders are used to communicate to to you detailed information about your assigned monitoring activities, such as documents to submit, monitoring results and CAP information.

14:44
This system has been thoroughly vetted by our internal Information technology colleagues and has been deemed safe to transmit personally identifiable information.

14:54
So please use the Secure folder rather than e-mail the office to submit documents to your monitoring officer.

15:01
This will help safeguard any sensitive materials such as driver's license for assigned NSCHC activities.

15:13
And so in assessing your secure folders, the authorized representative will receive an e-mail and it'll have a link attached with your secure folder.

15:27
If you are not able to receive the e-mail, sometimes you may need to check your spam box.

15:35
If it's not, if you haven't received it within 24 hours after receiving the kickoff information, those we will also be sending a Ameri Corps Secure Folders External User Guide so that you can learn and access those secure folders.

15:52
If you would like to grant access to additional persons or a different e-mail account to their your secure folder, then you may need to reach out to your monitoring officer to make that request.

16:07
The monitoring officers will use the secure folder to collect the required documents, provide monitoring results and review notes, and provide corrective action plan status updates and feedback when it's applicable.

16:22
It's very important for you to read the entire e-mail and attach letters that are sent to you.

16:29
Some monitoring activities require the completion and return of forms within a defined period of time.

16:36
Blank copies of those forms will be uploaded to your folder, and once you've completed those forms, a copy should be stored within your Secure folder as the role of the grantee.

16:53
The Secure Folders can be used to upload initial documentation, upload supplemental documentation and any clarifying information that's needed, review and download your monitoring results.

17:05
You can also submit a corrective action plan with supporting documentation and review and download your corrective action report as well.

17:14
It is very important again for you to read the monitoring results and any communication from the monitoring officer to ensure an understanding of the next steps and the supporting documentation to submit some.

17:28
Some monitoring activities require the completion again of a timed return on those documents.

17:35
If specific forms are required, blank copies of those forms will be uploaded to your folder and once you've completed those forms, a copy should be stored within your secure folder.

17:46
Upload that to your folder Once all supporting documentations have been received, the monitoring officer will use a separate Excel based tool to communicate the monitoring results or even ask for clarification if needed, and the results will be communicated via e-mail and a copy of that tool will be uploaded to your secure folder.

18:12
So here's a snippet of the grantee document and some supplemental request list that we talked about previously.

18:20
So this document will provide what documents are being requested, a description of those of that document, whether or not there is a template that accompanies that dot that request.

18:34
And then there's an opportunity for the grant for the monitoring officer to provide feedback or information about those documents.

18:41
In this that's submitted.

18:44
There's also a Grantee note column that can be used to provide notes that you feel are pertinent.

18:49
For example, if it's possible that some requests may not be applicable to your agency, please provide a description as to why you believe that request is is not applicable and if you find yourself if in that situation, you should be able to do that.

19:08
The Office of Monitoring's website offers resources including the Uniform Monitoring package, and that's what we've talked about and discussed previously and that will help you become more familiar with the monitoring process and the requirements.

19:22
There's a monitor Remote Monitoring at a glance as well.

19:28
This is a view of the Uniform Monitoring package.

19:31
It is actually the Prohibited Activity section, and each section of the UMP provides the purpose and approach to the monitoring activity.

19:39
The questions and reference guides used to guide compliance determinations, the overall and the overview of the Uniform Monitoring package can be used to familiarize your agency with compliance requirements if you're being monitored or just to maintain compliance.

19:59
So let's take a quick recap of what we've discussed.

20:02
We've talked about the Monitoring Kickoff and Documentation Request notifications.

20:07
That will be emailed to you and what you should do once you receive those.

20:12
If you have any questions, you can direct those to your assigned monitoring officer.

20:19
And we've also talked about making sure that you read thoroughly the information that will be provided to you from your monitoring officer.

20:32
And in the meantime, if you have any questions, direct those questions to monitoring at americorps.gov Thank you for your participation in this presentation.

20:46
We hope you find this helpful.

20:47
And please reach out to the Office of Monitoring if you have any questions.

20:51
Thank you.

20:53
Thank you.