2020 Completing the CAPER Webinar Transcript from September 30, 2020

Rob Sronce: My name is Rob Sronce and I'm with the Cloudburst Group. I am joined today by a panel of my colleagues at Cloudburst, many of whom you have heard on past webinars or may have worked with through the Ask-A-Question. I'll ask them to just quickly unmute and say hello so you can recognize their voices.

Laura Detert.

Laura Detert: Hello, everyone.

Rob Sronce: Ben Sturm.

Ben Sturm: Hello, everyone.

Rob Sronce: Susan Walsh.

Susan Walsh: Hello. Hi, everyone.

Rob Sronce: And Joel Warren.

Joel Warren: Hey. Good morning. Good afternoon for some.

Rob Sronce: Yeah. Thanks. Joel and I are in the West, so yeah, we forget. Good morning and good afternoon. And, of course, thanks to those working behind the scenes including our registrar and host, Niki Deininger.

And Gloria have you joined us from HUD?

Gloria Coates: Yes.

Rob Sronce: Hi, Gloria. Welcome.

Gloria Coates: Hi. Thank you. It took a while; I don't know what was going on with the computer, but I'm on.

Rob Sronce: Great. Thanks for joining us. So, before we get started, a few things regarding today's session. It is scheduled for one hour; however, it could run a little bit longer, but we think we're going to be right at an hour. We'll have plenty of time for questions. If you do need to step away for some reason, please remember that the session will be recorded. The slides, the transcript, and recording will all be posted on the HUD Exchange usually within two or three weeks of the session, if not sooner.

Again, we'll have time to take your questions today. All questions will be handled through the WebEx Q&A pod. So, by default, this pod is hidden in the WebEx app. Take a minute to find the WebEx control panel on the right-hand side of your screen, locate, and click on the Q&A pod up in the top right corner. You click on that and it will become visible and accessible to you. Same with the chat pod. You can turn that on and off if you need to communicate with the host. But please focus on the presentation and minimize conversation in the chat pod, and please use the Q&A for us to be able to receive your questions which we'll grab as we're going along.

Also, remember, if we can't get to your question today, you can submit a question to the Ask-A-Question on the HUD Exchange.

Note that all participants are muted by default; if you need help with WebEx or have other technical issues please chat at the host and we'll be able to help you.

Lastly, if you would like to change your audio settings from phone to computer, go back to the quick start menu at the top left of the screen, go to Audio Conference and switch your selection from phone to computer or vice versa.

And again, thank you very much to HUD CPD for making this webinar possible today.

So, by the end of the webinar, we hope everyone will be able to answer the following about the CAPER: how do I create the CAPER template? Where does the pre-populated data in the CAPER come from? How do I utilize reports as a validation tool alongside the CAPER? We'll talk a little about reports. And last, but not least, we will discuss how to submit the CAPER in IDIS.

So, Joel, can you tell us a little bit about the material we'll be covering today?

Joel Warren: Yeah, Rob, you bet. So, as some may recall, in July, we covered things that you should be doing before you make the CAPER. Today, we'll cover a few of the same topics to reiterate those points, then we'll get into a bit more detail about the data of the CAPER, some relevant reports, and then finally submitting. First, we'll talk about how to create the template for any folks who may be working on their first CAPER. It'll be a refresher for others, and we'll get into some screens specifically talking about where the data comes from. As you work to make some edits and adjustments in the CAPER, you will get a sense of where that pre-populated data comes from.

Then we'll have Susan Walsh join in—who's somebody you may know—and she'll cover some specific reports and how they are helpful as you work in the CAPER. Then we'll cover some ESG screens talking about the requirements there and the Sage report. And towards the end, we'll go over how to technically submit the CAPER as well as some other common troubleshooting steps. At the very end, we'll do the Q&A.

Rob Sronce: Alright, thanks. And feel free to submit questions as the webinar is running; again, we'll grab those and answer those at the end of the webinar. So, yes, our first section here will be on Creating the CAPER. So, a quick review, Joel, what is a CAPER, and who needs to complete it?

Joel Warren: So, I'm sure we've lost some people daydreaming about capers, bagels, and lox in New York City. But the CAPER we're talking about today is the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report and its purpose is to report and assess the progress made towards achieving those goals that you outlined in both your Con Plan and your Action Plan. It records different types of data such as progress towards goals versus outcomes; beneficiaries; resources and investments made over a program year; actions taken to address things such as fair and affordable housing; homelessness; and any other specific program data in your Action Plans.

Each grantee is responsible for creating and submitting their own CAPER and this is important to note. So, this includes even those participating members of a HOME Consortium. Both lead and participating members create and submit their own CAPERs. A caveat there at the bottom: so, usually the CAPER is due to HUD 90 days after your program year; however, in light of the pandemic, HUD's extended that deadline to 180 days after your program year. That means that your 2019 CAPER is now due 180 days after your 2019 program year ends.

Rob Sronce: Great. Thanks. So, remember that's after your program year. So, not everyone has the same program year. A lot end on June 30 and your CAPER is due today; but many follow the calendar year or the federal fiscal year, so it may be different. But again, look at that waiver that extends the deadline another 90 days. So, it's a total 180 days after the end of the CAPER.

Joel Warren: At the end of your program year.

Rob Sronce: So, next, what does the grantee need to do to create their CAPERs or where do they start?

Joel Warren: So, from the very beginning—when you log into IDIS on that left-hand side, you'll see the "Add" link under the orange CAPER sub-menu. When you click "Add", you'll get the menu that you're seeing here as a screenshot, you'll see the program year which you'll input as your Action Plan year, you'll see a title that you want to give to your CAPER, then you'll make that Version ID which is a unique identifier.

So, typically, the jurisdiction name plus the word "CAPER" and a program year is your title--or something similar. The Version ID is most typically a 1 or 1.0, something to tell your coworkers who would be helping you, which is the latest version of your ID. And, to note, you can always go back and change your title if you change your mind or something changes.

Rob Sronce: Okay. Next slide. Thank you. Go ahead.

Joel Warren: So, this is an important piece. So, it's important to know which Action Plan your CAPER is speaking to. So, if you don't know that, it might confuse you where the data is coming from. So, on this CR-00 Administration screen, you can see exactly which Action Plan your CAPER is connected to. So, as the screenshot shows here at the very bottom, you'll see exactly the year, the title, and the plan version.

Rob Sronce: So, what if we create CAPER with an error or we want to start over with a new version, what do we do?

Joel Warren: That's a good question. So, once your CAPER is created, it cannot be deleted, and it can't be reassociated to a different Action Plan. So, it's important that grantees take necessary steps to avoid the errors. So, first, the CAPER associates with the most recently approved Annual Action Plan; so, it means the most recent plan marked as "Review Completed."

So, the CAPER will not be linked to plans--this is important--so the CAPERs cannot be linked to plans that are still in Submitted for Review, Waiting for Modifications, or Open in Progress. So, they will only be associated to those plans in "Review Completed" status.

Rob Sronce: Got it. So, we need to be careful about the correct program year, make sure the Action Plan for that program year is marked, "Review Completed" and that is done by the HUD representative, correct?

Joel Warren: Yep. Exactly.

Rob Sronce: So, if it's not in that state, you need to reach out to your CPD representative and ask them to flip that switch.

Joel Warren: That's another basic point of the CAPER. So, when you log in and you hit "Edit" on that CAPER, the screens you see here will reflect the programs that you administer. So, this example, the screenshot, this grantee administers ESG, CDBG, HOME, and HOPWA as you see from that CR-45 through CR-55 screens, and in those ESG screens too. So, you'll only see the screens here that are relevant to you.

Rob Sronce: Alright. Thanks, Joel. So, now moving quickly, we're going to the heart of the CAPER: the data. We know that the CAPER and e-Con Planning Suite are set up to meet the reporting requirements for HUD CPD grants. We also know that data we enter at the activity level ends up in the CAPER. So, what else does a grantee need to know about that? How does the CAPER put this puzzle together? Where are we going to see the data, and can we fix it if we need to? Sorry, Joel, so many questions today.

Joel Warren: There's a ton of questions, we'll see if we can answer a few. So, throughout the CAPER, the pre-populated data can be edited and adjusted, so keep that in mind as you're working. Remember to also use the narrative boxes to support the data you see in those screens. So, a good example, in that CR-05 goals and outcomes screen, it's a good place to tell the story of how the numbers on that screen impact the community and the people you serve. So, don't get so caught up in the data where you forget to use the narrative boxes to kind of tell the story.

And the next point there on this slide. So, the CAPER reflects Part 91, which everyone should make themselves familiar with. It’s in the Con Plan Desk Guide, which was updated today, which is great news. You can also see the requirements for each screen of the CAPER in that Desk Guide. And the last bit there: in the CR-00 administration screen, that's where you'll be putting your supporting documents such as reports or other appendices that you might want HUD to review—and we'll go into some of those reports a little bit later on.

So, data throughout the CAPER comes from a few different places. The very first bullet there, the Strategic Plan and your Annual Action Plan information, all those places where you see the Expected column, that number usually points directly back to a number that you have either in your Con Plan, your Action Plan, or both depending on which screen you're in.

Activity accomplishments that are pulled into the CAPER typically come directly from the publishers that you already have reported in IDIS. It's important here to note the difference between CDBG and HOME. For CDBG accomplishments, just to reiterate, if the input has under the correct program year in the Accomplishment detail activity, it'll appear even if the activity is still open. This is because CDBG activities can generate beneficiaries over several program years. HOME is a little bit different; it only counts beneficiaries when the activity is marked as completed.

Rob Sronce: Oh, that's an important thing to remember.

Joel Warren: Yeah, it's a good thing to highlight as you work through your CAPER, if some data isn't looking quite exactly right.

So, then going down to the funding and drawdowns, so CAPER data also comes from the completed drawdowns as you've reported them in IDIS. So, the caveat to this is for those ESG grantees, the ESG CAPER is submitted through Sage and the Sage report is attached to the CAPER which is a little bit different.

And then finally, it's important to keep in mind as you work in the CAPER, that the CAPER organizes all of your accomplishment data by goal and not by project or activity. It's important that you review your activities and projects as they are tied to the goals that you have in both your Action Plan and your Con Plan. So, if you have all those goals lined up to your activities, you'll already be off to a really good start as you make your template.

Rob Sronce: Yes, and that's what we covered on our last webinar, on July 29th, about setting up those activities and projects, to get those goals and goal outcome indicators aligned correctly in preparation for creating your CAPER. So, if you're having problems or if this is new to you, then please go back and look at our July 29th webinar and also consult the materials that we have posted online including our newly updated e-Con Planning Desk Guide.

Back on Slide 15. There we go.

Joel Warren: Perfect. So, diving into the screens here finally. So, this is the CR-05 Goals and Outcomes Table 1. This is where you're reporting your accomplishments for the projects that are associated to a goal for your program year--and "Program Year" is the keyword here for this table. In this case, it's a 2019 CAPER, this table is reporting your 2019 accomplishments that are pointing towards those 2019 goals in your annual Action Plan.

So, the expected amount is coming from your AP-20 goal screen where you set up that goal initially. The actual amount is coming from your actual reported accomplishments within IDIS.

So, subtle differences here. Whereas Table 1 was looking at accomplishments for the program year, Table 2 is looking at your accomplishments against your five-year plan. So, the expected amount here is coming from your Con Plan goals, which is your SP-45 screen from your Con Plan. The actual column here is—just like Table 1—is populating your accomplishments in the system that are reported against that Con Plan goal.

Rob Sronce: So, Table 1: Annual Plan and Accomplishments. Table 2: five-year plan, progress towards five-year goals. Okay. Next slide.

Joel Warren: So, this is the CR-10, Racial and Ethnic Composition Table. So, this is populating from your accomplishment data within IDIS for the given program here. So, again, really similar to how the CR-05 populates. Something of importance on this table, though. The table description here states "Families," however, this is somewhat confusing. The system is actually reporting on both families and persons depending on your specific activity in IDIS. So, keep this in mind as you work to edit this screen in case the numbers don't look exactly how you'd expect them to when you create your template.

Rob Sronce: So, yeah, this can be a little confusing. So, I'm going to remember that subtle difference.

Joel Warren: Excellent. So, the CR-15, this is your Investments and Resources screen. While the Resources Made Available column is pulled directly from your

AP-15 Expected Resources page, the Amount Expended column is programmed to add up all the drawdowns completed for a particular program year; so, the key to that second column is the word "Completed." Again, like most of these columns, you can edit these numbers and use the narrative box to explain any adjustments that you're making.

Rob Sronce: Okay. So, in that case, we had 2019 cost, but the voucher wasn't completed in 2019 or you had a late draw from the prior year that spilled into the current program year. You need to look at this number and likely correct it because it's often that we have draws trailing the program year. So, remember to take a look at this.

Joel Warren: Yeah, in a perfect world, it would populate exactly how you would program it to. But yeah, relook at that column and make sure it reflects your program year.

Great. So, this is the CR-15 Geographic Distribution table. This will only populate for those grantees that use geographic priorities; I know many don't, so you might see the heading of this column but you won't see anything for this, CDBG, HOME, or any of your programs. As the screenshot shows here, the first column will populate directly from your AP-15 to the Geographic Distribution screen where you've stated your priorities and the plan percentages of your allocation, and that second column—the Actual Percentage column—will not populate automatically; you'll need to fill this in automatically.

Then that narrative description box, this will populate directly, again, from your AP-50, but if you put a really long description in your AP-50, it might not all fit here. So, I'd recommend going in here and editing that narrative description.

Rob Sronce: So, a little bit of manual entry on this screen. I'd like to reiterate that this is only going to be relevant to those who have geographic targeting in the Action Plan, others can just ignore it. And as a reminder, geographic targeting is not your entire jurisdiction: it's a sub-area and your targeting should be supported by data and narratives. If you have any questions about creating a target area, what a target area means, I suggest you talk to your CPD representative and they can provide you with some guidance. There is also some guidance in the eCon Planning Suite Desk Guide.

Back to you, Joel.

Joel Warren: Thanks. So, this is your CR-20 screen which is the Affordable Housing screen. The very first column here of this table might look familiar; this is directly pulled from your One-Year Goal column that is taken from your Annual Action Plan, and that's the AP-55 Affordable Housing screen. So, this table and that screen talk to each other.

We have questions occasionally on what exactly should be included on this screen, in the Actual column. I always refer people to look back at what you put in your AP-55 and what you stated there, and then use any reports available to you to populate that Actual column to reflect what you had in your AP-55.

Rob Sronce: So, these may be units that are part of your goals, that may not have been produced using CPD funds.

Joel Warren: Right. So, still on the CR-20 screen, this Number of Households Served table, like many others, populates from your accomplishment data in IDIS. So, again, we'll reiterate the difference between CDBG and HOME. For CDBG, the information has been input under the correct program year and that accomplishment detail part in the activity that will populate here even if the activity is still open. Whereas with HOME, this will only populate here if the activity is marked as completed.

Rob Sronce: Great. Thanks, Joel. A lot of information. Remember that this is recorded and there's always the Desk Guide and Ask-A-Question, and we're glad to help you with your individual situation. If we can't answer your question today, submit an Ask-A-Question.

Now, we'd like to introduce reports that grantees can use to help review the data that are going into the CAPER, reports that accompany the CAPER, and reports that can even be used to troubleshoot the CAPER to figure out what is going on. Joel, can you walk us through these reports? And, Susan, you'll be joining us as well.

Joel Warren: Yeah, I think Susan will walk us through these reports on this slide and then she'll go into some detail on a few of these too.

Rob Sronce: Okay, Susan, are you there? We may have lost Susan. So, do you want to walk us through these? Or Susan, you're muted? Technical difficulties here. Sorry about this.

Well, Joel, do you want to talk about the Con Plan goals and accomplishment report?

Joel Warren: Yeah. So, this is one of the reports that we had in our last webinar. This is good to run before you make your CAPER. This report will show you the accomplishments you have in the system as it relates back to your goals both in your Action Plan and your Con Plan. So, this report will expose if you have some accomplishments that might not be tied to a goal or if they are tied to several goals and the system is not quite sure where to put it. Again, this is probably one of the better reports to run before you make your template. This will work to inform exactly where you are with your CAPER. I think we have some examples of these other ones, the PR-03...

Rob Sronce: Yep. Alright, the PR-03.

Joel Warren: So, this report here, this is good to run as you're making your CAPER and will inform the CR-10 screen in the beneficiaries, so this is the Racial and Ethnic Composition table.

Susan Walsh: Hi, I'm back.

Rob Sronce: There you go.

Susan Walsh: Sorry about that. I was trying to unmute myself in a different part of the app and it wasn't working. Really sorry about that, everybody.

Rob Sronce: Just in time.

Susan Walsh: So, I wanted to go over, just briefly, some of the reports. So, if we could go back to that slide that shows these six reports and then I'll talk about each one briefly. And I think Joel already talked about the Con Plan Goals and Accomplishments report, which is really helpful. But the main drawback about that report is that it doesn't show you the activity, it doesn't tell you by activity number. And so that is problematic if you're trying to drill down to the activity level. And so, these other reports listed are very helpful to see more detail by activity.

So, we have the PR-03 report and we're going to go over that in more detail in a minute; there are a couple of versions of that. Also, the PR-22 report, we're going to talk about that more in the next slide. The PR-26 Financial Summary report, we'll talk about also a little bit more detail, but you can go back to that list for a minute, Rob. And then the PR-28, of course, is the State PER, and that's required for states. So, the PR-26 and the PR-28 are actually the only required reports for the CAPER, the others are more reports that are helpful for you in determining the data that you might need to enter if you need to adjust anything.

The PR-33 is the HOME Matching Liability report and you can run that and find it online. But a lot of people do get that confused because it's based on the federal fiscal year. So, if you don't know that your matching liability is based on the federal fiscal year, then your reports that you run might not match up with that. So, that would be—for 2019—that would be October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019 is what HUD looks at for your expenditures to determine what your match liability is for the 2019 CAPER.

And then also the PR-91 is an ESG Financial Summary and there's several versions of that. There are new filters now where you can filter for CV (CARES Act funds) or regular ESG funds. And even though most of your data is going to be uploaded into Sage, there is some information that's helpful by subrecipient in this PR-91 report that you can use for helping with your CAPER.

So, we can go to the next slide now. So, we're going to show you some examples of these different reports. First, we'll look at the PR-03, Activity Summary. This is a familiar report, I'm sure, to many of you. And this particular version is the regular PR08 and it's expressed in a PDF and is often many pages because it gives you pretty much two pages for every activity. So, this is really a nice report, particularly for your public, if you want to give your public information, it's easy to read and easy to look at. And it gives you information about your draws during your program year and when your activity was completed, if that was the case, and then your accomplishments.

There are also some other PR-03 reports that are helpful, that are more distilled. For example, we can look at the PR-03 BOSMAC—there's several versions of the PR-03 BOSMAC—but we'll just look at the original one. And this report just takes that data and distills it down. It's best to download it as an Excel document and you can sort of filter with that information. But it gets it into an easier-to-view format if you're trying to add numbers or see things at more of a glance. So, it goes way across, you scroll across and it has a column for every single thing that's in that report. Since there are so many columns, it's not so good for the public, but it's nice for the staff to try to figure out your totals.

Rob Sronce: What the heck does "BOSMAC" mean anyhow?

Susan Walsh: Oh, you had to ask me that, Rob? Well, I remember that there was something about Boston involved in it—maybe you know a little more.

Rob Sronce: Oh, that's all I know is it was originally an Excel macro that ran on the downloader report that generated this more tabular version of the report. And it was done by someone in the Boston Field Office who came up with it. So, a bit of lore.

Susan Walsh: And it will forever live in BOSMAC history.

Rob Sronce: Yes.

Susan Walsh: So, we can move on now and we can look at the PR-22--or actually, this is the PR-26. Why don't we look at the PR-22 next? So, this is a report that can be helpful for looking at HOME activities and particularly, for completed activities. And earlier, Joel mentioned how HOME doesn't count activities for your CAPER unless they're completed, which is different than for CDBG.

Now, one thing that's very important to know about this report is that the choices you have when you're running it are to run it for all years or to run it for open activities and activities that were completed in the last year. And so, a lot of people think, "Oh, I'll just do it for the open and completed in the last year, that's one selection." The problem is, unless you run it on the very last day of your program year, which will go back exactly one year, you're not going to necessarily get accurate data because it goes back one year exactly.

So, if you're running it today, which is September 30, but you want it for your program year that ended June 30, it's only going to go back a year from today which means it's going to miss out on those first three months of your program year from last year.

So, what we recommend is that when you run it, you make the selection to select all years, and that way, you can download it into Excel and then you can do a custom filter, then change it to "Completed", and that way, you'll see just what you've completed in your program year itself. But this is a nice report that just gives you a lot of information about your activities—and it does group them a little bit differently than maybe you're used to. But again, you can filter it and sort it the way you want.

So, I want to mention something too about TBRA activities, because we get a lot of questions about that. And TBRA is kind of a different animal when it comes to HOME activities because with TBRA, you don't always—not all PJs will complete those activities even every year, sometimes they leave them open for several years. And the problem with that is if you're looking at completed activities, then you're not going to get credit for those tenants that you assisted during your program year.

And so, some of the reports—like there's a PR-23 report that shows you your TBRA recipients based on the initial funding date of the activity. So, if you run a PR-23 for HOME, it will give you the numbers based on your activities during your program year that were initially funded during that program year. But it doesn't base it on “Completed.” If you do it through this report, PR-22, then you can see "Completed."

So, sometimes with TBRA, it might be good to verify your numbers by looking—if you have an internal tracking system which is very much recommended for TBRA, you can look and see how many households you assisted during your program year. Now, these would be newly assisted; so, if you're doing maybe 24 months of assistance, you're doing 12 months, and then you're renewing it for 12 more months, you don't want to count them twice. But for newly assisted tenants, you do want to make sure that you're getting credit for all those people that you assisted during your program year.

And as many PJs that have TBRA activities might be adding new tenants all the time—and that can cross program years—sometimes the reports don't tell the whole picture. So, we really do encourage you, if you're doing TBRA, to look internally at your numbers and really give yourself the credit for what you deserve of who you've assisted during the year.

So, let's go on to the PR-26 report. Now, this is the one report that for entitlement grantees, you have to submit with your CAPER. I’m sure everyone knows and loves this report. And it's got a little problem right now since the last release, it's not allowing people to add their 2019 program year in the Parameter section. So, if you did add your 2019 program year already before the new release that went live on September 14th, then you're lucky and you're going to have no problem.

But if you didn't, then we've consulted with HUD Headquarters about this and what they recommend is that—if you need to submit now—to go ahead and run it in your reports. So, you can always run the PR-26 for the 2019 year, even if you haven't edited the parameters. But it's not going to show you your Line 1, which you have to enter yourself, or any adjustments, if you happen to have any adjustments.

But you can run it in MicroStrategy reports and then download it as an Excel file, and that way, you can add your Line 1 which will, of course, lead to adjustments. You'll need to adjust your Line 8 and your Line 16, and you can also make other adjustments if you need to and submit it to your Field Office that way.

So, if you have to submit it, if you don't have an extension or you have to do it right now, that's the option available to you. We apologize for this, but there was apparently some change that happened in the new release that caused an issue with the parameters for the report. The report itself works fine when you run it, but the parameter section is the issue and doesn't allow for you to add the 2019 year.

Rob Sronce: So, someone can reproduce this in Excel, download it, and then enter formulas to make the adjustments to make it work.

Susan Walsh: Correct. Or just edit the numbers without formulas if you need to, just make sure that you're doing it correctly and following the way that the report runs when working properly. And if you have any questions, you can always submit an IDIS Ask-A-Question.

Rob Sronce: And there's good guidance on how this report works that is available and what numbers should go where.

Susan Walsh: That's right. There are very good instructions on the HUD Exchange for the PR-26.

Rob Sronce: Great.

Susan Walsh: So, yeah, I think that's the most helpful—of course, there's lots of other reports—and if you have questions, you can submit them right now and then we can try to talk through anything else you still have questions about.

Rob Sronce: Thanks, Susan. Thank you very much. And Joel. And now onto ESG. ESG is different, as we mentioned before. What do ESG grantees need to know, Joel?

Joel Warren: So, it's a little bit different. There are a couple extra things ESG grantees have to do. So, ESG grantees are required to complete that CR-60, the Subrecipient Information screen as well as that CR-70 Assistance Provided and Outcome screen. Within that CR-60, it's important that grantees identify all subrecipients. We get some questions about that sometimes. So, if you're an ESG grantee, make sure in that CR-60 screen that you're identifying all of your subrecipients.

ESG grantees will leave that CR-65 Persons Assisted and that CR-75 Expenditure screen both blank as those will be reported through the Sage report that gets uploaded into the CR-00 screen.

One thing to note: the system will not tell you—if you're an ESG grantee—the system won't tell you to leave those screens blank. So, just be mindful. Again, you're leaving that CR-65 and CR-75 screens blank.

As ESG recipients, as most of you probably already know, you're submitting your accomplishment data in that Sage HMIS repository. All the quarterly ESG-CV reporting will be done through Sage and not in IDIS, and if there are questions about any of these things on the screen you're seeing now, there's some pretty good resources on the HUD Exchange for ESG. And we'll have a slide at the end that lists out those resources and links to them.

Rob Sronce: Great. And remember there are AAQs, an Ask-A-Question desk, for both Sage and ESG.

Alright, and the last main topic is Submitting the CAPER.

Joel Warren: Nice. Well, congrats on making it this far, making good progress. So, once you have all of your data and all your narrative screens completed, that's when you'll head to that CR-00 Admin screen of your CAPER. So, in this screen, you'll see some places to attach things. Make sure you're attaching things in PDF form. Once all your attachments are there, this is where you'll go to the very bottom, click that dropdown menu, click "Submitted for Review," and then click "Save and Return."

So, when you click "Save and Return," that's when you've officially submitted your CAPER to HUD and this CAPER will not be editable at that point in time. If your HUD representative then turns around and says, "Hey, can you make some changes or some edits to the CAPER, I see some discrepancies," they may return the CAPER to you and then it will be in a different status of "Reviewed and Awaiting Modifications". If that happens, you can make changes to the CAPER and then you'll resubmit it again through the same process by going back to the CR-00 screen and changing the status back to "Submitted for Review."

Rob Sronce: Alright. So, some common issues: we work in the AAQ and we just know everybody gets this and it completely makes sense, right? Everyone who's been on this for the first time, this completely makes sense, right? No, no, it doesn't. So, Joel, can you walk us through some things that we see often that grantees stumble on or are a little bit confused about?

Joel Warren: Absolutely. Happy to. So, these are the four areas that I found we get the most questions about. So, that first one—just the most one we've covered a couple times both in this webinar and the last—make sure that the Action Plan you're trying to create a CAPER for is marked "Review Completed" in IDIS. So, if it's not marked as "Review Completed," work with your HUD Field Office to make sure you resolve any of the issues in that Action Plan so it can be marked as "Review Completed."

Number two there: it's also really important in your CAPER to make sure that your GOIs are consistent across all of your plans. This includes projects, activities, Action Plans, and Con Plans. If you're finding, through a report or through your CAPER, that you have a different GOI in an Action Plan than what was chosen for in the Con Plan, you might need to make an amendment to your Action Plan. Or if you choose not to and you think it's too minor to make an amendment, you'll need to manually adjust that in your CR-05 screen.

Number three there: so, again, very, very similar. The same goes for how projects are matching to your Action Plan. Make sure that the Goal Outcome Indicator (GOI) that you've selected for a project points to the exact same GOI for the goal. Again, when you don't match, you'll probably have to amend either the Con Plan or the Action Plan to just make sure that your GOIs line up from Con Plan, to Action Plan, to project.

I think we've hammered that one.

Rob Sronce: Yeah.

Joel Warren: So, the very last one: when you get some funky errors on the screen—this happens sometimes and it's frustrating. The most common cause for these errors that we've seen is pasting from Word into the CAPER. So, when you paste from Word or a different processing document, there are a lot of special characters that get pasted behind the scenes. So, make sure you're using that Paste From widget. So, yeah, Rob's highlighted that. Thanks. So, that little widget above the narrative box, if you click that, it'll open up a box, you paste your narrative in there, then you hit insert, and that'll remove all those special characters. So, the limit is 4,000 characters for most narrative fields, so keep that in mind as you're going.

If you try to save a screen and you get an error message, a good practice would be to delete whatever you just added, try saving it again, and if that saves, you've probably figured out where your error is.

Rob Sronce: Alright, what are some things we must do before we create the CAPER?

Joel Warren: Yeah, so we're reiterating here again a couple of things we've already covered. You'll make sure that your Action Plan is marked as "Review Completed." This goes for amendments as well. Ensure your Action Plan and your CAPER are connected in the right way. When you make that CAPER, make sure in the CR-00 screen that it's associated with the right Action Plan. Ensure your Action Plan has all the right projects, including the program year. So, if you're in the habit of copying an Action Plan from one year to the next, you probably know that it keeps those projects in the system. So, we'll get a lot of questions sometimes about projects not looking right in the CAPER or accomplishments not reporting exactly right. A good way to go back to that is to make sure that in your Action Plan you have projects for that program year.

Now, so if you're copying 2018 to 2019, you'll need to make sure that you're removing those old projects and making new projects for that program year.

Rob Sronce: Right. And a little grantee hack is to think about how you name your projects, so that if they're common from one year to the next, you'll be able to tell them apart, so the name jumps out at you. So, think about how you name your projects.

Joel Warren: Yes, that's a good tip. Bullet number four there: make sure you're entering all your data in IDIS. I would give it a day, sometimes the system takes a little bit to refresh. Put all your data in, maybe the next day come back in, and hit that "Add" button.

And along with similar lines, make sure you're using the reports that are available to you both before you make the CAPER and as you're in the process of making those edits and adjustments. Use those reports. And if you have questions, again, like Susan said, feel free to use the IDIS AAQ and they can help a lot with that.

Rob Sronce: Final warning.

Joel Warren: We're on the home stretch here. So, if you've created a CAPER and you see some issues, you don't need to create a new template. Remember all these screens are editable so you can manually adjust the data using the reports, making sure that whatever is in those screens in the CAPER is reflective of your program year to tell the story both through data and narrative. It's both editable.

Alright. That's all I got.

Rob Sronce: Alright. Thanks. On the Resources section here. So, I mentioned these slides will be made available in about a week or two. In the meantime, there are plenty of resources available on the HUD Exchange. Also remember to sign up for the HUD Exchange listserv, so you'll get announcements of events like this and also when program materials are made available. New materials are made available on the HUD Exchange. There are some Quick Guides available that are focused on specific tasks in addition to other reference guides.

As we pointed out, Appendix B of the Con Plan Desk Guide is where you're going to find the correct goal outcome indicators for activity types, if you need to make sure that they're aligning correctly. And for CDBG, the correct pairing of the matrix code and goal outcome indicator. So, those all have to match and align so that they all can move through the CAPER correctly.

As we mentioned, you can submit your question to Ask-A-Question, have us respond to it, and of course, the past webinars which we've plugged are available on the HUD Exchange.

So, now, there are over 10 minutes left, and we have some time for questions. Questions should be submitted to the Q&A pod, and remember that if you're not seeing it, it may be hidden. So, click on the Q&A pod up in the right-hand corner to activate it so you can see it.

And let's see... we have a lot of questions, so we'll answer as many as we can. And I'll go ahead and turn it over to Laura who's going to read out the questions.

Ben Sturm: Hey, Rob. This is Ben. I think I'm going to read them out.

Rob Sronce: Oh, Ben. I'm sorry, Ben.

Ben Sturm: Hi, everyone. So, starting off, Joel, I think this one's for you. "If I'm in a consortium, do I need to wait for the lead grantee to create their CAPER before creating mine? And do we also need to submit our CAPERs at the same time?" Two-part question.

Joel Warren: It's a good question. So, it's different than the Action Plan and the CAPER—sorry, the Action Plan and the Con Plan. The CAPER is its own thing. So, no, you don't need to wait for the lead grantee to create the CAPER if you are a HOME consortium member. So, as a member, you're responsible to both create that CAPER template yourself and to submit it. You're not on the same timeline, necessarily, as the lead entity. This is different than the Con Plan and the Action Plan where you do have to wait for the lead entity. With the CAPER, you're on your own.

Ben Sturm: Thank you. Next question is another CAPER setup question and I can handle this one. "Can you delete a CAPER after it's been created in IDIS and start over or can you only create a new version?"

So, once a CAPER has been created in IDIS, it cannot be deleted. The good thing about the CAPER is, as Joel indicated earlier in the presentation, the CAPER is editable, so a lot of the data fields, you can correct or manually update the data if it didn't populate correctly in the system. Or if the CAPER is not associated to the correct plan, or if it was created before IDIS activity accomplishments were entered, you can create a new CAPER. Though it's recommended that you update the existing CAPER template that has been created.

And for the next question, "What are the required reports that must be submitted with the CAPER?"

Rob Sronce: Susan, that's got your name on it.

Susan Walsh: I guess it does. Well, the only required reports are the PR-26 for entitlement grantees and the PR-28 for state grantees. Those are the only reports that you must send to your Field Office with your CAPER or upload into the eCon Planning Suite. You can, of course, have other reports in your public-facing document or even send to your Field Office if you'd like, but the PR-26 and PR-28, whether you're entitlement or state, are the only required reports.

Ben Sturm: And I'd also just like to add that if you are an ESG recipient, you are required to include a Sage PDF download report from the Sage system for your ESG accomplishments. And that needs to be uploaded with the reports on the CR-00 Administration screen.

Susan Walsh: Great. Thanks, Ben.

Ben Sturm: This is another question for you: "Will the CAPER tell me if we went over any spending caps?"

Susan Walsh: Well, the PR-26 will tell you that. The PR-26 measures the public service caps which are waived right now for 2019 and 2020 funds and for your CV funds. It measures your 20 percent planning and admin and it also measures to make sure you've used at least 70 percent of your funds that year for low-mod activities. So, the PR-26 is very helpful in making sure you have adhered to those requirements and that's really the main reason why you need to submit it so that your HUD Field Office can see that as well.

Ben Sturm: Thank you, Susan.

Rob Sronce: And Susan, if something in there is wrong, we can adjust that and the guidance tells us how to do that, correct?

Susan Walsh: That's right. There are adjustment lines on the reports and there's also a prior-year flag option in IDIS where you can mark vouchers as "Prior Year" if they were invoices you're paying after your program year ended, but were really attributed to your prior year. And if you mark those as "Prior Year," they will automatically update in your PR-26 and you won't have to make any adjustments. But if you have other types of adjustments or you add unliquidated obligations for planning, admin, and public services, those are all adjustment lines that are available to you and we encourage you to read the instructions to understand how that all works.

Rob Sronce: Thank you.

Ben Sturm: We have questions about CDBG-CV, ESG-CV, and HOPWA-CV. Currently, we're going to wait until more HUD guidance on how to incorporate accomplishments for CARES Act programs into the CAPER comes out. We're going to wait until more HUD guidance comes out on that. But there are always the description boxes on the accomplishment screen. So, if you want to talk about what's going on with your CDBG-CV projects, you can provide an explanation in the narrative boxes in the CAPER. But as far as reporting requirements for CV HEROS, we're going to hold off on that until further HUD guidance comes out on that.

So, Joel, I think this is a good question for you. "Our Con Plan began in 2019, however, we have projects from 2017 and 2018 that were completed this year. How do we report those projects in our 2019 CAPER?"

Joel Warren: So, if you're talking about data specifically, we covered when those accomplishments will be reported in the CAPER. So, if it's CDBG, those are reported if it's still open during the program year. If it's HOME, the activity has to be closed. If you're speaking more about the narrative section, you're always—if it's a multi-year project—you're always able to describe, in narrative form, the ongoing accomplishments of that project.

Did I answer the question, Ben? Or was I getting somewhere else?

Ben Sturm: I think you hit it. So, if a previous HOME project from 2017 or 2018 wasn't completed until 2019, then those accomplishments would be reported in the 2019 CAPER, whereas for CDBG, the accomplishments would be reported during the program year that those accomplishments occurred. So, if a 2017 CDBG project has been open but no accomplishments were reported until 2019, then those accomplishments would be reported in the 2019 CAPER.

Joel Warren: Got it. Yep, so that's a key difference between reporting of CDBG and HOME. Whereas for CDBG, it's program year even if the activity is still open. For HOME, it will only report when the activity is closed for that program year.

Susan Walsh: And I'd like to add that for CDBG, to make sure if you're reporting the accomplishments for a certain year, to add that year in your accomplishment data because you can add multiple years. So, if you started in 2017 and maybe you didn't have any accomplishments until 2019, then you want to make sure you add the 2019 year in your Accomplishments screen so that you can show that happened in 2019. Or sometimes, activities can remain open for a couple years and you have accomplishments in both years like for public services.

Ben Sturm: Thank you, Susan. Rob, this is a question for you: "Do continuous CARE grantees, CDBG-DR, or CV grant funds do a CAPER?"

Rob Sronce: No, they do not necessarily. So, disaster grants: if you're receiving a disaster grant, you'll be reporting to DRGR and we just mentioned that for CARES Act grantees, there will be further reporting guidance for them. And CoC grantees use HMIS, so those grantees do not report through the CAPER and IDIS. Although as Joel mentioned, anything that's going on in your community that's contributing to those goals you have in your Con Plan or Action Plan can be discussed in a narrative. Find a place and if you want to highlight that, feel free to do so in the narrative.

Ben Sturm: Alright. Thank you. And Joel, one more question for you: "If there are multiple versions of the Action Plan, will this be associated with the last version that was viewed and completed even if the most recent Action Plan is still open?"

Joel Warren: This is a good question. There's a little caveat that I can get into here. So, if this is a Year 2-5 Action Plan of your Con Plan, so Years 2, 3, 4, or 5 of your Con Plan, as long as you, at one point in time, had an approved Action Plan when you make the CAPER template, it'll associate itself to the latest "Review Completed" version of that Action Plan. So, if you have an Action Plan, say in Year 3 of your Con Plan cycle, and you make an amendment and it's still listed as "Open Amendment" and you make a CAPER, that CAPER will associate itself to that latest "Review Completed" version of that Action Plan.

I think that's clear, Ben. So, then the caveat to all of that is if this is Year 1 of your Con Plan cycle and you had a "Review Completed" Con Plan and you're amending your Con Plan. If this is the case, the CAPER template will not create for you. You'll have to actually make sure that your Con Plan—even if it's an amendment—that the Con Plan will need to be marked as "Review Completed" before a CAPER can be created for it.

So, that's only relevant if it's Year 1 of your Action Plan. So, if you're making a Year 1 CAPER, that Con Plan needs to be "Review Completed" even if it's an amendment.

Ben Sturm: Okay. Thank you, Joel. And we are coming towards the end of this webinar, but we're going to turn it over to Rob to show the HUD Exchange really quick.

Rob Sronce: Yeah, let's see. So, everyone's able to see the screen here. So, this is hudexchange.info. We've talked a lot about the HUD Exchange. You go to www.hudexchange.info and you'll need to create an account as you'll see that I'm logged in over here. If you're not, you'll have the ability to create an account here. Here's the link if you want to sign up for email updates, and over here, the Ask a Question, which is mentioned under this Program

Support dropdown, and you'll go here to Ask-A-Question. You'll fill out your question there and submit it to us, and then we'll respond to you through the Ask-A-Question system. Also, you'll see on these dropdowns, there's information that's program specific. There's a really good, robust search feature in the HUD Exchange. So, that's the HUD Exchange that we have been talking about if you want to go there.

So, that is all the time; we're one after the hour. So, remember, if your question was unanswered today, please submit it through Ask-A-Question. And this webinar has been recorded, and the recording, slides, and transcript will be posted in about two to three weeks.

I want to say thanks again to our presenters, Joe Warren and Susan Walsh; Ben Sturm for reading out the questions; and Laura Detert and Niki Deininger for working behind the scenes. Thanks for the IDIS support and development team keeping this whole system up and running.

And Gloria, thanks for joining us today, did you have any parting comments for us? I think Gloria may be a victim of the unmute/mute button as well. Little bug we're having today, getting people muted/unmuted.

So, thanks, Gloria and all the staff at HUD for supporting the work that we do.

Good afternoon, everyone. Keep up the good work and please be well.