Transcript for HOPWA Office Hours: Remote Methods

[00:00–00:32] Steve Ellis: All right, everyone; we're going to get started for the sake of time. So, first of all, I wanted to thank all of you for taking time out of your very busy days to join us today. Today, we are going to be discussing remote methods as part of the HOPWA Office Hours series. In particular, we're going to be focusing on remote methods when it comes to intake, initial and annual certifications, as well as virtual inspections. Next slide.

[00:31–00:41] *Pause*

[00:41–1:07] Steve Ellis: So, we're gonna do some introductions: For those of you who I've never met before, my name is Steve Ellis. I am a Senior Analyst with The Cloudburst Group. I know many of you through the HOPWA technical assistance that we do, either through the CARES Act, or through modernization as well as the CAPER and APR validation process, so thank you again for joining.

[01:07–01:10] *Pause*

[01:10–01:11] Steve Ellis: Heather, would you like to introduce yourself?

[01:12–01:35] Heather Rhoda: Hi, everybody! My name is Heather Rhoda, I also work at the Cloudburst Group and do quite a bit of work with HOPWA grantees and their project sponsors, also do some work with the APR and CAPERS, provide quite a bit of HOPWA-related TA. I'm glad everybody could join—thank you.

[01:35–01:38] *Pause*

[01:38–01:40] Steve Ellis: And we'll go to OHH.

[01:41–1:57] Rita Harcrow: Hi, I'm Rita Harcrow, I'm the Director of the Office of HIV/AIDS Housing, and I appreciate everyone joining today and—to our friends at Cloudburst—thanks for pulling all of this together. Hopefully, we can answer a lot of questions today.

[01:57–01:59] *Pause*

[02:00] Rita Harcrow: Amy?

[02:01–02:10] Amy Palilonis: And I'm Amy Palilonis, I'm a Senior Program Specialist in the Office of HIV/AIDS Housing, and I'm looking forward to taking your questions today.

[02:10–02:14] *Pause*

[02:14–02:19] Steve Ellis: Thank you, everyone. You'll see our faces again later on when we get to some of the questions.

[02:19–02:23] *Pause as Steve, Rita, Amy, and Heather turn off their cameras*

[02:23] Steve Ellis: Next slide.

[02:23–02:28] *Pause*

[02:28–03:04] Steven Ellis: So, as we get started, before we go into details, we just want to give you some general information. So, our goal—our objective—today is to provide you an overview and a reminder about a few HOPWA program requirements; to refresh you on some of the HOPWA waiver flexibilities that have been issued due to the pandemic and COVID-19; and then, finally, we're gonna get to and answer some of your burning questions about conducting virtual inspections and completing initial, interim, and annual certifications remotely. Next Slide.

[03:04–03:08] *Pause*

[03:08–04:22] Steven Ellis: So, for those of you who like an agenda: here's what we're gonna be looking at during our 90 minutes. So we'll start with those general HOPWA eligibility requirements, and then we'll go into specifically the waivers and flexibilities for those

requirements, particularly around HIV status and income and how to document those. We'll then pivot to HOPWA habitability and HQS inspection requirements and what waivers and flexibilities were put out regarding that topic. We'll then go to your questions and answers, so as we're going through if you do have any questions please throw them into the questions box so that we can ask them when we get to that moment. We most likely will not get to everyone's questions today so, as always, if we are not able to your question online we'll definitely handle it offline and we will also try to share a list of the questions and answers for everyone so that will eventually be posted to the HUD Exchange. And finally, we'll end today's Office Hours with some resources and reminders as well as where to find help if you need more information and assistance as you move forward after today's Office Hours. With that, I'm going to turn it over to Heather.

[04:23–00:41] Heather Rhoda: Hello, everybody! Again, thank you for joining today's office hours. As Steve mentioned, we're going to first start with some refreshers and then we'll move into specific information. Next slide, please.

[04:39–04:43] *Pause*

[04:43–05:27] Heather Rhoda: So we're going to be starting with, as I'm sure everybody knows on this call, just a reminder about the HOPWA eligibility requirements. Right? HOPWA eligibility requirements apply to all activities except for housing information services, and those being at least one family member must be diagnosed with HIV/AIDS—this may include a minor—and total income of all family members must be at or below 80% of the area median income. This information (area median income, income level, the entire family) must be verified initially and at least annually thereafter. Next slide.

[05:27–05:29] *Pause*

[05:30–06:29] Heather Rhoda: So regarding verification of HIV: in general, I wanted to talk a little bit about some key elements associated with HIV verification because we've had a few questions about it. HIV only needs to be verified once, right? And physical documentation must be in the current household file. And the form of HIV verification needs to be legible and meaningful to a non-medical professional. And, as you might know, and if we haven't told you already, you can follow along the presentation live right here but you can also click on "handouts" where we have a PDF version of the slides from Office Hours including some additional notes for each slide. Let's move to the next slide, please.

[06:29–06:32] *Pause*

[06:32–07:41] Heather Rhoda: So, what are the HOPWA income verification requirements? Remember this is just in general. So, in general, except for housing information services, all family income and assets, unless excluded, that is, received by or on behalf of any adult family member, including minors, must be verified before assistance is provided. The same income and assets from all family members (including minors) must also be verified at least annually. In addition, any income source (that being, you know, assets included) that changes during the year should also be verified at the time of the change, which we refer to as an interim recertification. This is especially important when somebody is receiving HOPWA rental assistance because that income change—particularly if it's a reduction—could change the assisted household portion of rent and therefore lower the portion that they are required to pay. Next slide, please.

[07:41–07:43] *Pause*

[07:43–08:31] Heather Rhoda: So, knowing what the general eligibility requirements are for income and HIV verification and attempting to gather those types of documentation of verification in the middle of a pandemic, are there waivers available regarding getting that type of documentation? And yes, I'm sure you're all aware that there are waivers covering this. One of which is, an HIV/AIDS diagnosis can be verified via other credible information, which includes self-certification, and income of all family members can also be verified using self-certification. Next slide, please.

[08:31–08:34] *Pause*

[08:34–09:10] Heather Rhoda: But first, to be able to verify using other credible information or self-certification: if you're a project sponsor, your grantee must have notified HUD of their intent to use the waivers, and then as a project sponsor you need to be in open communication with your grantee about your intent to apply any potential waivers that they've notified—that your grantee has notified HUD about. Next slide.

[09:10–09:14] *Pause*

[09:14–10:14] Heather Rhoda: So, how do the waivers affect your current intake, like, for initial and annual and income certification process? Everybody has a process, right, for which they have established, that they have been using pre-pandemic. And the waivers don't mean you need to throw out your process entirely; what the waivers do is make it a little bit easier and quicker to determine eligibility and to begin providing most necessary services, whether it be supportive services and housing assistance, before obtaining physical or source documentation of HIV/AIDS status and income eligibility/income verification for the household. So, the waivers are meant to complement your current eligibility determination process. Next slide, please.

[10:14–10:17] *Pause*

[10:17–11:31] Heather Rhoda: So, regarding the HIV waiver—verification waiver—what does that mean? Well, you still should, to the extent that you're able to, obtain source documentation if possible, right? So, as part of your intake process, you know, that would include asking if you know a client or potential household, the person who is HIV positive, has any documentation on hand, right? Or, maybe you could obtain HIV verification rather quickly through a testing center or medical facility. In addition, if you're going to be using the waivers, both grantee and project sponsor policies and procedures should be updated to include that you're going to be using other credible information, including self-certification to verify HIV status when source documentation can't be obtained. In addition, you must then obtain source documentation within three months after safety measures within your community are no longer needed. Next slide, please.

[11:31–11:34] *Pause*

[11:34–12:46] Heather Rhoda: What are some examples of other credible information to verify HIV status? Well, as part of your intake, you can be working with a potential client and, you know, do a review of their HIV medications, you could, you know, discuss with them a doctor that they might be seeing or in treatment with, their own knowledge of their own viral suppression and also self-certification of their own HIV status and HIV medical history. Another option is you could get a referral from another HIV-specific agency that might have been providing non-HOPWA-type services to the person that you're conducting an intake with. Also, you may be able to get some information or knowledge from a case manager within your same

agency who may have been providing case management or already been working with the client and knows them to be HIV positive. Next slide, please.

[12:46–12:48] *Pause*

[12:48–14:09] Heather Rhoda: What does the waiver mean regarding income verification? Well, self-certification of income can be used in lieu of source documentation including, you know, third-party; so, this means in lieu of, you know, social security benefit letters, paycheck stubs, items like that. This applies to any activity in which documentation of income is a factor or is needed, right? So, you're looking at intake—conducting intake—and overall HOPWA program eligibility (except for housing information services), and as part of determining income and calculating portions of rent for tenant-based rental assistance, master-leased rental units, and facility-based housing, both permanent and transitional. And, it also applies to when you're working with existing clients and you're conducting an annual or interim recertification. Please also note that although you can use self-certification, you should continue to try to collect, you know, source documentation for household income whenever it's possible. Next slide, please.

[14:09–14:11] *Pause*

[14:11–14:20] Heather Rhoda: Now, this is where Steve is gonna pick up and he is gonna talk a little bit about HOPWA habitability inspections.

[14:21–14:58] Steven Ellis: Thank you, Heather. As you are all aware, that there are some inspection requirements for the HOPWA program. So, all units assisted with HOPWA rental assistance must pass habitability or HQS. Make sure whether or not your community uses habitability or HQS is outlined in your policies and procedures and uniformly applied across your area. So, a particular note: these units must pass the inspection at initial before any HOPWA assistance is provided and at least annually. Next slide.

[14:58–15:08] *Pause*

[15:08–016:20] Steven Ellis: As part of any inspection requirement, there's also a requirement to be aware of lead-based paint—particularly anyone who might be doing a habitability needs to be aware of lead-based paint visual assessment requirements. So, as part of HUD programs, there are times when a unit will need to make sure that it passes this visual assessment. So, particularly for the HOPWA program, when it comes to HOPWA TBRA, master leasing, and facility-based housing, you need to be aware and do a lead-based paint visual assessment for any unit that's built before 1978, where a pregnant person or in which children under the age of 6 will reside. These lead-based paint visual assessment requirements will also apply to HOPWA STRMU but only in which—where a unit with STRMU will be used for over 100 consecutive days, assuming once again that the unit is built before 1978 and that unit is going to have a household with a pregnant person or children under the age of 6 living there. Next slide.

[16:20–16:25] *Pause*

[16:25–17:17] Steven Ellis: So, are there waivers available regarding this? And, of course, there are. So, the first waiver, April 1st, extended some property standards to TBRA, the second waiver put out May 22nd applied these property standard waivers to all HOPWA activities that required an inspection. So, these waivers gave programs the flexibility to say that all initial habitability and HQS inspections can be done virtually. It means that inspections still need to occur at initial before any assistance is provided, but it does not have to be done in person. And as a quick reminder, that grantees do need to notify HUD of their intent to use this waiver before they start applying it to their program. Next slide.

[17:17–17:22] *Pause*

[17:22–18:21] Steven Ellis: So, let's talk about how to take these wivers and apply it to your current inspection process because if you are utilizing any of those HOPWA activities where an inspection is required, you already have something and have been doing something for years and it's probably operating fairly well. So, what these waivers mean is that you do not need to throw your entire inspection process out of the window and start from scratch. What this means is you now have the ability to do virtual inspections if physical, in-person inspections are not possible or not safe. So basically, this is just gonna complement what you're currently doing, right, because there might be situations where initial inspections can be done so in person, right, you know, physical, face-to-face, particularly if it is an empty unit. So, it doesn't mean you have to automatically do initial inspection remotely, but it is an option to make sure that everyone stays safe during the pandemic. Next slide.

[18:22–18:29] *Pause*

[18:29–19:49] Steven Ellis: So, what this all means is that your initial lease of inspection, that these inspections must continue before assistance is provided but they can just be conducted using remote technology. So, when we talk about remote technology and virtual methods, we're talking about things such as live-streaming, pre-recorded videos, or photographs. For those of you who were able to join us in the past, there was a webinar on doing remote inspections virtually. We can make sure that when we are done we share that link with everyone in case you have any questions about how to do so. But, in the meantime, if you do need to look it up, it is posted on the HUD Exchange—not just the slides, but also some examples on how you can do your inspections remotely, particularly using live-streaming and pre-recorded videos. As always, it's worth noting that if you are going to do or need to do initial remote inspections, to make sure to update your policies and procedures. Particularly that there is a requirement that in-person, on-site inspections must be done once it's safe to do so. So you'll need to make sure that not only are your policies updated but you're tracking these units where the inspections need to occur once the public health emergency is lifted. Next slide.

[19:50–19:54] *Pause*

[19:54–21:26] Steven Ellis: So, so far we've been talking about initial inspections and now we're gonna bring in this idea of annual inspections. So we've seen a lot of questions in the past about if there are waivers available for annual inspections. And so there are no, per se, waivers about annual inspections, but there have been a number of waivers—or, sorry, flexibilities—that have been put into place to help you with annual inspections. So annual in-person on-site inspections can be postponed or done virtually. If you're already doing your initial inspections virtually, you can now also do your annual inspections virtually. If this is what you're going to do or any changes that you are going to make, please make sure you update your policies and procedures accordingly. And if, for some reason, you aren't going to be doing in-person or virtual inspections, HUD does expect HOPWA program staff to at least check in with clients about the conditions of their unit. So make sure to have some sort of phone call that you're asking about "is it safe? Is it livable?" Maybe you're running through the questions you would normally run through when you do an in-person inspection. Maybe you're adding a few additional questions since you're not able to see the unit, you're not able to touch things in the unit, all right, so just make sure that's all outlined in your policies and procedures so you're not

only staying safe and keeping your clients safe, but you're also meeting the HUD requirements and HUD recommendations for doing these inspections. Next slide.

[21:26–21:32] *Pause*

[21:32–22:50] Steven Ellis: And when it comes to waivers for lead-based paint visual assessments, right now there are no waivers saying that you do not have to do them, but you can also do them—like these inspections—virtually using live-streaming or other methods. So, in general, a lead-based paint visual assessment is going to be performed as part of any habitability or HQS inspection, so you can easily fold that into your virtual methods that you're conducting already. As always, make sure to update your policies and procedures to reflect any changes that you are making. There is a special note: particularly, this would come into effect for annuals but, for any unit where lead-based paint visual assessment rules apply, a visual in-person physical inspection must occur once it's safe to do so. So, this is going to be another instance of where you're going to need to track this to make sure is that when the public health emergency is lifted, you're going in to not only do your initial inspections in person but also any annual inspections where lead-based paint might be an issue. And it might be worth trying to prioritize those units where lead-based paint might be an issue. Next slide.

[22:50–22:55] *Pause*

[22:55–23:06] Steven Ellis: Alright. Those were our slides and so, in the meantime, let's get into some of the questions that have come through.

[23:06–23:15] *Pause as Steve turns his camera on for the question segment*

[23:15–23:47] Steven Ellis: So, one of the first questions that has come through is people want to know: how do they figure out if their grantee has notified HUD of their community's intent to use these or any of the waivers? In these instances, if you're not aware if your grantee has notified HUD, please make sure to reach out to your grantee and ask. There's a clear path for how grantees should do this and how everything should be documented so please do not implement any of these waivers until you are sure that your grantee has notified HUD.

[23:47–23:51] *Pause*

[23:51–24:47] Steven Ellis: Another question: if a waiver is used, do we need to document the use of that waiver in the household file? The answer is yes, so please make sure, if you are going to allow any of the self-certifications, or any of the virtual inspections, that there is a note somewhere in the file that you've applied this waiver. I think this is especially key if you need to follow back up with physical documentation—it's very clear to anyone who might monitor that file not only of you using the waiver but you doing your due diligence and following up. It will also be a good way to maybe explain why you might have a habitability or HQS inspection that might say at the top that it was done virtually and then the exact same form might appear two months later when you did it in person. So, please make sure to document this in the client file—this and any waivers that you might apply.

[24:47–24:50] *Pause*

[24:51–25:58] Steven Ellis: Also tied to waivers, there's a question: do we need to track the waivers anywhere else besides the household file? So, in general, tracking this anywhere else is not a HUD requirement, but it isn't a bad idea to go ahead and try to track the use of these waivers at a systems-level—maybe on an Excel spreadsheet where you use client numbers. As you can tell from some of the information that we shared and from some of the information from other webinars there's required follow-up, so having a list in front of you of clients that might

need HIV documentation for the file—having a list in front of you of what units might need to be inspected once it's safe to do so—will make your life much easier instead of necessarily having to go through each individual household file. I do know that there are some grantees that are requiring this additional layer of documentation, asking people to track it at a systems-level, so please make sure to contact your grantee to see if there're any additional requirements besides the household file.

[25:58–26:00] *Pause*

[26:00–26:04] Steven Ellis: Heather, are there any other questions?

[26:04–26:07] *Pause as Heather turns on her camera*

[26:07–26:18] Heather Rhoda: Yes, there are, and I have a couple of questions for HUD staff: when do the waivers expire?

[26:18–26:22] *Pause*

[26:22–28:04] Amy Palilonis: So, I can take that one—So, there isn't a specific expiration date for the waiver regarding self-certification of income and credible information on HIV status. Grantees can utilize that waiver if they agree to obtain source documentation of HIV status and income eligibility within three months of public health officials determining that no additional special measures are necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19. So, that one is more open-ended and ongoing, and really has to do with, you know, how the pandemic plays out and recommendations on what safety practices are needed. For the habitability standards waivers that allow for virtual inspections—those are a little different in that there is a date tied to those. So, those waivers are in effect for one year beginning on the date of the waiver memorandums. So, until March of 2021 for the first waiver memo that was specific to TBRA and then May 2021 for the second waiver memo that was for all applicable housing types. So, grantees can use those waivers if they are able to visually inspect now using technology and they have policies and procedures in place to physically inspect the unit after health officials determine special measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are no longer necessary. So, I definitely just recommend that you reference the waiver memos that we published if you have questions at any point about the expiration of those waivers.

[28:04–28:07] *Pause*

[28:07–28:18] Heather Rhoda: Great, thank you, Amy. And to follow up on that, on the waiver theme: when will the—when will or will the waivers be extended?

[28:19–29:16] Amy Palilonis: So, that's a good question. So, as I said, the documentation of income and HIV status waiver is pretty open-ended (just, the way that it was written) and there really isn't an expiration date, so that one is really just based on how the pandemic plays out and what the recommendations are related to safety practices by public health officials. That one is ongoing and doesn't really…does not really need to extend it at this point. As I said, the habitability standards waivers expire in the spring of 2021; there isn't really a plan right now or a need to extend those at this point, but we are constantly monitoring things and using any questions and concerns raised by grantees and project sponsors to inform our policy decisions, so we will absolutely keep you all updated if any waivers will be extended or any new waivers will be granted.

[29:17–29:19] Heather Rhoda: Great, thank you.

[29:19–29:25] *Pause*

[29:25–31:29] Heather Rhoda: I think that's all we have for right this minute. We do have a couple other questions that we have had grantees and project sponsors posed before: are there any waivers for working with clients remotely? And I can definitely take this one. There's no requirement to work directly with clients face-to-face, so you don't need a waiver to work with clients remotely. The way in which case management is conducted and how you deliver, you know, housing…HOPWA housing assistance such as STRMU, TBRA, PHP—how that's provided is at the discretion of the grantee, right, and according to their current policies. But what I can tell you is that current guidance in addressing the pandemic and making sure, you know, you're keeping program staff safe and clients safe is that, when you're providing HOPWA-funded supportive services and housing assistance, those activities should be done remotely as much as possible. Another question that we've had before is: can we work remotely with clients that are new to our agency? And the answer to that is yes. HOPWA program staff can work with existing and new clients remotely. As I mentioned earlier, current HUD guidance is to provide HUD-funded support services and housing assistance remotely as much as possible during the pandemic but if that's not possible to conduct those activities remotely and do need to be in person, all work, right, that you're doing should be conducted using protective health measures and considering precautions such as social distancing and wearing face masks.

[31:29–31:33] *Pause*

[31:33–31:38] Heather Rhoda: Steve, I think there are a couple other questions that you wanted to tackle?

[31:39–34:43] Steven Ellis: Yeah. So, some of the questions that we have seen come up are some more about physical signatures so people want to know are there any waivers regarding physical signatures? So, first of all, it's worth noting that physical signatures are not a HOPWA requirement so, therefore, there is no waiver necessary for physical signatures. So, if this is something that you do have as part of your policies and procedures, it is probably best to try to address this in some sort of safe method—that might be, instead of physical signatures, doing signatures via telephone, maybe that might be involving a witness, you might be able to get physical signatures for documentation via mail, sending things back and forth. But please make sure, as always, if you are changing any of your current processes, that you update your policies and procedures, particularly if you plan on reverting back to your usual process once it's safe to do so. Another way that people can get signatures in a question that's come up: can programs use electronic signature software like DocuSign to get signatures and if HUD has a preference for some type of electronic signature or software? So, first of all, it is totally allowable to use electronic signature software as an option to get those signatures for anything that you might have. So, please make sure, if you're a project sponsor, you're consulting with your grantee before purchasing or utilizing any of this. Once again, do make sure that everything is updated with your policies and procedures: this will definitely be something (because you'll be purchasing software) you're going to want to talk to your grantee about how to allocate those costs. The cost of purchasing any software is allowable under the HOPWA program and should be allocated similar to any of your other overhead cost in that it should either go through the activity that you're going to use the software or prorated across different activities or maybe even different funding sources, if any software might be used for multiple programs (like HOPWA and Ryan White). HUD does not have a preference for any specific type of electronic signature software outside of any requirements that you're probably already aware of like

confidentiality and safety, right, so just to make sure any software that you might purchase is safe for clients to use since most of that…most of the forms they're going to be signing will most likely have some sort of sensitive information on it or some sort of information that can identify who the person is. If there is a particular software that a community, or EMSA, you know, whatever your HOPWA grantee is (whether that's a city or a state), that should be covered in the policies and procedures as well. So, once again, if you're a project sponsor, please consult with your grantee for specifics.

[34:43–34:48] *Pause*

[34:48–34:50] Steven Ellis: Heather, what about some other questions?

[34:50–35:02] *Pause*

[35:02–37:22] Heather Rhoda: Let me take a look and see what we have. We have received some questions regarding the waivers in general, specifically allowing self-certification of HIV and/or income. And one of them being: are programs required to automatically allow people to self-certify HIV and income? The short answer to that is no, it's…the waiver doesn't mean you're required to automatically allow for that, but, you know, ultimately that's up to the grantee first if they even choose to utilize the waiver and notify HUD of their intent to do so. So, you should—when you're working with a client, you know, you're doing intake—have a discussion about the availability, right, of the source documentation because it's possible (and we have spoken to, you know, several grantees and project sponsors that have been able to obtain, you know, source documentation of HIV status and income pretty quickly). In some cases, the applicants or existing clients—especially if you're doing, like, an annual re-certification or an interim—they have that information on hand. So, definitely ask. And at the point that you have asked and explored that information isn't available, the waiver is there to allow you to, you know, quickly provide assistance and quickly and easily process your annual re-certifications just be aware, though, if waivers are being used, grantees must have included this in their updated policies and procedures and also notified their project sponsors about the availability of those waivers. So, project sponsors should be checking in and confirming with their grantee about what and if any waivers are available and when they intend to use them. Another question…oh, go ahead.

[37:23–38:07] Rita Harcrow: This is Rita, I just wanted to weigh in on that one, too, and just remind everybody that the purpose of the waivers is to give you flexibility to give the grantees flexibility in managing everything that we're all dealing with with the pandemic and the thing that you should have as your number one priority there is what's safe for your staff and for your clients that you serve. So, maybe you can conduct business safely and get documentation safely without utilizing these waivers, so just always remember that that should be the…priority one is what is going to keep people from sharing a breath.

[38:07–38:10] *Pause*

[38:10] Rita Harcrow: Thanks.

[38:11–38:47] Heather Rhoda: Thank you. If a client self-certifies HIV diagnosis and income, is physical documentation of both needed for the file? Yes. As Amy mentioned earlier on, the grantee and project sponsor must obtain source documentation of HIV status and income within three months of public health officials determining that no additional special measures are necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

[38:47–38:50] *Pause*

[38:50–39:48] Steven Ellis: Heather, I just wanna add real quick because I think there's some questions about that, right? The public health emergency really is locally defined, right, because the way that this disease is spreading and the pandemic's occurring, it's really impossible for a federal program to explain this for everyone. So, if you're a project sponsor, please make sure to contact with your grantee about when this documentation or any follow-up might need to occur, right, so all of these deadlines—about three months. As a grantee, we would definitely recommend: reach out to the public health department for your particular area and find out from them, right, if there is a public health emergency already documented and, if there's not, is it safe to do so? Because a lot of this is going to come down to how you…how the grantees define "public health emergency" and that's when that clock is going to start ticking. So, for anyone asking about when that clock ticks, please make sure to contact your grantee.

[39:48–41:11] Heather Rhoda: Right. And also, too, if you might remember from talking about, you know, verification, you might remember from the remote methods presentation we had done—Steve, if you want to hop back on the camera—we had done a while back where we were sort of role-playing (remember when we were role-playing) a program and a client and that individual had…was working, right, and had, you know, paycheck stubs and they had medical documentation and was showing those virtually to the program staff, right? And, in that sense, that—where you could even take a screenshot of that and print that—that's documentation of income, right? So, grantees and project sponsors can be creative about the ways in which, you know, they've been obtaining source documentation including, absolutely, you know…obtaining self-certification of both, you know, when those items aren't available. But the point is that you have a lot of flexibility, which is great.

[41:12] Steven Ellis: Of course.

[41:12–41:15] *Pause*

[41:15–41:24] Heather Rhoda: Let me see…any other questions that we have coming in through--- the question box that we want to address?

[41:24–41:28] *Pause*

[41:28–42:55] Steven Ellis: I think some things…I think worth addressing is people are asking if a client can self-certify income for other family members. So, in general, right, you already had your own process—you had what you've been doing for your HOPWA program for awhile, so usually you're probably asking each adult household member to provide source documentation of whatever income source they might have: their income, their assets, all of that. So, in general, you can apply much of that to any virtual method, right? So, if, for some reason, an additional household member can't provide the source documentation or the source documentation might take a period of time to get, you can definitely ask additional household members to verify that income; however, if there are situations or scenarios where that's not possible or it's not timely, a client can self-certify income for others in their household, in the same way, maybe, that HIV-positive individual might have been declaring income from minors in the past, right? So, it's just something—sort of, take a look at what your current process is, what might still be reasonable, and adapting that with these flexibilities to make sure you aren't totally changing your process but you're also not delaying giving assistance to people who might need it because of a technicality such as requiring source documentation.

[42:56–43:47] Heather Rhoda: Right, and while, at the same time, you're keeping program staff and clients safe and not requiring people to go out to obtain, you know, documentation and it's

taking, you know, a long time to get that information before you could give them assistance. Do you want to—oh, go ahead—do you want to move on to some of the inspection questions because we have quite a few that are rolling in, and it seems to be specifically related to doing an inspection and lead-based paint visual assessment as it pertains to an overall habitability inspection for something like TBRA versus what you need to do and when for STRMU.

[43:47–43:51] *Pause*

[43:52–46:29] Steven Ellis: Yeah, so, as as we talked about…so, the habitability requirements—whether or not use habitability or HQS—apply to HOPWA rental assistance program as we outlined. So, for STRMU, there is no requirement that a unit pass habitability or HQS. It's generally good practice as part of any STRMU process you might have to ask these questions, right, to make sure it's generally safe, it's generally livable, right? Some of the same standards might…you might have tried to apply them, but it does not need to pass to get that assistance. As a matter of fact, there are programs that have something…if there is something that needs to be repaired in a unit, they can work that into a housing care plan and work with the landlord to try to get that repaired before any STRMU assistance might be offered. But there's no requirement for that. However, separate from the habitability or HQS are these lead-based paint issues, right? So, once again, lead-based paint becomes an issue when you're going to use HOPWA in a unit that was built before 1978 in a family where there's going to be a pregnant person or children under the age of 6 residing there, unless a landlord can prove that there's no lead-based paint. In those instances, you need to do a lead-based paint visual assessment. So, many of you who are listening to this have done that before, right, where you are looking at the outside of a building, the common areas of a building, as well as the unit, looking for chipping, peeling, cracking paint or any issues that might occur in the near future where a child might be exposed to lead-based paint and possibly poisoned. So, this lead-based paint visual assessment can be done remotely—as Heather had mentioned, this was something that we did as part of our remote inspection webinar that—we walked through and were able to look at a unit and see where there might be chipping, cracking, peeling paint or dust and so that…that component does apply to STRMU when you're going to use STRMU assistance for more than 100 consecutive days. So, please make sure (particularly with the flexibilities with STRMU that you can provide additional assistance) that you are tracking this closely. And, even recommended…if it is a situation or a family where there is the possibility of using STRMU for more than 100 consecutive days to just go ahead and do the visual assessment. That way you don't have to worry or potentially stop or delay assistance while that is conducted.

[46:30–46:33] *Pause*

[46:34–46:35] Steven Ellis: Anything to add, Heather?

[46:36–46:45] Heather Rhoda: Great. Do you want to get to some of the questions…the questions that we had beforehand that we received?

[46:46–47:01] Steven Ellis: I say let's…let's just sort of jump around because I think a lot of it's tied together. So, Heather, do you wanna talk about what to do if you do delay annual inspections and if they need to be done once it's safe to do so?

[47:01–47:12] *Pause*

[47:13–47:14] Steven Ellis: Are you there, Heather?

[47:14–47:20] *Pause*

[47:20–47:57] Steven Ellis: Alright. So, initial inspections do need to occur before you provide assistance, right, so that was something we had talked about and something that should be…that can be done virtually as part of the waivers and flexibilities. Annual inspections can be delayed or postponed so…or can be done virtually. At this moment, right, you still want to make sure that any unit is safe and livable so you should have a plan to do any annual inspections once it's safe to do so if you're not doing it virtually.

[47:58] Heather Rhoda: Hi, sorry!

[47:59] Steven Ellis: Hi!

[47:59–48:05] *Pause as Heather and Steve laugh*

[48:06–48:11] Steven Ellis: This is perfect we'll tie this in a little bit about some of the hazards of working remotely!

[48:12] Heather Rhoda: So, go ahead.

[48:13–48:21] Steven Ellis: No, no, so…is there anything that you just wanted to add about the importance of doing annual inspections if you do delay them?

[48:21–48:24] *Pause*

[48:24–49:43] Heather Rhoda: No, if…if you…if you are delaying annual inspections, I think it's definitely important as part of, like, your annual re-certification process, right, because generally when you're, you know, doing like an annual re-certification of income and the inspection, those things are lined up, right, together—so you're not doing an inspection completely separate, you know, months later from the re-certification process. So, you know, if you're working with clients remotely during an annual re-certification—you know, you're on the phone talking to them—you can include as part of your annual re-certification…ask some questions about the condition of the unit, right? Has anything changed since the last annual inspection, right, or is this the first annual after somebody's moved in? Has anything changed, you know—do your smoke detectors still work? Are you having, you know, any problems with any of your large appliances? Are you noticing any peeling, chipping, cracking paint, right? Do you have any broken window panes? Kind of you know, your…regular life and safety items that you might want to check on. So, I think that's important to talk to your clients about and just document the file so you know that you've gathered that information.

[49:43–49:47] *Pause*

[49:48–51:00] Steven Ellis: Right, and speaking of documentation for the inspections, there's - there's really not a difference in what you've been doing; so, if you are doing a virtual inspection, you can use the exact same form that you have been using. There is no requirement to save any videos, to save any live-stream, to save any pictures. Do what you've always done—that…whatever form that you've been using is perfectly acceptable. If you are doing a virtual inspection and you come across something that is questionable or suspect and you do want to follow up when it's safe to do so, that might be worth saving a picture in the file just so you can remind yourself that you need to follow up. But, so, there is no additional documentation requirements for that and so any additional documentation requirements for inspections would all be local, right? So, I see there are questions about having people sign habitability or…habitability forms if done virtually, like having the landlord and tenant sign it. If that's something that you choose to do, that is perfectly acceptable as a local requirement, but please make sure that this is through your grantee and they are aware that you are doing this. But that is not a HOPWA requirement.

[51:01–53:14] Heather Rhoda: Absolutely, yeah. Let me see, there's some other questions, too. I think we clarified that when we were…there…someone asked you what (because we tend to speak in acronyms sometimes, so we apologize for that) ask what HQS meant, right? And so, I just explained that it's housing quality standards. So, HOPWA follows HOPWA habitability and, you know…slash housing quality standards but then there's a separate, like, Section 8 housing quality standards. Some grantees and project sponsors use HOPWA habitability and the checklist that's available on the HUD Exchange under, I think it's the HOPWA administration administrative toolkit. There is also Section 8 housing quality standards inspections which is a completely different form and a lengthy form—longer—and so either can be used and I think generally overall there's a mix between, you know, grantees and project sponsors that, you know, some use HOPWA habitability and some use HQS but whatever one you're using you should stick to that and, you know, be consistent. Anything you want to add to that? It looks like we clarified the STRMU question: Steve talked about…it's not that HQS or habitability is required specifically, it's that there's a point in time where, depending on—like you said, Steve—how, you know, how many days STRMU is being provided that would trigger a lead-based paint visual assessment. But then that's only if the unit meets certain requirements itself, right? Did you talk about that? You did. The pre-'78 and that…great**.**

[53:15–53:52] Steven Ellis: And for, you know, anyone who's going to do the lead-based paint visual assessment, it is a required training. It's a 20-minute training through the HUD Exchange, so please make sure you're looking through that because it has some additional requirements, right, ways or situations that lead-based paint will not apply. So, you just want to make sure that you're aware of all of those and particularly to take that training so you're aware of what exactly a visual assessment is but also what a visual assessment is not. So, you're sticking to the scope and responsibilities of your job and knowing what you need to do if you find any potential issues.

[53:53–54:44] Heather Rhoda: Right. We have a question, too, about…is it necessary to do a consent form for each HOPWA application or can we use one form for the entire year? I'm…I'm assuming this means like release of information consent, right? First of all, when you, when you're doing an intake, right, you're going to want to have, you know, anybody, you know, any adult, right, in the household…if you're going to be using—you're going to be seeking information from an outside party about somebody residing in the household in addition to the client, then you need, you know, to have them sign a consent form. And so, consent forms should be signed initially and then updated annually each year thereafter.

[54:44–54:47] *Pause*

[54:47–58:48] Steven Ellis: I want to note that there's…there's a number of questions I'd like to ask but I think there's some additional details that might be difficult. So, as I said earlier there, if we don't get to everyone's questions we will address them offline. So, I apologize to some people—you're asking questions and I think they are too complicated for a webinar or Office Hours and might require some back and forth. So, we'll reach out to you if you're one of those individuals and, like I said, we will share questions and answers with everyone so you all get that information. One topic that has come up that I wanted to talk about a little bit is about technology to assist clients and actually doing these, right, because these flexibilities…these waivers are really great ways to keep everyone safe, but your actual clients, the individuals you're assisting, need to be able to connect to do that. So, first of all, any…if you do need to purchase any equipment so that clients can do these things virtually—whether that's a tablet

whether that's a cell phone (because not every household has access to that)—those are allowable costs under the HOPWA program. As I mentioned earlier, please make sure—if you are a project sponsor—you are connecting with your grantee before spending any funds because you'll want to make sure that you're allocating those costs correctly across the correct HOPWA activities and any non-HOPWA sources. But you can purchase and loan devices for clients, whether that's to help them with doing a virtual…a virtual annual assessment, to have virtual case management contact, even to do an inspection. Those are all things that you can do and the client just needs to return those devices to the HOPWA program when they are finished with them because they are the property of the HOPWA program. We are also aware that there are going to be individuals and households out there that just aren't tech savvy, that may not be able to operate some of this software or hardware even if you provide it, which is completely understandable. Which is why you want to think through different ways to do some of this, right? Which is why we've talked about different methods, you know, for inspection. We talked about, you know, doing it virtually or doing videos or doing pictures, so that way you can be in communication with the client and see what ways they might be comfortable with. I've also spoken with some communities who are trying to be very mindful and thoughtful and creative in how they solve this. So, in some situations, it might involve doing part of the HOPWA paperwork or HOPWA annual or even part of the inspection with the client alone on, say, like, a telephone, but maybe that individual has a friend or maybe an additional, you know, person who lives in their building that can assist them with the rest. And, so, that's not for everyone, right, because it's all going to be up to the client what they're comfortable with. But I am aware of programs that talk to clients and say "let's get all the sensitive information out of the way, right, anything that might tip anyone off why you are connecting with me or getting assistance. And if you're comfortable and you just want to get the inspection out of the way, right, is there anyone in the building that could help operate the tablet for you who might have a smartphone that we can connect with, right, and we'll…we'll use our pseudonym name. They don't need to know the specifics of why we're doing this but that way we can get it done," right? So, we really encourage you all because if there's one thing that I've noticed for the HOPWA program, it's you all are very creative, thoughtful, and resilient people and programs, so keep applying that creativity and resilience in what you were doing and just problem-solve through this. And, as you've heard me say, if you have questions about something you're doing is allowable, reach out to your grantee and ask—that way they can help you think through any problems that might pop up, particularly in situations that clients don't know how to navigate some of this new hardware or software.

[58:48–58:53] *Pause as Heather's mic is off*

[58:53–59:25] Heather Rhoda: Sorry, Steve—I wanted to mention one question, too, that was posed…that clients, too, could…like, say, you're working with a client and you need them to sign something like a release, that that can be done, like, remotely, like, over the phone—you know, intent to sign or permission. Can you talk about that a little bit?

[59:26–59:29] Steven Ellis: Yeah, can you…sorry, can you just ask that again?

[59:29–59:45] Heather Rhoda: Yeah, sure. It was actually our lovely colleague who asked if a client could agree to consent, right, agree—

[59:46–59:47] Steven Ellis: Oh, over the phone.

[59:47–59:48] Heather Rhoda: Yeah. Correct.

[59:49–1:01:13] Steven Ellis: Yeah, sorry, so, as I mentioned, right, that's one thing that makes webinars like about remote methods fascinating to do is there're always technology glitches. So, I don't know about all of you but this is currently one of those days that everyone's at home so we have…we have people working from home, people teaching from home, and people learning from home today so our internet's a little glitchy at moments and I'm sure you've all of experienced that. So, thank you for repeating that, Heather, it just cut out for a moment. Of course, a client can verbally consent over the telephone. This was something, when I worked for an AIDS service organization, we would do all of the time: have a client consent over the phone. Our particular organization we required—if it was a telephone release of information and someone consented, we would have a witness if we could, we would write on the release of information that it was done over the phone, that way it was clear that we weren't forging a client signature. And as part of our requirement, is…we would follow back up with the client when we met them in person, right? So, if it…if we were going to end up meeting the client for either case management or an inspection, we would take those to be signed. In some instances, because we served a large geographical area, we might send that release via the mail to try to get the physical signature, but at least we had the client consent verbally over the phone so we can continue our work and not need to delay it.

[1:01:14–1:01:34] Heather Rhoda: Great, thank you. There's also a question, too: is there a form available that you know a client or household can use to self-certify income? And even, beyond that, self-certify HIV status?

[1:01:35–1:01:37] *Pause*

[1:01:37] Steve Ellis and Heather Rhoda, simultaneously: Yeah!

[1:01:38–1:01:40] Heather Rhoda: Yes, there is.

[1:01:40–1:01:42] *Pause*

[1:01:42–1:01:43] Steven Ellis: Please, Heather, go ahead.

[1:01:44–1:02:47] Heather Rhoda: There is, on the HUD Exchange—and I think, right, it's the HOPWA administrators' toolkit—there is a self-certification of income form that could be used to, you know, self-certify that you have an income source. Also located there on the HUD Exchange is a 0-income affidavit, right, that can be used to verify that you don't have any income. There…there isn't…there is a statement of HIV form on the HUD Exchange but I think the original intent of that form was, you know, that form would be, you know, provided to, you know, a medical provider, right? To fill out and so if you're going to…you could possibly absolutely adapt that form to use so a client could then, you know, self-certify their HIV status.

[1:02:48–1:03:38] Steven Ellis: Yeah, I would add, particularly, looking at some of those forms and adapting them, particularly if you're going to apply self-certification to rent calculations is you want to make sure that you're asking clients all of the relevant questions that you sort of just subconsciously think of, right? That if someone is working, what's their gross income versus their net income, what deductions are on a pay stub that might affect other mandatory deductions? So, having some sort of adapted form that you use universally across your program would be really key to make sure that you're accurately getting the information you need so that income verification does come in or, at their next annual, there's not potential wild swings of income because maybe you forgot to ask about net income or any deductions that might occur**.**

[1:03:39–1:03:56] Heather Rhoda: Okay. Did you address the question about if…if—for annual inspections—if virtual inspections are occurring, does somebody need to go back and do a physical inspection once it's been deemed safe to do so?

[1:03:57–1:04:51] Steven Ellis: As of this moment, if there…if you were doing the virtual inspection, there is no requirement to do an in-person habitability or HQS. There is a requirement that, if lead-based paint is an issue and say you've done a visual assessment, that you do go back in and at least do that once it's safe. You may choose to go back in and do in-person physical inspections particularly if there is something that you are worried about or questionable about because you would rather catch that early than have to wait and potentially get worse. But at least, if you're doing all your due diligence and don't have to worry about lead-based paint, no. I wanted to back up for a second because there's some additional questions coming in about releases of information and so I just wanna make sure it be—

[1:04:51–1:04:52] Heather Rhoda: [Thank you, I was just going] to do that, I was just going—

[1:04:52] Steven Ellis: Yeah—

[1:04:52–1:04:54] Heather Rhoda: —to do that!

[1:04:55–1:05:59] Steven Ellis: Yeah, it's—I was afraid of forgetting. So I just, I just want to be very clear, right, that while…while you do have flexibility in how you get that release of information including maybe over the phone, you should not have one blanket release of information for the entire program, right? So, you shouldn't have one release in a file that you leave blank and you just photocopy and apply to every situation. You should be…you should be getting client consent for every different entity that you're connecting with. That client is aware that you're going to be discussing them and potentially sensitive information with whomever that person is and…because, particularly then, the client might have the ability to limit some of that information shared, right, because what you share with a doctor on a release of information is probably going to be radically different than what you share with the landlord. So, right, just be clear, you have a lot of flexibility in how you get that release signed or verified but you still have the same idea that you need a different release of information for every situation that's going to occur.

[1:06:00–1:06:57] Heather Rhoda: Right, and your release should spell that out, right? Released, you know, released from and to, you know, obtained from and released to and a description of what it is you're requesting, right? And it's not even just the client, it's any adult household member, right, that you're getting information about. So, you need to have releases for everybody and they need to be updated annually. You may not need one release that you had the previous year the next year because maybe their job is different, right, or maybe something else is different, but you would need a new release. We have seen, you know, these blanket releases with all these organizations and everything listed but, yeah, you definitely need individual and descriptive releases.

[1:06:57–1:07:01] *Pause*

[1:07:01–1:08:22] Heather Rhoda: Let me see…If we certify income and a client needs help more than once during the year, do we need to requalify income for each application or is this for one year? This seems to me like this might be…I mean, for instance, I'll take TBRA, then you could talk about STRMU? Okay, for, say, TBRA for…just for example, right? So, you're, first of all, you're determining income eligibility for HOPWA in general, right, so, you're going to determine their income level for HOPWA initially, right? And so, say, then, you're going to be

working with them for tenant-based rental assistance, so you did the initial determination of income eligibility and then at the annual—one year later, right—for TBRA, you're going to be re-certifying their income for continued income eligibility but when you…when we're talking about TBRA, you're certifying income for the income eligibility but also, as part of doing a rent calculation. So, you want to talk about certifying income for STRMU?

[1:08:22–1:08:28] *Pause*

[1:08:28–1:08:32] Steven Ellis: Yeah, so, a lot of what Heather said applied—sorry, just sometimes you cut—

[1:08:32–1:08:38] Heather Rhoda: Now you're on the right of me, before you were on the left of me! My left.

[1:08:39–1:09:33] Steven Ellis: So, a lot of what Heather said is going to apply to the STRMU program because you do need to determine income eligibility for HOPWA as a whole but, because you're not doing a rent calculation, right, you're really looking at verifying income as a client might need assistance, right? Because once they're coming through the door for initial assistance, you could determine STRMU eligibility and then, from there, you really only need to worry about documenting income if there's some other change that might affect their STRMU eligibility or if you're a program that asks households to share in the expense. So, if someone might have something that might change that, right, how much they should pay towards rent or mortgage or utilities, you might ask for that, but that's not a requirement for HOPWA eligibility—that's going to be basing it on need. But then you could still go through all of the waivers and flexibilities that are offered so you don't have hard documentation requirements and not able to help people when needed.

[1:09:34–1:11:09] Heather Rhoda: Okay, there's a question…some of these—and as as Steve mentioned before—some of the questions that you're posing, they could seem like, you know, straightforward questions, but when when we read them, we can see some nuances in them so, you know, we do apologize but we're not going to answer them, you know, in this format. But we will absolutely, you know, get to those and, you know, follow up offline and make sure everybody, you know, is able to see a response because there's some really good questions, you know, about what happens when somebody claims zero income and then you find out later they have income…that's, you know, kind of complicated to get into in this situation but believe me: we completely understand what you're referring to and that's an important question. So, we definitely want to give that some thought before we respond. There was a question, I apologize…it was—oh, about housing assessments! You know, are those…what was the question…something like: do conducting a housing assessment fall like the same for the…housing stability assessment fall, like, in the same thing as the waivers, like the inspection? That doesn't really give you a lot to go on, Steve, does it?

[1:11:10] Steven Ellis: No.

[1:11:11–1:11:14] *Pause as both Steven and Heather laugh*

[1:11:15–1:12:02] Steven Ellis: Right, but, I mean, any—in general, right—any assessment that you're going to do, just be mindful. I mean, I think…I think one thing that's very aware from that TA work that we've done and the webinars and these questions, is you all are very thoughtful and you all want to do things to the benefit of families living with HIV/AIDS, right? So, if you do have any assessment forms, any applications, any standard forms, it doesn't mean…you don't have to not use those because of the pandemic, it just means be flexible on

how you apply those, right? So that, therefore, a form—because there are no requirements for what those forms look like or say—that a form doesn't become a barrier so a household might not be able to exit homelessness quickly or might become homeless because of a standard form or standard assessment.

[1:12:03–1:13:08] Heather Rhoda: So, the question is: is the house ability—is it the housing stability assessment or does it fall in the same category of inspections as far as waivers needed? So, your housing stability assessment can—should occur like it's…like it's always been occurring, right? You don't—if I'm understanding the question correctly—like, you know, Steve was talking about, you can do that remotely; you don't need to meet face-to-face with a client to do a housing stability assessment. So, whatever your process or policy is, right—your grantee, the project sponsor—for conducting, you know, as part of case management, a housing stability assessment, I think, in most instances, that could occur, you know, at the same regularity as it was before…maybe a little bit differently. But it might just be that you're doing it remotely and over the phone versus face-to-face and as an in-person appointment or meeting.

[1:13:09] Steven Ellis: Yeah. Yeah.

[1:13:09–1:13:10] Heather Rhoda: Does that make sense, Steve?

[1:13:11–1:13:45] Steven Ellis: Yeah, I think that's spot on. So, these questions are great everyone. Like I said, there's some really good ones I wish we had time to get to but I want to be mindful of time because you all have welcomed us into your world for over an hour and so we have a few more slides that we want to get to. But, yet again, we will remind people, right, any questions we didn't get to we will definitely address offline and we will put together a list of questions and answers and make sure that's shared with everyone: those who are here as well as those who were unable to make today's webinars, so you will have the same information.

[1:13:46] Heather Rhoda: Yes.

[1:13:47–1:13:50] Steven Ellis: With…well, if that's enough, do you want to go to the next slide?

[1:13:50–1:13:53] *Pause*

[1:13:53–1:15:17] Heather Rhoda: Okay, so…and I'll just stay on camera now at this point. So, what's next? So, after the Office Hours, everybody is going to receive a HOPWA CARES Act survey: it's going to ask some questions about, you know, is there any information that you, you know…would…would like about the HOPWA program and administering and providing HOPWA supportive services and housing assistance? Any resources/tools? We also, too, wanted to mention an amazing tool that was recently created by some of our TA partners: HOPWA guidance for COVID-19. It's a recently published tool for policy development for grantees that are developing policies around, you know, CARES Act funding and using waivers. And both of these links are live so, once you get on this presentation or if you select the little title here that says "handouts"—you click that—there will be a PDF version and you should be able to save that to your, you know, desktop and then print that out. Next slide.

[1:15:17–1:15:20] *Pause*

[1:15:21–1:17:10] Heather Rhoda: And these are just some reminders, folks that have been present during some of our other webinars: we've included these, you know, last slides in every presentation and I'm just going to read the title. Just make sure that you're applying HUD guidance to the correct program, right? There is, you know, lots of changing information coming out, lots of flexibilities and waivers for different HUD-funded programs such as CoC, ESG,

Public and Indian Housing program, CDBG—Community Development Block Grant. CoC means Continuum of Care, ESG means Emergency Solutions Grants—sorry again for the acronyms. Make sure you're applying the right program guidance in the right waivers to your HOPWA program. Grantees are responsible for provi...for notifying HUD of their intent to use the waivers and for developing new policies and procedures. Those policies and procedures should also trickle or be carried over to your project sponsor so, project sponsors who are on the call—make sure you're talking to your grantees, you're talking to each other and updating policies accordingly. And stay tuned for lots of new guidance that is still forthcoming; make sure you're signed up for the HOPWA listserv and also visit the HOPWA landing page for information about COVID-19 and Housing and Urban Development Community Planning and Development HOPWA landing page. Next slide.

[1:17:10–1:17:12] *Pause*

[1:17:13–1:17:35] Heather Rhoda: Also, coming attractions: stay tuned Wednesday, December 9th, 2020 2:00 to 3:30 PM Eastern Time the next HOPWA Office Hours will occur and this one is about supportive services. Please join. Next slide.

[1:17:36–1:18:01] Heather Rhoda: And there's technical assistance available, right? So, grantees can submit a request for TA, individualized TA, related to responding to COVID-19 as well as regular HOPWA program administration and requirements. There's information here on this slide about where and how to submit a request for TA. Next slide.

[1:18:02–1:18:06] *Pause*

[1:18:06–1:18:33] Heather Rhoda: And here we have some additional resources. When you have some time, take some time to select each of these links. There was a question earlier on about the waivers and where they were—there are live links right here on this slide. The first…the first mega waiver, April 2020, and then the second one a month later, May 2020. Next slide.

[1:18:33–1:18:36] *Pause*

[1:18:37–1:19:18] Heather Rhoda: And also we have the HOPWA Ask-A-Question desk so, if you have a question about the HOPWA program, the HOPWA notice, waivers, implementing COVID-19 activities…it's not only about CARES Act and not only about COVID-19 but, generally, HOPWA program administration requirements. We'd love to hear from you so please submit your question to the HOPWA Ask-A-Question desk and that link will take you to the portal where you can submit your question. And just follow the instructions on the page. Next slide.

[1:19:18–1:19:28] *Pause*

[1:19:29–1:19:58] Heather Rhoda: That might be it. Oh, the last one: stay informed. Like I said, make sure you're signed up for the HOPWA listserv, the mailing list—here's a link right here with instructions on how to subscribe to the listserv and also a live link on where you can get updated information about HOPWA guidance for COVID-19.

[1:19:58–1:20:01] *Pause*

[1:20:01–1:20:02] Steven Ellis: Final slide, please.

[1:20:02–1:20:06] Heather Rhoda: And that wraps up today's Office Hours.

[1:20:07–1:20:29] Steven Ellis: Thank you, everyone again, for letting us into your hectic, crazy, busy lives for 90 minutes. We really appreciate the time that you give us and also the great work that you all do. So, we'll be emailing this presentation out and so, please make sure

to follow those links and reach out through the Ask-A-Question or the TA portal if you do need any additional assistance; we are here to help you however we can.

[1:20:30–1:20:58] Heather Rhoda: Thank you very much and we apologize for the audio issues in the beginning but yes, the presentation is being—is/was being—recorded and we'll make sure that that's available to everybody as soon as possible, as well as…we'll provide responses to the unanswered questions and, you know, there'll be information available about the answered questions, also.

[1:20:58–1:21:01] *Pause*

[1:21:02–1:21:07] Heather Rhoda: And now we have Rita and Evie from our wonderful HUD OHH staff!

[01:21:08–1:21:10] Rita Harcrow: Thanks, everyone.

[1:21:11–1:21:13] Steven Ellis: Thank you everyone, have a good day.

[1:21:14–1:21:15] Heather Rhoda: Have a great day, thank you.

[1:21:15–1:21:30] *Pause as the presentation and call are closed*