

OPERATOR: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants are on listen-only mode until the question-and-answer session of today's conference. At that time, you may press star-one on your phone to ask a question. I would like to inform all parties that today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. I would now like to turn the conference over to Leslie Green. Thank you. You may begin.

LESLIE GREEN: Hi, everyone. This is Leslie Green in the Office for American Indian Programs. And, virtually beside me, I have Lacey Boven. Did you want to say hello, Lacey?

LACEY BOVEN: Hello, this is Lacey, the regional administrator for Region 7. I serve the states and tribes in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska.

LESLIE GREEN: [Unintelligible], Lacey. And today we're going to be talking about MIPPA grants for Title VI grantees. And a couple quick housekeeping issues. This presentation is being recorded, and it will be available on Older Indians in two weeks. It takes us that long to get it formatted for compliance. If you would like the presentation earlier than that, you can email Laura Stevenson or Melissa Szasz from Teya, or you can email Lacey and I, and we can certainly get it to you as well.

So thanks for joining. Today we'll be talking about what MIPPA is, in case you are a Title VI grantee who has not received MIPPA in the past, or even if your tribe has received it in the past, but if you're a new director and aren't familiar with MIPPA, we're here to teach you a little bit about it. And then we'll go over how you apply for MIPPA. It is not so much an application process as much as it is a simple signed agreement.

We'll talk about how you can spend your MIPPA dollars. And we're going to focus a little bit on what to do about MIPPA during COVID. Because so much of MIPPA in the past has been things that are very public-oriented, so large gatherings, health fairs, we'll be talking a little bit about alternatives to those during the pandemic. And then we'll just go over kind of the—the kind of boring stuff, reporting, resources, and reminders. And then we will certainly have plenty of time at the end of the call for questions and answers.

So what is MIPPA? To start, MIPPA is the short name for the Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act. It's a grant program that is administered by ACL and provides grants to tribes and to states to conduct outreach and education on the programs that can help elders pay for costs associated with Medicare. And just so we're all on the same page, Medicare is the federal health insurance program for people ages 65 and older or people of any age with permanent disabilities.

And in doing some research for this presentation, I found out a little bit more on Medicare and how many American Indian, Alaska Native elders are enrolled. It turns out the vast majority of elderly American Indians and Alaska Natives, up to 96%, report having Medicare coverage. And it's the most frequently reported source of healthcare coverage among American Indians and Alaska Natives age 65 and over.

And so, while Medicare provides protection from many healthcare costs, it pays for a lot on its own, it doesn't pay for some services that are important to older people and those with disabilities, things like long-term services and supports, dental services, eye glasses, hearing aids, and so there are other Medicare programs you can enroll in to cover those costs. But

Medicare also requires cost sharing where individuals are expected to pay for a portion of their care for most of the health services that it covers.

Now, if your elders go to ITUs, IHS, or other providers like that, they usually do not have copays. But if they go out of IHS, they will have copays, and MIPPA can help you cover those costs. So the programs that can help your elders cover those Medicare costs are called Medicare Part D, which is for prescription drug coverage, LIS, or the Low-Income Subsidy, MSP, or the Medicare Savings Program, and there's also Medicare's Prevention and Wellness Benefits. Lacey will talk more about LIS and MSP in a few moments.

But first, we're going to go over what matters about MIPPA for you, the Title VI directors. So I'd like you to understand that the point of MIPPA grants are that there are benefits that can help your elders pay for Medicare costs. There are people who can help your elders learn about these benefits, and these people will come talk with your elders for free and even enroll them in these benefits if they're eligible.

Um—[dog barks]—excuse me. So to provide a little bit more information—[dog barks]—on why—[chuckles]—MIPPA grants are important, I have a chart that shows that cost is a barrier to accessing healthcare for one in ten American Indian and Alaska Native elders. So 10% of elders reported that cost of services has kept them from getting healthcare in the past year. And this is data that's a little bit old, it's actually from 2014, but I think the point is still relevant today. So MIPPA grants can help you help these elders who said cost kept them from getting healthcare. And I'll turn it over to Lacey to talk about these MIPPA programs.

LACEY BOVEN: Great. So, as Leslie mentioned, the Medicare Savings Program, or MSP, helps pay for Medicare costs related to health. And, also as Leslie mentioned, there's a lot that Medicare doesn't cover. The most typical Medicare costs are related to hospital stays, just your regular doctor appointments, and prescription drugs, and that's a lot of what is covered with the MIPPA program savings related to enrolling in MIPPA.

So the Medicare Savings Programs that we're about to go through are actually run through the Medicaid offices in your state, but cover helping to pay for Medicare. That's all through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid. They're the big giant federal insurance agency. They're one of our sister agencies, but a lot bigger than us, and for good reason.

So, as Leslie also mentioned, seniors and younger adults with disabilities, you know, they may not qualify for a full Medicaid program because Medicaid is related to income, and then Medicare is, once you're 65 and have a disability for two years, you get Medicare. So even though it's going through the Medicaid office, you can still—you may still be able to enroll someone in a Medicare Savings Program. Thank you for the ball. I will [unintelligible] my next slide here.

All right, so how the Medicare Savings Programs can help your elders is through saving money on their Medicare costs. That does- there's programs that cover the Part B premium, which, again, is hospital—really hospital stays, but for the most part, enrollment in any of these Medicare Savings Programs can put over \$1,700 back into the wallets of your elders or persons with disabilities every year, which may not sound like a lot to some of us, but it's a lot of money to someone on a limited income.

And, as Leslie mentioned, that can go back—I think you talked about the IHS program using Medicare to cover some of the costs that they incur for providing healthcare to your

elders or anyone, so really that's putting back into the community. If your elders are enrolled in these savings programs, enrolled in Medicare, and it's protecting the budget of your health institutions for your community broadly.

Also, just to mention, that there is automatic extra help, so if your elder is receiving a Low-Income Subsidy as part of their social security benefit, then they don't have to enroll in it. But we can go through some of those. [Unintelligible] button. Okay. So there are different types of Medicare Savings Programs. They are basically dependent on different levels of financial eligibility. So there's the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary, the QMB Program. So these charts in these next few slides identify the income requirements, the resource requirements, and then it covers—it shows the benefits that are covered by the type of Medicare Savings Program.

So there are multiple types of Medicare Savings Programs, but ultimately it's related to how much monthly income your elder is bringing in. And we did include Alaska and Hawaii, given our audience may be in those areas, because those income requirements are higher in those areas. So I'll run through just—I'll keep it on the screen for a minute, talk among friends, and continue on to the other types of the Medicare Savings Programs.

The next one is the SLMB, or the Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary, a slightly higher monthly income. So, as we go, these are going to get higher monthly income but less benefits that they cover. So, but still, regardless, you know, check into it, if you have an opportunity to talk about resources with one of your elders or persons with disabilities that you may be serving through your program.

The next one, again, slightly higher, is QI, the Qualifying Individual. Same idea, slightly higher monthly income requirement, but getting that Part B monthly premium covered is significant. \$144 back in someone's pocket a month is very significant. That can cover other expenses that the person may be paying for and save someone a lot of money. Additionally, just wanted to make sure that these program names of note in some of the states that you may reside, you know, states, they can kind of get a little territorial with some of their programming and naming and whatnot, so in the middle is what the program actually is.

So if you go back to the chart, and you're looking at QI in Alaska, it's actually called SLMB+. So this chart is more of—as the states that have taken a little ownership and changed the name up on you a little bit, so in the middle is the program name and—the actual program that they're offering, and then the name that it's called in that particular state. So, you know, some of them just, you know, do their own thing. I think this is back to Leslie. I'll throw you the ball if you want to get started.

LESLIE GREEN: Thanks, Lacey. That would be great, thanks. Okay, so hopefully we've interested you in applying for these grants that will help your elders pay for Medicare costs. Applying really couldn't be easier. It's more of a signed agreement than an application. The deadline is two and a half weeks from today on Monday, August 10th. All you need to do to get the quote, unquote, application package, it's really not so much of an application as—it's not as intimidating as it sounds.

But all you need to do to get this package is to email me, Lacey, Cecilia Aldridge, or your ACL regional administrator, and then have somebody who is authorized to apply for grants on behalf of your tribe, have them sign page nine, you add your grant number for FY20—not your

MIPPA grant number but your Title VI Nutrition Services Program grant number because this—these MIPPA grants are only open to people who already have Title VI grants.

So you add your grant number, you get it signed, and that's literally all you have to do. You then—yeah, we can—hey, Laura, could you please copy and paste, if you can, the link here and put it in the chat box? That's a great idea. Thank you for somebody who suggested that. Because I actually tried searching grants.gov with that number on the end there and was not able to find the opportunity that way. I will be sending out another email reminder to apply for these grants, so if for some reason you're not able to get this link today, it will be coming in an email from me later today or tomorrow. Or, like I said, you can email your ACL contact to get the announcement.

We do not want you applying through grants.gov, though. We will not see it if you apply through grants.gov. Unfortunately, the little apply button on grants.gov is active, so in theory, you could, but we will not see that. We need you to send that signed page, just that one page, to mippa.grants@acl.hhs.gov. So that is how you apply. It's very simple. Thank you, Laura.

And a little bit more about what we require for these grants and how they're funded. Grants are for at least \$1,000 for a period of 12 months. That should begin 9/1 of this year, September 1st. We're trying to get them out a little bit earlier than we usually do. But the grant amounts, the reason I say they're for at least \$1,000 is because these grants are formula based, much like our Title VI grants are also formula based, which just means that because we don't yet know how many applicants we're going to have, we do not know how that set dollar amount of money that is going to all tribal MIPPA grantees will be divided up.

So awards are for at least \$1,000, but last year, MIPPA awards ranged from \$2,200 to \$5,300. So while we want to encourage all Title VI programs to apply, because we do believe these are really valuable benefits, the fewer programs that apply increases the dollar amount that every tribe—every applicant gets. So when you receive your MIPPA grant, you must produce one community announcement about the programs that Lacey talked about earlier and you must do one outreach event to educate your elders about these programs.

So these grants are not hard to apply for. They are not super hard to execute. It's one community announcement and one community event. And that's why we encourage everyone to apply. And it can be even easier if you use your state SHIP. So SHIPs are your partners in MIPPA. The State Health Insurance Assistance Programs, or SHIPs, are federally funded. They come out of ACL. And all these programs do are provide free objective assistance to people with Medicare and their families. They can do Medicare counseling, but they also do many, many outreach events about the exact benefits that we've talked about today. They are experts in providing this information.

So if you haven't heard, thank you so much, and I see another note about open enrollment period, which I believe is—it's, yeah, October to December, but you can contact your local SHIP, and information on how to do that is right on this slide. So, if you haven't heard of your state SHIP, it might be because they have a different name. So depending on where you live, they could be called the SHIP program, they could be called HICAP, SHINE, or even SHIBA, but they all function the same way in providing outreach and education about Medicare benefits.

So to find your SHIP, you can call this number on the slide or go to the SHIP TA Center website and select your state, and it will give you the contact information for your SHIP. My

hope is that, and I'm pretty sure that a lot of Title VI MIPPA grantees already have these relationships with the state SHIPs because it makes administering the grant much easier if you can call in the experts, if you happen to not be an expert on Medicare Savings Programs, on Medicare, on LIS, you do not have to be. All you have to do is call your SHIP, and they will provide outreach for your elders.

Okay, so spending your MIPPA grant. So when you use the—if you were to use the SHIP outreach individuals to come and talk with your elders, they will do it for free because they are federally funded to provide the services that they provide, and therefore, you would likely have a lot of your MIPPA grant still left over. So you could spend that money on health fairs and similar events. That's where a lot of Title VI MIPPA grantees have spent their money in the past.

But during COVID, I know large gatherings are prohibited or limited, so that's not really an option anymore. So we've been keeping our ears open at ACL for suggestions on how to do this outreach event, given that it's a requirement of the grant. So we've got like a couple suggestions we came up with, but we're also—we would love to hear from you during the question-and-answer portion about how you can do an outreach event when you cannot have a large gathering.

One suggestion, and again, I completely understand that many tribes live in rural or frontier locations that might not have the technology that would be necessary, like the infrastructure for providing things like Zoom meetings so that outreach could be done virtually rather than in person, but one way to spend your MIPPA grant, if you did have access to a network, like a wireless network that people could connect to would be you could purchase tablets or smartphones so that your elders could connect to these outreach presentations.

Printed materials for distribution, you can certainly include those materials about the MIPPA benefits in home-delivered meals. That's another suggestion for spending the grant. And salaries and wages for Title VI staff who are involved with planning the event or creating that community announcement are certainly allowable MIPPA costs.

So unallowable costs for MIPPA are—these are actually just like general things for our mandatory grants, [unintelligible] debts, basic research, construction, contributions, donations, interests, things that I've honestly not heard somebody ever ask if they could spend their MIPPA grant on, but these are unallowable costs. Sorry, and I just want to go back really quick because we—another two things that you can spend your MIPPA grant on are food that is associated with the outreach event. Again, this is a little different during COVID.

I'm sorry, Lacey, did you have something you wanted to say about that one [unintelligible]? I saw a bubble pop up, but then it disappeared.

LACEY BOVEN: Oh, no, I don't think so.

LESLIE GREEN: Okay. Not sure where it's coming from. Okay. And also any promotional items that are related to enrolling in the MIPPA programs. So something that had like the SHIP's—your local SHIP's contact information on it, that would be an allowable promotional item. Things that inform and educate your elders about the MIPPA program.

Okay, so again, just wanted to talk quickly about MIPPA during COVID. We, of course, defer to your tribe's policies for gathering during COVID. The National Council on Aging, NCOA,

is a resource center that focuses on MIPPA for states, and they have been putting out some tools for how to do outreach events during COVID. They had a presentation a couple weeks ago that asked state SHIPs to talk about how they're adapting to a state-at-home environment. One of the ideas suggested there was a parking lot presentation.

So, and I know I've seen this in our Title VI grantees, in Oklahoma, they have parking lot bingo where the elders come and they have bingo in their cars with their windows rolled down, and all the cars are obviously like—I think they're 13 feet apart or something, and they have a PA system so they can read off the bingo calls that way. So that's one way. You could have somebody come to your elders and do an outdoor presentation if that's allowed in your tribe.

Radio advertising is another way to do your community announcements, and your SHIP partners might have ideas about how they are adapting to this stay-at-home environment. ACL's office that administers the state MIPPA grants is working really closely with the state SHIPs to come up with ideas for outreach, and anything that we see from them that could be relevant to your grants, we will certainly share with you.

Okay. MIPPA reports are as simple, I would say, as the application process. They are due within 90 days of the event. A narrative report just needs to contain a paragraph about the event, give its date, its location, it's number of participants, we do not need any names, any activities you conducted during the event, including the speakers you had, and any materials created for that event. All funds must be obligated no later than the end of the one-year project periods—the project period, and funds must be drawn down from PMS within 90 days following the event.

The FF425 form that I think all of your fiscal offices are familiar with, but you also have an FF425 due for the MIPPA grants. So, again, we do not ask for a large report, but if you would like to share this information with us, these are some things you can consider when writing your report. The more information you include in your report, the better we can do in understanding what will be helpful in future MIPPA grants and connecting tribes to like examples of best practices, we would really like to have that information to share.

We don't currently have that information, and I'm working on getting it, but because the reports are so brief, there's not a lot of information we can take from them about how other tribes can do MIPPA well. So we would welcome you to share information about partnership or collaborations that were helpful, challenges you had in producing your event, we would love to hear about what was produced as part of the event and the impact it had on your community, like if you enrolled a certain number of elders or if your partner has enrolled a certain number of elders in the program, we love hearing that. And any lessons learned, or things you want to share with us about how we can better support you with the MIPPA grants.

[Unintelligible], okay. So narrative and financial reports must be emailed to mippa.grants@acl.hhs.gov. It's that same email inbox that you are going to use to submit your FY20 MIPPA application. In the subject line, you just need to include what kind of report it is, whether 425 or progress report, your state, the name of your tribe, and your MIPPA grant number. An example is shown here about what we would hope to see in the subject line so we can easily identify which grant the report is associated with.

Some problems we've experienced in the past in terms of MIPPA reporting, time limits of submission. So the reports are due 90 days after your event, but we struggle with getting the reports in from grantees even one year following the event, like when the grant is set to

expire. So the sooner you can submit your report, the better it will be. We don't often get a lot of detail, as I mentioned, for the events. Again, we are not requiring it, and we can certainly look into requiring more in the future, but often we just get a—the number of participants.

It would really help us if you can share, like I said earlier, the partner organizations that you work with so that we can have examples of best practices to share with other MIPPA grantees. Same thing with the communication materials you included, if you can share those with us, we can, again, send those out as—for people who are confused about what to do with their MIPPA money. And please don't include any personal or identifying information in the attendance list for your event. [Unintelligible]—hand it over to Lacey to talk more about NCOA.

LACEY BOVEN: Right. So NCOA is funded through a cooperative agreement. The Center for Benefits Access is funded through a cooperative agreement with ACL, and they have wonderful resources that are ready to go to help you meet the minimum requirements to receive the MIPPA grant funds. And that's done through the MIPPA Resource Center and the Benefits Checkup and the Benefits Enrollment Center, is what I'm going to go through.

All right, so one of the things that they've developed is a state-specific MIPPA flyer that's available for any of the states, and it has all—it has the name of your program that they've decide to call themselves, it has the contact information, it's tribally-specific, and it goes through, in simple language, on what the programs are, how they can help. And so you can use your MIPPA funds that you receive to buy the paper to print these off, buy the postage to send it to your elders, or, you know, hang it up in your building if you're still able to congregate, depending on the various rules that you have right now.

But it's a super simple way to check your box for the education piece of the requirement, you buy some paper, you buy some postage, or whatever you want to do to support this, but you don't have to make it yourself. It's already available. You put in your state, you put in your tribe, and, bam, there it is. So it's a really nice resource for this—for this particular program and meeting that education requirement.

Also, they—on the website, you've got some map visualizations specific to Native communities, so you can identify maybe where some of those targeting might—you might want to target a little bit. I think, on the next slide—yeah, so if you're in an-if you're—it's done by county, and so it can show you the number of households that are currently Medicare-enrolled and where maybe you would want to focus some of your efforts.

So I chose Kansas because I'm from Kansas, and I can say, hey, guys, look at your numbers. So just as a screen shot of what the tool actually looks like and how it can help you identify some of the targets for your MIPPA dollars. So in your reporting, like Leslie was just talking about, you can say, I use the map visualization to identify my focus in this area because there's 30%—er, there's only 10% of eligible people enrolled in the Medicare program who are eligible, so, you know, nine out of 10 are not, so I'm doing this program, this program, this program, and it would really help to have something measurable for your program.

Also, they have the Benefits Checkup, which is another great tool that they have. It's a free online screening tool, and what it does is you put in as much information as you can or are willing to, and at the end, it gives you like literally a booklet of all the potential services or benefits, public and private, that that individual would be eligible for. If that person puts their

income information in, they can also have a really easy click to help them enroll in the extra help—er, help—[chuckles] have them go through the extra help application.

So, you know, for programs that I've engaged with previously that have used MIPPA dollars in the past, something that was easy for them to do for the outreach piece was to use the MIPPA funds to purchase a computer for the—for their public space, or a laptop or a tablet or whatever, if they want to bring that to someone, and, you know, have them just go through that Benefits Checkup.

So in your reporting, you can say, I purchased this piece of equipment—you know, and also, I know we're in a unique time right now, but, you know, you could say, I purchased this equipment, it's available at our center, and, you know, there's been 30 people who have used the Benefits Checkup, and then go print it off for them. So make sure you're buying the paper and those sorts of things that go along with the entire process. But it's a really great tool, but just as a—words of wisdom here, it's only as effective as—as much information as you put in it.

So you can put, you know, like age and name and get a thick book of potential options, but the more specific you can be, the more information you can put in, the more likely the benefit would align with that person's eligibility. So it's more than, you know, any of the specific Medicare Savings Program or extra help, but it could help with really any additional screening that that—any additional program that that person might be eligible for. But it does have that direct link on there.

The other thing is—are the Benefits Enrollment Centers. There are 69 located in 36 states. They would do the work for you, [chuckles] which is awesome when, you know—we're not saying these are our big-dollar grants by any means, which is also why we're making sure you're connected with your SHIP program because you don't have to pay them to come and do the presentation.

Many of the state programs do offer a Medicare Savings Bingo, so if you did want to use that idea that Leslie shared in parking lot bingo, then you can use your MIPPA funds to get some cool prizes, something that, you know, someone would be interested in, and then go—have that individual from the state program have a very targeted bingo, they have those programs available.

But if you are also physically close or in a space that has a Benefits Enrollment Center, they're another great resource to, you know, do this work for you and then, you know, do some promotion materials and those sorts of things to get your elder connected. This slide just includes all those links. We've been getting some questions in the chat box about when the—er, if the sides are available. So if you weren't at the very beginning of the presentation, yes, they're always—all of these presentations are always posted to the olderindians.acl.gov website within two weeks of being done.

We need to go through our compliance and all that good stuff. Or, if you want it sooner, you can email either Leslie or myself or Laura, and they—we can get it for you. And this slide is a good reason to have those, and it takes you directly to all of the resources that have just—that have just been mentioned. As your final reminders, I did want to just, you know, go through and make sure that, again, these deadlines, it's two and a half weeks, Monday, August 10th, do not use grants.gov. The instructions are there.

It's weird. Federal government is always and forever going to be weird, but, you know, the instructions have to go on grants.gov, but the applications have to be emailed to this email

address. So make sure that you're, you know, not applying through grants.gov, it won't be seen. Make sure that you're documenting as you're going and that you're using allowable cost principals, that you're meeting those minimum requirements, and, you know, like I said, we're with family right now, you don't have to do all this work yourself, use those resources that you have, and, you know, give your elders the—something really awesome.

[Chuckles] Use your funds for some sort of promotional gift that would be of interest to your elders. Just make sure that they do know about these because, ultimately, these are really great programs. Our funds are easy to get. They're, you know, easy to spend. There's a very high return on investment if you can get a simple signature on an agreement and grab these funds, you can, you know, use them on the other end. And, ultimately, the programs do benefit your elders and, at a minimum, save them almost \$150 a month or get them some help with their prescription drugs.

So, all around great return on investment for your time, and we're hopeful that all of you do the application and if you have any questions, maybe ask Leslie because I'll be too honest. [Chuckles] But we are—we're—we are in that area of question-and-answer, so maybe, if I'm going to be honest, we should turn off the recording—

LESLIE GREEN: [Unintelligible].

LACEY BOVEN: Just kidding, just kidding. Yeah, don't do that. But we will move into the question-and-answer session, and we do have plenty of time to get into some of these. So we'll give people just a second to put those into the chat. I think, if you want to ask that in person, I think it's—what, it's like a star-zero or something, no? Star-one?

LAURA STEVENSON: Star-one. Operator, do you want to—

LACEY BOVEN: Star-one. [Chuckles]

LAURA STEVENSON: Yeah.

OPERATOR: Thank you. We will now begin the question-and-answer session. If you'd like to ask a question, please press star-one, unmute your phone, and record your name clearly. Your name is required to introduce your question. If you need to withdraw your question, press star-two. Again, to ask a question, please press star-one. It will take a few moments for the questions to come through, please stand by.

LAURA STEVENSON: We do have a couple in the chat, if you want me to ask those while we're waiting.

LACEY BOVEN: Sure.

LAURA STEVENSON: One is, I think it was around slide 26, but the state specific MIPPA flyer, the question was, is that a new flyer?

LACEY BOVEN: It's the same one, if you've used it in the past. But if you haven't or—and it is editable, too, so if you want to put a picture that's specific to your community, that's a nice way to make it your own as well, but it does come pre-filled with all of the contact information for state SHIPs and all of the program information that's specific to your state for the income and asset requirements, and so it's not different than what's been available in the past, but it is very editable, if you'd like to make those changes.

LAURA STEVENSON: And one more, when is the enrollment period for the Medicare Savings Programs?

LESLIE GREEN: So, Lacey, I'm not sure—I have a thought on this, and it's more of a follow-up, so do you want me to go, or do you happen to know that? [Pause] So I know open enrollment period is from October 15th through December 7th, but I'm not sure if that extends to like MSP programs or if like—well, what their enrollments guidelines are around that and timing, so I can find out the answer to that question and include it with the materials that will be posted on Older Indians.

LAURA STEVENSON: Okay—

LACEY BOVEN: [Chuckles] I can't unmute myself.

LAURA STEVENSON: That's okay.

LESLIE GREEN: Hey, Lacey.

LACEY BOVEN: [Sighs] Oh, I was just going to say that most of the enrollment happens during that open enrollment period, so just as people are reviewing their different plans and identifying and going through the, you know, what their resources and assets are and those sorts of things, the majority of the time, that is just like you said, that October to December time period.

LESLIE GREEN: Yeah, and your SHIP—your state SHIP will definitely know the answer to that question, so I would suggest giving them a call. Their number is on the slide right now.

LAURA STEVENSON: Operator, do we have more questions yet? Otherwise I can do the next one from the chat.

OPERATOR: Yeah, we have a question from Donald Peters. Go ahead, your line is open.

DONALD PETERS: Yes, hi, thank you for taking my question. Can you hear me, folks?

LESLIE GREEN: Yes. Hi, Donald.

LACEY BOVEN: Yep.

DONALD PETERS: Yes, yes, hi, my question is, for the no-cost extension that—for your MIPPA grant that was the previous year, how long is the extension for, is that for a whole year?

LESLIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, I'm so excited that this question is being asked. It's a really good question, and I wanted to provide a reminder about that, so how fortunate. Yeah, so the MIPPA no-cost extensions were for FY19 MIPPA grantees were awarded to all MIPPA grantees unless you had already spent out your funding. The project period has been extended until September 29th of 2021, so that's a full year extra that you have to spend your money.

And so the 90-day period that is like the end of the grant, after that, so you have to file all your reports no later than December 28th of 2021. And all funds must be obligated by September 29th, 2021, and the funds must be liquidated by December 28th of 2021. So we're going to have two MIPPA grants running at the same time because the FY19 no-cost extensions will be going, and then the FY20 MIPPA grants will also be going out on that same schedule.

DONALD PETERS: So my next question would be, so if you don't—year 2021, could you file a no-cost extension for that also, if you didn't exhaust all the funding—

LESLIE GREEN: For your FY—

DONALD PETERS: Yeah, 20—

LESLIE GREEN: For your FY20 MIPPA grant?

DONALD PETERS: Yeah.

LESLIE GREEN: So this is the first year that we've offered no-cost extensions and it was because of COVID and because of people's inability to gather like and to do—and then other people being furloughed and everything, so they couldn't even administer the grants, so that was the justification we used this year for offering no-cost extensions. I have no idea if that justification will be available next year. You know, I certainly hope it's not. And I'm also not sure of whether we can offer them for other reasons. So I can find out that information. It's something that we should know, so I can look that up.

DONALD PETERS: Thank you. And then my next question would be, again, Donald Peters, it would be, some of my tribal elders have gone beyond signing up for their Medicare D Plan at 65, now I'm understanding that they could be penalized for that, is that correct?

LESLIE GREEN: I don't have that information, so I would—I think that's a SHIP question. It's a great question. I'm not sure if other people on the line know those details. And, Lacey, I'm not sure if you have any information about that.

LACEY BOVEN: Yeah, I had heard that at one time as well, and I think it was something that, you know, on a—on that case particularly that I heard it happen on, we were able to work with

CMS to ensure that that person was not penalized for their late enrollment into the program. So it's definitely something to, when you do work with your state SHIP program, to mention as a concern so that it's addressed right from the get-go.

And the SHIP program would have access to the state aging program, to the state insurance program, and to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid to ensure that, you know, if it is something that would apply to that person, that they can work to try to not have that happen. Because it's definitely not any intention, yeah—

[Talking over each other]

LESLIE GREEN: —Donald?

DONALD PETERS: And I guess my third question—I'm sorry, it's Donald Peters again—and I guess my third question would be, how are the tribes having any type of outreach programs during this pandemic? To get the information out to the tribal elders, is it by mail or radio like you mentioned prior or . . . ?

LESLIE GREEN: So—

LACEY BOVEN: Yeah, those are a couple of good ones. Yeah, go ahead.

LESLIE GREEN: Oh, no, I was just thinking that I think this is all kind of new territory for us all, and so we are sharing best practices as we hear them, like [unintelligible] mail and radio, parking lot presentations, although obviously not in this heat, so we—on the East Coast, it's insanely hot right now, so that's for different times of the year. And as we continue to learn best practices about what works for other programs, whether it's state SHIPs doing their outreach or other tribal MIPPA grantees, we will share them with all of the MIPPA grantees.

DONALD PETERS: Thank you.

LESLIE GREEN: Thanks for your question. And, Donald, could I just ask really quickly what state you're in—located in?

DONALD PETERS: I apologize, I'm from the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe. We're from Massachusetts.

LESLIE GREEN: Okay, awesome. Thank you.

OPERATOR: We're showing no further questions at this time.

LAURA STEVENSON: We do have a couple from the chat. Let's see, one, I don't know if you've gone over this, but we still haven't done our outreach event for the 2019 MIPPA grant, how do I know if I received a no-cost extension on that grant?

LESLIE GREEN: Yeah, so, yes, all FY19 MIPPA grants do have a no-cost extension until September 29th, 2021. Thanks, Laura.

LAURA STEVENSON: Okay. Another one. When we've had MIPPA grants in the past, we've always done health fairs. We're not allowed to have large gatherings anymore because of COVID. What should we do this year?

LESLIE GREEN: Yeah, it sounds like everybody is having the same question, so we will collect best practices for outreach during COVID at ACL and disseminate them to the MIPPA grantees, but also would love to hear from anybody on the line. We've got a lot of people on this call, over 40 people, and if anyone has anyone has any ideas that they would like to share, we would really welcome that. You can press, I think, star-one to share your ideas. It doesn't have to be to ask a question. If you have any ideas or outreach events that you're currently doing or plan on doing, we would really love to hear about them.

LACEY BOVEN: Yeah, I think that one of the things that's been shared was, you know, sending out the information, whether that'd be a flyer or whatever, and then following up with phone calls has been an effective way to talk to people and make sure, like also just do a check-in with your elders as well if you're not able to, you know, physically see them or they're not able to physically come to the center, that, you know, like that good old-fashioned phone call and to say, hey, are you getting this information? And, you know, this may be something that could work for you, do you want to go through a Benefits Checkup with me? I can ask you some questions over the phone and we can see and get you enrolled.

You know, something like that. I mean, it is—it's a lot of work to do that individually, but I think—and I think that there's also been a lot of success in some of those parking lot activities when heat is not an issue, and the mailings, and partnering with like a church bulletin and seeing if you can borrow a section of those, if they're going—getting sent out to, you know, people that you may not have direct contact with either.

LAURA STEVENSON: Okay. We do have another one. Can I get a copy of the no-cost extension? Or where can I get a copy, I guess.

LESLIE GREEN: Yeah, you can feel free to send me an email at leslie.green@gmail.com—oops, oh my God, I'm giving you my personal email address, excuse me—@acl—

[Laughter]

LESLIE GREEN: You can also email me at Gmail. acl.gov, I'm going to put it in the chat box. Email for no-cost extensions, I can get you a copy of your award, and that's in the chat box right now. You can also feel free to chat me which tribe you're with. Wendy, I see your question. If you want to chat me which tribe you're with, I could send it to you, if you send me your email address.

LAURA STEVENSON: Oh, great. We have another one. I don't have access to someone who has authority to sign for the tribe right now with COVID and offices being shut down, how can I get the signature required?

LACEY BOVEN: I think Leslie might be taking some notes right now, so I—my understanding is that electronic signatures can be accepted, so if you can talk to that individual or know that they—that you have their support, we have all of the physical signatures on file with the existing Title VI applications, and because these awards are limited to Title VI recipients, and we have those signatures, you could do an electronic signature on the application form.

Or if you, you know, can send us a note that says, you know, I anticipate being able to see this individual on this day and to get it to you at this time with that electronic signature. If you feel more comfortable with something physical, but some—there's a way to do like a /s/ and then that person's name, and that's considered a valid signature because we have those existing signatures. So a nice use of technology, I guess.

LAURA STEVENSON: Mm-hmm.

LESLIE GREEN: Thanks, Lacey. [Chuckles] Yeah, watch for your next Gmail, I'm going to be emailing you.

[Laughter]

LAURA STEVENSON: And one more chat question, when we've gotten MIPPA money in the past, we don't know how to spend it, could you go over how to spend the grant again?

LESLIE GREEN: Sure. Or, Lacey, was this—did you want to respond to that one, or is that—

LACEY BOVEN: No, you can go for it.

LESLIE GREEN: Okay. Sure, so, yeah, any salaries or wages associated with the person who is arranging for the MIPPA event at the Title VI—on the Title VI side, you know, as I said, like last year, this ranged—the grants ranged from like \$2,300 to \$5,300, so, you know, that can cover some wages that then don't have to be charged to your Title VI grant. Food that is associated with—if [chuckles] you were to have an in-person event, food that is associated with putting on the event—

[Talking over each other]

LACEY BOVEN: Yeah—

LESLIE GREEN: Yeah.

LACEY BOVEN: Virtually anything that's associated to that event. So if you're doing—

LESLIE GREEN: Yeah, exactly.

LACEY BOVEN: If you are having, you know, [unintelligible] discussion, I don't know what you would be doing, or, yeah, if it is associated to a nice dinner, paying for part of that cost, or if there is, you know, a—think through whatever you're going to be offering, if that—it requires computers or space, you can pay for the space.

Like you could pay for the paper for what you're printing on, pay for the [unintelligible] that you're typing it up with, pay for the postage, like pay for magnets with the SHIP contact information, whatever is associated to what you're doing. So—and food is always a—it's a—it's not standard in the federal grant to have food be an option, but as long as the event is around that food, then by all means. Sorry for interrupting.

LESLIE GREEN: No, great point, thank you. And if you come up with something, I guess, and—if you come up with an idea of how to spend your MIPPA money, you know, that's related to the grant but is not something we've [unintelligible] this year, you are welcome to email us and check if it's an allowable cost or not, and we can answer that one-on-one if you have—

LACEY BOVEN: Even better point, yeah. And you can do that with any of your regional administrators. [Unintelligible].

LAURA STEVENSON: That's all we have on the chat. Operator, are there any more questions on the line?

OPERATOR: Yeah, we have one question from Donald Peters. Go ahead, your line is open.

DONALD PETERS: Yes, hi, Leslie, and thank you for having this conference call. This is very informative. But one question I'd like to ask, obviously because of the pandemic, with open enrollment coming in October, how would the SHINE counselors look at their—the elders past plan opposed to a new plan that they should enroll in if they're not meeting face-to-face? [Unintelligible].

LACEY BOVEN: I think that's something that CMS is working on with the My Medicare website, like knowing and respecting what the SHIP programs do and the virtual nature that these meetings are going to have to be at this time. I think that that's something CMS is working very diligently on in having that type of information be able to be accessed through My Medicare, you know, like creating some kind of like PIN number or something specific to the individual where someone can—where that counselor can virtually see the information and go through the potential plan, if there are some changes that may benefit them based on a prescription drug change either in their plan or that they're taking. So I think there may be more to come on that. But, Leslie, do you have additional information? And I'm going to jump off. Just FYI.

LESLIE GREEN: Oh, yes, of course. Thanks so much, Lacey. I can—

LACEY BOVEN: [Unintelligible].

LESLIE GREEN: —yeah, talk with you soon. Yeah, I'll just say that, I'm not sure if you're referring to prescription drug or for other types of Medicare plans, but, yeah, but for Part D, I know there's a compare tool that's already available online that does compare like the current plan to plans that you could enroll in. And you would include like all of the medications that the elder is on in cost comparison. So I know that—yeah, I agree, Lacey shared that they are looking into how to do this in this stay-at-home environment, and then, also, for Part D at least, I think that tool is out there already.

DONALD PETERS: So there's a template that I could print out. Leslie, I'm sorry, this is Donald again—

LESLIE GREEN: Of course.

DONALD PETERS: —and I could email that you blast that to tribal elders, and they would be able to fill it out, and when they met with a SHINE counselor, they could compare apples to oranges?

LESLIE GREEN: Okay, yeah, because, like I said, you can enter—

DONALD PETERS: [Unintelligible]—

LESLIE GREEN: I'm sorry, what was that?

DONALD PETERS: —old plans opposed to new plans for scripts, prescriptions.

LESLIE GREEN: Yeah, it's an interactive tool, so it asks you to list all the drugs you're on, and then it will—it asks you to list the pharmacy that you go to, and it will give you the price for different plans based on those drugs at specific pharmacies. So it's kind of something that requires, you know, one-on-one input to create because it is specific to the elder's medications and their location, like the pharmacies that they're close to. So that's something that SHIP can help with as well.

DONALD PETERS: Thank you.

LESLIE GREEN: But I can send you the website, too, if you want to check it out.

OPERATOR: Next question is from Mary Wolf. Go ahead, your line is open.

MARY WOLF: Thank you. This is Mary from Wisconsin. I'm from the Great Lakes Intertribal Council. And we are going to be attempting something quite different that we've never attempted before, but we are going to be working with all of the tribal benefits specialists to conduct a virtual online outreach event and have it so that it would be like Facebook Live. Now, it's all in the planning stages right now, but Facebook Live, but recorded to a YouTube page that

we could keep on our website. And this would be shared with all of the Chippewa tribes and the other tribes that we partner with in the State of Wisconsin.

So something that we are doing now to partner with them, and they could use their MIPPA funds as part of this, as we do this outreach, for the recording and getting all the technology taken care of. We realize that a lot of our elders in the rural communities maybe don't have the bandwidth or don't have the equipment to participate, but we do notice there are a lot of elders who are on Facebook, who are on social media, and we're hoping that they would be able to at least tap into this. But it's our first ever, and we're planning this, and hoping to help all of the tribes in Wisconsin meet their MIPPA obligations. Thank you.

LESLIE GREEN: Thank you so much for sharing that, Mary. That's really exciting, and we'd love to hear about how it goes and how the planning goes, as well. I know you're a very busy woman, but we'd love to share information about that with the other grantees so that perhaps they could copy that model. And that's a great point about Facebook being available even if other programs aren't.

I will include in the presentation materials that are posted on Older Indians a list of like—it's developed by the National Council on Aging, tools for outreach to remote audiences, and it lists the pros and cons of each like virtual meeting format. So Facebook Live is included on there, Zoom, and a couple other formats as well so that, if you were considering doing something similar to Mary, you could take a look at the different kinds of formats that are available. It sounds like Facebook is an excellent idea.

OPERATOR: We're showing no further questions on the phone line at this time.

LESLIE GREEN: Okay. Any more in the chat bar?

LAURA STEVENSON: It looks like more of a, I guess, a suggestion or something that—it's from Vivienne Garland(?), it says, I have included a tribal calendar in our mailing that is picture—a different picture each year of something in connection to the senior program. The seniors really look forward to having that calendar each year. So just a recommendation of what they do.

LESLIE GREEN: Yeah, thank you for sharing that, Vivienne. That's an excellent idea, too.

LAURA STEVENSON: And that's all we had.

LESLIE GREEN: Yeah, so we're six minutes over, I will not take up any more of your time, but my email is in the chat box. I think you know where to reach your regional administrator, but you can feel free to connect with any of us here at ACL, and we will get you where you need to be. And I've seen a few requests for the no-cost extension award letters, and we'll send those out. These materials are available just by emailing Laura, or they'll be available on Older Indians in two weeks. So, yeah, just follow up with us if you need them sooner, though. Thank you so much, everyone, for your time, and don't forget to apply by August 10th. Thanks and take care.

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OPERATOR: That concludes today's conference. Thank you for participating. You may disconnect at this time. Speakers, please allow a moment of silence and standby for your post conference.