February 2021

Dear Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) Project Director:

It is now time for you to prepare your annual performance report (APR) for reporting year 2019-20, the third year of the 2017–22 grant cycle.  As of February 8, 2021, you will find the APR form and instructions, plus links to the secured VUB APR website maintained by our contractor, at <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/triovub/report.html>.  **Your APR is due to us by March 5, 2021.**

Do not rely solely on the VUB APR website in completing your APR; be sure to read thoroughly the U.S. Department of Education’s APR documents at the web address above.  Should you wish to revise your report after having submitted it, you may ask the Help Desk to “unsubmit” it, but you must make final submission **no later than the due date**.  Also remember that, **within five business days after final submission of your completed online APR,**you must scan and upload a signed copy of Section I of the report form.  Section I must be signed both by the project director and certifying official; you may wish to alert your certifying official of this requirement in advance.

# **Notes specifically for the 2019-20 APR**

*Preview of APR results:* This year, at the end of the APR’s “Review and Submit” section, you will be able to view your APR data and the results of prior experience (PE) calculations for your project in advance of formally submitting your APR. With this information, before submission you will be able to identify results that might not be what you had expected. You will thus be able to review your data and correct any errors you might have made, thus reducing any need to ask the Help Desk to “unsubmit” your APR at the last minute.

*Move to case numbers****:*** You may recall that, by the end of the 2018-19 data collection, all TRIO programs with student-level data shifted from using Social Security numbers to case numbers assigned by the Department. In the download file that you will receive in the APR online process, you will see case numbers for students that need to remain in your data file. For more information, please consult pages 4-5 of the General Instructions at <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/triovub/report.html> .

***Earning prior experience (PE) points:***  The years in which the Department will assess prior experience are the second, third, and fourth of the 2017–22 cycle (that is, 2018–19, 2019–20, and 2020–21); thus, this year’s report will produce your second PE assessment. **Be sure to keep in mind that, in any of the three assessment years, if your project fails to serve at least 90 percent of the agreed-upon number of students, you will earn no PE points at all for that year.**

***Dropping older participant records from the APR:***  In the past, the Department has required grantees to retain in their data files all student records found in the previous year’s APR.  In the APR web application, we provide a file allowing grantees to download data from the previous year.

Grantees that have participated in VUB for many years—primarily those that held grants in the 2007–12 cycle—are aware that TRIO  has identified a large number of prior-year participant records that the Department no longer needs for PE calculations or for other important measures.  We are continuing to eliminate such records from this year’s download file.  **If one or more of your old records are among those we deleted, you will not be able to report on those specific individuals in 2019-20 or thereafter.**Please see pages 2-5 of the General Instructions, available at <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/triovub/report.html> , for further information.

# **Other important reminders**

***Reminders concerning cohorts (field #38):*** A cohort may be set for a participant only when that person completed the VUB program in one project year and enrolled in a program of postsecondary education no later than the end of the subsequent project year for the first time since completing the VUB program.  Please note that **any participant who completed the program in the 2018-19 project year (field #31, Completion Year = 2018) must have enrolled in postsecondary education by the end of the 2019-20 project year to be counted as a member of a cohort; otherwise, the participant will not qualify for one.** Therefore, you should be sure to ascertain whether these individuals enrolled in postsecondary education before the end of the 2019-20 project year, and, for those that did enroll, **you must report in field #37 the date of first postsecondary school enrollment in the 2019-20 APR.**Such participants who enrolled within the period August 1, 2019 through July 31, 2020 will be members of  the 2019 cohort; those who enrolled within the period August 1--September 30, 2020 will be members of the 2020 cohort. **Also note that all participants who qualify for the 2019 postsecondary enrollment cohort must be reported in the 2019-20 APR; this includes any individuals who completed the VUB program in 2019-20 and enrolled in postsecondary by the end of the 2019-20 academic year, that is, by July 31, 2020.**

***Protecting your participants’ personally identifiable information (PII)****:*The only location in the APR in which you should provide participants’ birth dates is the data file that you will be uploading securely.  **Do not**include PII in such places as the text boxes within the APR website for the Current Participants and Eligibility Status Report and the Critical Fields Verification Report.

***The Help Desk:*** If you encounter technical problems accessing the website or using the web application, please contact the Help Desk by either telephone at (703) 885-8008 or email at generaltrio@collabralink.com. Please note that the Help Desk will try to contact projects within two business days of receiving a telephone call or email. The Help Desk will be available to respond to your questions on weekdays that are not Federal holidays from the “go-live” date of the web application through March 5, 2021. During peak times, it may take longer for you to receive a response; thus, I encourage you to prepare and submit your performance report as soon as you have collected complete data. For any questions regarding the APR requirements, please contact your program specialist directly; to ascertain his or her name, telephone number, and email address, please visit  <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/staffdirectory-cupt.html>.

Thank you for the time and effort you devote to preparing your APR each year and for your commitment to providing complete and accurate data. Please retain source documents in readily accessible form so that they can be verified during an on-site visit.

Sincerely,

Gaby Watts
Director
TRIO Upward Bound and Educational Opportunity Centers Division
Student Service