>> Rachel Anderson: Welcome to today's training on the Case Service Report, RSA-911. Now, this training is specific for VR counselors, but many of you might be in other positions in the agency that can benefit from this training as well. But we wanted to give you a history on why this training even exists. And for those of you that are not involved in the actual implementation of the RSA9-11, I wanted to let you know that RSA and the WINTAC actually started a miniseries, starting back in October of 2019, that went into detail on the expectations of the RSA-911 report and helping agencies prepare for the new 911 that's going to go into effect on July 1 of 2020. So the intended audience of those initial eight trainings was people that are responsible for the data collection and reporting activities, so that might be directors, case management system administrators, policy and training personnel, data analysts, and other related program staff. But if any of you are interested in learning more about the RSA-911 or what is required for VR agencies, feel free to watch those trainings. But the intended audience is not for VR counselors. So after getting a lot of feedback from agencies -- and actually the WINTAC and the RSA had talked about, we felt it would be really important to do this training for VR counselors through their lens. So we're going to try to be transparent in big-picture items on the data collection requirements, but we're also going to maybe explain some details that will help you understand your role in the reporting. So today's objectives are we hope to provide a breakdown of the information that's collected in the case service report, which is the RSA-911. We want to share examples of additional requirements outside of the RSA-911 reporting, source documentation, case notes, those types of things. We also want to provide considerations and expectations. So depending on the policies within your own agency, there's a variety of tools and resources, and there's the need for internal controls. And all of that can shape how you actually report in an RSA-911. So we're going to try to give you as much detail as we can, and hopefully this will help clear up some of the confusion out there. So before we get started, I just want to introduce us as your presenters today. We've got Christopher Pope, who is the chief of the Data Collection and Analysis Unit with Rehabilitation Services Administration, and my name is Rachel Anderson, and I am with the WINTAC, which is the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center. We largely work with administrations in VR to help them implement WIOA. But we often actually come out and do some training and work with some of you as counselors. So hopefully, you know who we are. But if not, there are a lot of good other resources and VR counselor materials on our website if you're interested. So just a little bit of background on me, I've worked in the disability field for about 20 years now, and about ten and a half of those years was working in the Utah VR agency. And I've been with the WINTAC for about the last four to five years. So Chris, do you want to tell everything a little bit about you?

>> Christopher Pope: Yes, sure. Thanks, Rachel. This is Chris Pope with RSA. And like Rachel said, I lead the Data unit at RSA. And when Rachel and I talked about this training, I was excited because I'm a former VR counselor, too. When I was working as a VR counselor, I really didn't know anything about the RSA-911. And so I thought this would be a good way to tie the work that VR counselors are doing every day on the frontlines to some of the data collection and reporting requirements and how that makes its way to RSA and out to the public through the RSA-911. I've been with RSA for eight years, and for the past little over a year I've been chief of the Data unit. And like Rachel said, we've been collaborating with WINTAC on several projects related to data collection and reporting, and a lot of those are posted on RSA's website and WINTAC's website. And Rachel will share more resources with you at the end of this training. So thanks for being here.

>> Rachel Anderson: Thanks, Chris. Okay, so before we actually get into the RSA-911 and kind of the background on that, and where all the reporting requirements come from, we wanted to set the stage to really talk about the intent of the VR program. So sometimes there does seem like there's a disconnect between all the reporting requirements that we have and the true intent of the program, so we thought we would start here. So under the regulations, the foundation of the VR program is the principle that individuals with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, are capable of achieving high-quality, competitive integrated employment, when provided the necessary services and support. To increase the employment of individuals with disabilities, in the competitive integrated labor market, the workforce system, which includes the VR program, must provide individuals with disabilities opportunities to participate in job-driven training and to pursue high-quality employment outcomes. So there are a lot of different requirements under the Rehab Act that actually lead us to employment outcomes for the individuals that VR serves. Some of that gets reported in the RSA-911, and some of that actually lives through other ways in your agency, like your policies, your procedures, how your case management systems are set up, in your case files, or in case notes in your case management systems. So there's a lot of things that are going on in the VR program as a whole. And today we're just going to talk about the RSA-911, which is where you report everything that is happening for individuals who are receiving services from VR. So through the 911 is how you're actually going to show what services and supports were provided to help individuals access job-driven trainings, and to pursue high-quality employment outcomes. Under WIOA, a lot of things changed. We're going to talk about some of them as it relates to reporting and the RSA-911. But prior to WIOA, we were always looking at employment outcomes. That's been the goal of the VR program forever. So that hasn't changed. But how we look at the definition of jobs might have changed a little bit. So under WIOA, we're not just looking at whether somebody holds a job for at least 90 days to be determined successful. Now we're really putting a focus on the jobs actually being careers, and what skills and training they receive through the VR program that actually help them get to that career goal; what services helped increase their long-term success; and then also all of the services and supports that were provided to help somebody actually be self-sufficient, so they're not having to continue going and getting services from agencies all of the time, but they can actually work, and live, and pay their bills, and have that long-term success. So the way that we wait our employment outcomes might be a little bit stronger under WIOA. Because of that, you know, on July 1 of 2017, many of you felt a lot of additional requirements for data collection and reporting. Some of that is due to WIOA and that we have a different -- actually not even a different focus, but just more of an enhanced focus of things we're looking at. So we are going to get into some of the specifics of the RSA-911, just so you understand how all the work that you do and all the services that you provide to individuals with disabilities actually get to the federal government, and how it's used. And we're also going to give you some examples of how all of this connects under WIOA. So with that said, I'm going to hand it over to Chris. And Chris is going to start just giving us some information on the Case Service Report itself. So Chris, I'll hand it over to you.

>> Christopher Pope: Thanks, Rachel. So the 911 is an information collection request. RSA manages about a dozen information collection requests. And all of our information collections are approved by the Office of Management and Budgets, which is a component of the Executive Office of the president, sort of leads the Executive Branch and Management and Financial Affairs. When RSA develops an information collection, it's assigned a number. So we have the RSA-911. The RSA-911 has been around for a long time. And it was in place before September 11th, 2001. Unfortunately, after the events of September 11th, OMB and the department looked into changing the name and the numbering of this information collection, and it wasn't feasible. So we're more or less continuing the use of the moniker, but please rest assured that it has nothing to do with September 11th. Really, the purpose of this information collection is to tell the story of the VR program. It talks about all of the services VR agencies provide individuals with disabilities. And then it -- like what Rachel has talked about, it describes the outcomes, both educational and employment related, that people who our program services obtain, at the time that they exit the program and then following those people after they've exited the program. RSA uses data that we obtain through this collection for lots of different purposes. We report this data to Congress, to the President, and to other oversight bodies, like the general -- the GAO, General Administrative Office -- I'm sorry, the General Accountability Office, and other entities in the federal government. We also use the data that we collect through the 911 to calculate performance measures of the VR program. And you'll see here some information on the slide about Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act, which aligns with Section 116 of Title I of WIOA, which is where it lays out the common performance measures for the VR program and other workforce development programs. And we'll talk more about those measures as we go. So on the next slide, we share -- we talk about other ways that we use the data. If you've ever been a part of an RSA monitoring review onsite or either remotely, you've heard RSA using 911 data in those reviews. We use 911 data to provide technical assistance to help RSA plan for the program, and to help agencies at the state level plan for the operations of their programs, whether that's in regards to service delivery or preparing budgets. We exchange data with the Social Security Administration, because that's required by the Rehabilitation Act. So we provide SSA with information about participants being served by VR agencies to assist the Social Security Administration with their research activities for those VR program participants who are receiving Social Security benefits. And finally, we share 911 data with a wide variety of researchers at the university in think tank levels for their disability-related research reports and analyses. In short, we use 911 data for lots of different reasons. And it's important that we're receiving data that's, you know, accurate and reliable so that we can tell the full story of the VR program and all the good work you as VR counselors are doing. So like I mentioned, the 911 has been around for a long time, but we're going to talk about the two most recent versions of the 911. And on this slide, you can see that when RSA implements an information collection, we typically do that by issuing what we call "policy directive". So in -- several months ago we implemented RSA PD 16-04. And that was our first iteration of the information collection that aligned with WIOA reporting requirements. So that went into effect on July 1st, 2017, like Rachel mentioned, and it will remain in place until the end of June of 2020. So we'll have used this 911 for three program years. Under that first 911 that aligned with WIOA, we began collecting quarterly information from VR agencies. We also began collecting information about all of the WIOA performance measures, and began tracking individuals who participated in the program following their exit from the program. It was a significant shift in data collection and reporting that was required to align with the new statutory provisions and the law. We are about to implement a new version of the RSA-911. In May of 2019, we signaled that beginning in program year 20, which starts on July 1st, 2020, we have revised the 911 to more align with WIOA and clean up some of the information we had in collecting. All the information collections, they're approved by OMD, expire at some point. And when expiration comes due, agencies like RSA have to think about how we're going to improve upon the collection for the future. So that usually means making changes to information collection. And that's what we've done with the new PD 19-03 that goes into effect in a couple months in July. So on the next slide, we highlight some of the changes we made to the 911 at the high level. We talk here about having deleted 94 data elements from the old version of the 911. We added 14 new data elements to the revised 911. So this resulted in a net gain of 80 fewer data elements on the 911; which is a good thing because it means less reporting burden. We also changed the layout of the RSA-911 to live more in like an Excel-base style documents. Prior to Excel, the 911 has only existed in more or less a Word format, so we hope that this Excel-based format is easier for agencies to use. We updated the appendices to the 911. There -- of which there are six. And we made the corresponding changes in the actual information collection to adhere to what we've added or deleted. So deleted elements will be reported as blank, and then the new elements we've added have been added to the end of the information collection. On this slide, we talk about the reporting period. As you may know, RSA issues federal grant awards on the federal fiscal year basis, which is October 1st through September 30th. The WIOA performance accountability provisions, however, require data collection and reporting on the program year, which begins July 1st and goes through June 30th of every year. So the federal fiscal year and the WIOA program year are about one quarter disaligned. So it means you have to take three quarters of a program year and the first quarter of the next program year to arrive at a full fiscal year. It's important to think about, but at the VR counselor level these types of things probability don't affect your day-to-day service delivery with participants. But the program year is what we use and what you'll see RSA-911 data published based upon into the program year. So I mentioned quarterly reporting. And on this slide, we talk about when those quarterly reports come to RSA from VR agencies. So quarterly reports are due to RSA 45 days after the end of each quarter in the program year. So for example, the first quarter report is due to RSA November 15th, just 45 days after the quarter ends on September 30th. The advantage of quarterly reporting is having access to more real-time data, and the ability to use that data for program improvement and performance analyses. So we hope that this new reporting structure being on a quarterly basis provides agencies more opportunities to analyze their data, to identify data anomalies or errors, and to correct that data in subsequent reports. So how does all of this information make it onto the RSA-911 quarterly reports? VR counselors play a significant role in that. VR counselors and other direct line staff, in other words, create the bulk of information that lands on the 911 report. And you do this through your work with your clients, by collecting information from them, reporting information about their progress in their VR program, and ultimately entering that into a case management system that generates the 911 report. VR agencies then at the end of the quarter upload those reports or files to RSA through our website. We check for data errors or issues in the file. And then files are ultimately uploaded successfully. So while it might seem like a distant exercise, VR counselors have a direct role in the information that comes to RSA on the 911, and this is how it happens, through your data collection and reporting through the case management system, and then ultimately by being uploaded to RSA through our websites. So where does all of this information that comes to RSA -- why is it required? So the Rehabilitation Act, either explicitly or implicitly, requires that this information be collected by RSA for participation in the VR program and the support of employment programs. In addition, like I've mentioned, Section 116 of WIOA requires data be reported to us so that we can analyze performance in alignment with those common performance measures that are outlined in the law. And you see here that we've talked about how the VR program is one of the six core programs. The other six core programs in the -- the other five core programs in the workforce development system are also collecting and reporting this data so that all of the programs can report on progress with these measures. And finally -- and we'll talk a little bit more about this later, the 911 collects information about the characteristics of the people with disabilities who the VR program is serving. And one of those characteristics is, "Are those barriers to employment that participants in the VR program may be facing?" And like I mentioned, we'll talk more about that soon. So I'll hand things over to Rachel to provide even more context about the 911.

>> Rachel Anderson: Thanks, Chris. So continuing the requirements of the data, there are a couple of other things we wanted to make sure you understood. So there are different types, or levels, or places in the 911 that are dependent on where the person is in the process. So specific -- now all the WIOA core programs report on both reportable individuals and program participants. So for purposes of the VR program, a reportable individual is an individual who has applied for VR services, but not yet met the definition of a participant, which I'll talk about in a second; and also students with disabilities receiving pre-employment transition services prior to applying and being determined eligible through VR services and having an approved IPE. So those are your potentially eligible students with disabilities. So a program participant is an individual who has an approved IPE and has began receiving services. So big picture, anyone that is -- prior to having an assigned IPE in place -- so they've applied for VR services, they've been determined eligible, and together you've developed an IPE, it's signed by both you and the individuals with disability, and they began receiving services under that IPE, that means they meet the definition of a participant. Anyone prior to that definition is a reportable individual; so again, your potentially eligible students with disabilities, applicants, folks that you're working on a comprehensive assessment of needs just developing the IPE, they're all reportable individuals. That's really important to know because reportable individuals have a set of data elements that you have to collect and report on them. And once someone becomes a program participant, there are a lot more requirements that you have as a VR counselor and that Agency has on reporting what happens to those participants; one of those being once an individual becomes a participant of the VR program, that person may be included in the WIOA performance indicators. So that's why as they're an IPE and they're receiving services, that's why it's really key, for example, that you document that they are enrolled in training programs, that you are documenting measurable skill gains, you're documenting credentials, and a variety of other things that are happening, because that person could be included in the performance indicators. So we want to just give a couple of brief examples of a reportable individual versus a potentially -- or a participant, and give you a little bit more information on specifically what's reported in the RSA-911. So this is James, our example of a reportable individual. James is a student with a disability who is potentially eligible for the VR program. The VR counselor collected a referral and a consent form from the school and parent, verifying that he needed self-advocacy and job exploration counseling services. So the VR agency is required to collect and report the reportable individual and pre-employment transition services data elements. The VR agency is responsible for the collection of source documentation, time allocations, and other requirements related to the provision of pre-employment transition services required by the Rehab Act. However, only a portion of this is collected in the RSA-911 report. So this next slide, this is kind of just a snapshot of some of the information included in the RSA-911 report. Now, as a VR counselor, it's not your job to really understand the data elements that Chris and I keep talking about. All of those numbers are built into your case management system. So what you have to know is what status the individual is in or what page in your case management system you have to enter this information. So oftentimes it's your application page, or maybe your O2 status, depending on your case management system. And that's where you have to document the Social Security number, the date of birth, the sex, et cetera. So and a lot of that is from the application. So the application doesn't get reported to RSA, but much of the information that's collected in your application and then entered into your case management system is coming from the RSA-911 report. So on this slide with the -- we have the reportable individual requirements. So you have to report the unique identifier. This is something that actually gets auto-generated from your case management system. So I would think that none of you are required to come up with a unique identifier, but you do have to enter the social, the date of birth, the sex, the race, and ethnicity of the individual. And then in James' case, because he was a potentially eligible student with a disability, you also have to report Data Element 22, verifying that he is a student with a disability, and then also the start date of the pre-employment transition services, and then any of the applicable data elements for the five required pre-employment transition services. Next I want to give you an example of a participant. So Candace was found eligible for the VR program due to a cognitive and a psychological disorder. Her IPE goal is to become an accountant. She is almost finished completing her training program at the local university, while continuing active participation in her restoration services. So again, the VR agency is required to collect and report the participant and career and training services data elements for Candace. We're going to get into that in a little bit more later on in the presentation, so we'll come back to that. And then the VR agency is responsible for the collection of source documentation, case notes, eligibility determination, signed IPEs, and other requirements related to the provision of VR services required by the Rehab Act. However, only a portion of this is collected in the actual RSA-911 report. Because Candace is a participant, her outcomes may be included in the WIOA performance measures. So just wanted to re-emphasize that once someone becomes a participant, the requirements kind of greatly increase when it comes from the reporting perspective. So just another example of the data elements that might be applicable to Candace. So she's -- you have to report all the reportable individual data elements; so again the unique identifier, Social Security number, date of birth, sex, race, ethnicity. And then now that she's also a participant, you have additional things that you have to report; so the application date, the eligibility date, the IPE date, and start of initial VR services on or after the IPE. Then we get to the career or training services. So we're going to get into a little bit more detail in the future, but all of the VR services are identified as either a career service, a training service, or other services. So for Candace, it might be likely that she receives VR counseling and guidance, accounting tuition fees and books, including the measurable skill gains that she achieved along the way, and then also restoration services, so maybe counseling, maybe medications, and also maybe accommodations through her training program. So there's a variety of services that she might have received that are also reported in the RSA-911. Okay, I'm going to hand it over to Chris just to quickly go over our next topic. There's a lot more going on for the VR program than just the Rehab Act or WIOA. So Chris is going to touch on internal controls and data validation.

>> Christopher Pope: Thanks, Rachel. So like I mentioned, RSA has about a dozen different information collections. And all of those information collections require internal controls and some level of data validation to assure that the information being reported through them is accurate and valid. So the same is true for the RSA-911. It has internal control requirements. On the next slide you'll see that internal controls really mean any process system implemented by a nonfederal entity, like a VR agency, that are designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of objectives in these three categories of effectiveness and efficiency of operations, the reliability of reporting for internal and external use, how reliable that data is that's being reported, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. So we -- on the next slide, we talk about how in accordance with VR program regulations and with uniform guidance regulations, VR agencies must implement policies and procedures that are their internal controls, that ensure the proper and efficient administration of the program, so that they can carry out all of the necessary functions of the program. So when it comes to internal controls for the 911, RSA asks VR agencies to develop controls that ensure that the data collection system that the state has can capture and report all of the required data elements that we're talking about on this webinar; that the VR agency has trained tasks, like VR counselors, to ensure that those data elements are collected and reported accurately; and processes to ensure that the data that is being submitted is accurate and valid. Agencies accomplish these requirements in a variety of ways. There is no one set of internal controls that work for all agencies. In other words, these things must be contextual. They have to be specific to the state, and to the program, and maybe even different aspects of the program may have different internal controls. So some examples of RSA-911 internal controls could be about VR services. So like Rachel mentioned, VR agencies report all VR services provided to participants on the 911. And so an agency may say that they're going to have controls in place to ensure that all of those services are reported when they happen, by whom they're provided, how much those services they have cost. They may have information such as requiring like case notes or other records for people so that only those services that have been provided are reported. Those that have not yet been provided to the persons are not reported as an example of an internal control. Another example might be that a VR agency implements policies and procedures to ensure the accurate tracking in reporting of progress made in an educational program. And that's important because it fulfills requirements for two of the WIOA common performance measures, measurable skill gains and the credential attainment rate. So then the internal control might help the agency ensure that it's submitting the information about all students in educational or training programs who make progress or earn a recognized credential to ensure that all of that information gets reported on the 911. Another example of an internal control might be related to the provision of pre-employment transition services. The internal control may be in place to ensure that only those individuals who meet the definition of a student with a disability are provided pre-employment transition services. And having internal control would be important because the Rehabilitation Act requires that those kinds of services can only be required -- can only be provided to a subset of the people a VR agency is serving. So that's a little -- a couple examples of internal controls. There are many more. And like I mentioned, your VR agency probably has several policies, procedures, or rules in place that constitute its internal controls for data collection and reporting. So switching gears a little bit, we're kind of continuing in the vain of reporting accurate and reliable data. WIOA requires data validation on many of the data elements that are collected, because they're required by the law. The Department of Education and the Department of Labor issued policy guidance together about guidelines for data validation so that all workforce development programs have a sense of what's the minimum amount of data elements that must be validated by grantees across the workforce development system. And we did that through a document a couple years ago; and it's listed here. So really like I mentioned, the purpose of data validation is to verify that the information being reported is valid, it's accurate, it's reliable. Data validation also helps VR agencies identify anomalies or other errors in the data that could cause inaccurate reporting. Data validation also outlines source documentation requirements for some of the data elements. And data validation helps improve performance accountability recording, because that validation ensures that the information being reported is accurate and reliable. And like I mentioned, your source documentation is required for VR agencies to validate data being reported on the RSA-911. An example of that might be a transcript or a report card from a student who is pursuing his or her high school diploma. Source documentation might be an unemployment insurance wage record that substantiates an individual's employment at the time they're exiting the program or following their exit from the program. If you're interested in learning more about source documentation, there are a lot of resources out there through RSA and the WINTAC, and I would encourage you to check those out. So I'm going to hand things back over to Rachel to talk a little bit more about the structure of the 911 and other related 911 issues.

>> Rachel Anderson: Thanks, Chris. Now, to start we're going to give you the structure and the expectations of the RSA-911. I'm trying -- I'm going to try to point out how this might look through the VR counselor lens. But keep in mind because you all have different case management systems that your agencies use, this might function a little bit differently, or it might not be exactly how I'm describing it here. But it is important for you to know the overall expectations under the RSA-911. So first of all, there are three types of VR services outlined in the RSA-911. I mentioned this earlier in our examples. We've got career services and training services. Now, these are both reported in the WIOA and your report, which we're going to talk about later on as well. And then we've got other services. So the other services are VR services that support career and training services. So those might be things like maintenance services or transportation in order for someone to participate in a training or a career service. If any of you want to learn more information about all the different services that VR provides and how they are categorized, we added another link here for you that you can -- it's Attachment Seven Table D of RSA-TAC-17-01. So feel free to look at that. But again, it's speaking through RSA-911 data element language, so it might not make total sense to the VR counselor. But I think you will understand, "Oh, well, that's where I document it in my case management system." So we just want to share that with you for more information. There are also various points during the VR process when different data elements are required to be collected and reported. So in the RSA-911, you've got application data elements, you've got a variety of pre-employment transition services data elements for potentially eligible; and if you're receiving those services under an IPE, we've got eligibility data elements. And then order of selection for those of you that are on an order of selection, we've got disability data elements; so those include things like your primary and secondary disability codes; trial work experience for anytime that is applicable to a person; and then anything under your individualized plans for employment. Then we've got our training services, our career services, other services. We've also got your measurable skill gains. There's also everywhere that -- all of the different types of credentials that you can obtain that you're documenting; also the employment outcomes, all of the information that outlines that you've met the VR regulations for someone exiting the program, so when you're getting ready to close their case, and then all of the post-exit data elements that are new under WIOA. So Chris mentioned this a little bit, but after we close someone's case or they exit the VR program, if they are going to be included in the WIOA performance measures, we have to report on them for six additional quarters post-exit. So there are a variety of data elements that are required for that purpose. Now, in order to provide a VR service, they can be provided in three different ways. So the first one is they can be provided by VR agency staff in-house. So that's anytime the VR agency is providing a service directly. So you as a VR counselor, if you are providing VR counseling and guidance, or referral and information, or maybe you're providing job assistance, all of those services need to be reported to RSA in the RSA-911 as a service that you've provided. Also, there might be different departments within your agency that are also in-house. So you might refer someone to an in-house benefits planner, or maybe some of the blind agencies you might have your disability skills training programs that are in-house. So every agency does this a little bit differently. But hopefully that gives you an idea of provided by agency staff. Also, they can be -- VR services can be provided through VR agency purchase. So most of you are familiar with this. You are usually having to generate an authorization for the service and identifying the vendor and the cost associated with it. And the third way is services can be provided through comparable benefits -- comparable services and benefit providers. So we wanted to give you an example of this. You know, actually, before I do that, I wanted to mention that -- and Chris, I don't know if you want to jump in this at all, but we see across the country that overwhelmingly we see VR agency staff and comparable services get underreported the most. VR agency purchase, that one is usually pretty on point because you're -- you have a bunch of other requirements in order to pay for a service, in your case management system, in your policies, in your approval levels, depending on, you know, your training or however your agency has that outlined. But, you know, VR struggles a little bit in giving you some credit for all of the services that you're providing; or if someone is accessing a service through a comparable benefit, that is helping them achieve their IPE goal. So I just wanted to put a plug out there that make sure you really understand how you report the services you're providing and comparable services in the RSA-911. Chris, do you have anything to add to that?

>> Christopher Pope: Yes. Yes, I appreciate that plug, Rachel. And I think that's true, especially for the comparable benefits. Even though the VR agency may not be providing the service in-house or purchasing it through a vendor or a school, the VR counselor may have invested a lot of time and energy in securing the comparable benefit for the client. For example, college, even though a VR agency can't provide that service as an agency, and may not be purchasing the service because the student received funding through another entity, the VR agency and the counselor are likely pretty involved in that student pursuing his or her degree program. So when we look at the 911 data, we want to see all of that effort and time reflected because the coordination of that service still counts, and it still helps us tell a story of the VR program. So I second that, Rachel, and thank you for bringing it up.

>> Rachel Anderson: Thanks, Chris. Okay, we also wanted to just give you an example of how the services are reported. So we're using benefits counseling as an example. So like I said before, you know, in the VR counselor world -- and Chris and I can both attest to this too from being VR counselors, you don't speak in data elements speak like we are today. So we just want to make sure that you understand how all the work that you're doing in your case management system actually feeds into the report. So when you are providing a service in one or more ways, there are a variety of elements that get reported in the RSA-911. So if you are providing benefits counseling in-house by the VR agency staff, that would be Data Element 268. So you're simply telling RSA we provided this service and we did it in-house by one of our agency staff. The next one, through agency purchase there are a couple of additional things you have to tell RSA. So Data Element 269 says that yes, we provided benefits counseling to this person through agency purchase. So we completed a purchase order a service authorization, whatever your agency calls, it to provide that service. Then we also have to tell them, under Data Element 270, that the benefits counseling was purchased by what kind of provider. So that's where you're giving them a little bit more information of who the vendor is and the provider type. And then lastly in Data Element 271, you're telling them the amount of VR funds that were expended on that particular service. And then when you're providing services through the comparable benefits, you -- it's -- there's no cost associated with that one in the RSA-911. You generally do provide an estimated cost in your IPE, but that's not actually getting reported in the RSA-911. So what's being reported here is that you -- first of all, you're providing the service through a comparable benefit, and then secondly, who the provider type is. Okay, so there's a couple of things we just wanted to point out and just give emphasis in some of your work as a VR counselor. It is really important to follow your agency policies and procedures and understand how to document services in your case management system. I know that seems basic, but it's important, because like Chris was saying before, the requirements in the quarterly reporting, we've moved to a world where we're essentially telling RSA through the RSA-911 report everything that happened with a person during a certain timeframe, which is a quarter. So when it comes to service provisions, it's really important to understand that we have to tell RSA everything that was provided or everything that happened to that individual within that certain timeframe. So we're not usually reporting services when an IPE is developed. You're not reporting those services when an IPE is amended or services are added. That's because, as you know, your IPE is a plan for services, all of the services or support needs that the individual might have in order to successfully reach their IPE goal. But then we also have to have another way to report that any or all of those services were actually provided to the individual. It's also not reported when agencies authorize for a VR service. So again, there's a lot of behind the scenes things that happen with your case management system, but it's very important for you to really understand, "What functions do I have to actually follow that get the services reported in the right way?" So just keep that in mind. Some of you might have a quarterly form that you have to complete on all clients. Some of you might have an actual service that you have to actually go in and say, "I provided this today." So again, just making sure you understand that you really need to follow your own agency's policies and procedures on that one. Okay, so just an example, we wanted to show, too, that there -- another important aspect is making sure that when services are provided in multiple quarters they actually cover all of those quarters. So we don't want to just report to RSA that a service started in August if it's continuing over the next couple of quarters. So as an example, a student with a disability who's receiving pre-employment transition services, they -- let's say they received a work-based learning experience. And the work-based learning experience was over the summertime and it was for a week program. So it started on June 17th of 2019, and it ended on July 12th of 2019. So that service actually crossed over two different reporting quarters. So the VR service began in program year 18 fourth quarter, and it ended in program year 19 first quarter. So the work-based learning experience really has to be reported in both of those quarters, not just that it started in program year 18 quarter four. We want to make sure that you are reporting all quarters that a service was provided in. Again, just want to plug again, make sure you're following your own agency's policy and procedures on that. And if you're not sure that you are actually doing something some correctly or you even know where those functions, make sure you ask for support in that, because this is a really important area in the RSA-911 reporting. And this is just a -- I want to end with an example. This is our participant who is in an IPE; so this is Samuel. And he's engaging in pre-employment transition services, some career services, and some training services. So in his first quarter -- maybe this is the first quarter of program year 19, so that would be July 1st through September 30th of 2019 to start. He was receiving VR counseling and guidance by you as the VR counselor, so that's reported as an in-house service. He also was receiving job exploration counseling. And for this agency, they provide their pre-employment transition services through vendors. So this was a purchased service for Samuel. And then also, he's engaging in some restoration services that are also purchased through an outside vendor. So all three of those services would be reported in that first quarter report. Now, if Samuel had actually -- came in, maybe you developed an IPE and started providing services, but then you never hear from Samuel again, even though you planned those IPE services, he may not have actually received any of those in that quarter. So that's just an example of why it's important to really know what's happening with all of our participants during each quarter while they're with the program. So then in the second quarter he continued to receive VR counseling and guidance, but now he moved to another pre-emp service, which is workplace readiness training, which was also purchased. And also because he was getting closer to work, they also referred him for benefits counseling. So that was an additional service that was provided in the second quarter. Then the third quarter happens, and again VR counseling and guidance is continuing. He's also engaging in additional or continued restoration services. And now he's also engaged in an on-the-job training. Now, this on-the-job training was actually in collaboration with the VR agency and through a vendor, so it's being reported as an in-house service and a purchased service. And on-the-job training opportunity actually started in the third quarter. And then by the time we get to the fourth quarter, about a year later, Samuel's still receiving VR counseling and guidance. None of the other services are being reported anymore because they have completed. But we're continuing to provide on-the-job training support, therefore reporting that in the fourth quarter. Okay, so we've got a couple of other VR things that we just want to make sure that you understand. Because it's not just -- it gets confusing I think sometimes on WIOA requirements versus the Rehab Act and the VR requirements. And we actually have to answer to both. So because sometimes they align; sometimes they are separate things. But we just wanted to point out a couple of other key data points particular to the VR program. So timeframes; you know that the Rehab Act does tell us that we have 60 days to make a determination of eligibility. We have 90 days to develop an IPE. And someone has to be working a minimum of 90 days in employment in order for their case to be closed successful, amongst a variety of other things. So RSA-911 is actually how we tell RSA that you've met those requirements under the Rehab Act and the regulation. So it's very important that with your real-time reporting of services, you also make sure that these timeframes are being met. This is why also it's very key that you take advantage of the extensions, you know, for 60-day eligibility or for 90-day for IPE, because all of that is actually going to be reported and we want to make sure that we're meeting that expectation under the regulations. Also, there's VR source documentation. So we talked a lot about source documentation and data validation from WIOA's perspective and the joint partners. But there's -- and Chris gave a couple of these examples. But these are some of the key points in the VR system that we have to have that source documentation in addition to what gets reported in the RSA-911. So some examples of that are date of application. You're reporting the date of application, but you also have to have that application with signed dates that match what you put in the RSA-911. And that would live in your -- through your case files. Other things are paystubs or eligibility letters, your signed IPEs. So there are a lot of additional source documentation that's required for VR; and it's how you validate some of this information. So one other example, when you're closing somebody's case as successfully employed, you have to have source documentation to show what their hourly wages are at exit. You have to really show how do you know that they're really working? How do you know that they're employed? How do you know their wages? How do you know how many hours they're working? So all of that is going to live in your case management system or your case files. And then just the two -- on these two slides I'm just going to go pretty quickly, but it is hard to understand the difference between the RSA-911 and your case management system. I've talked to many VR counselors out there that have worked in VR programs in different states. So sometimes you can see those differences based on working with different agencies. But when you've only worked in VR in your agency, it's kind of hard to see the connection. So the RSA-911 only collects a certain type of information, but your case management system collects much, much more because it has a different purpose. So your case management system, here are some examples of what it does for you and your organization; but definitely this is not exhaustive. So it organizes your client files. So it really keeps a historical record. It organizes all the IPE requirements, your confidential records that you have for individuals. Another example, you might report your primary and secondary disability codes, but you don't actually report those confidential records to actually talk about the person's personal information and their disability. Also, you're going to have things like approval levels and the case notes that tell the story of the case. Case management systems also provide an electronic workflow. It also provides you the ability to manage deadlines. This can be federal, state, supervision, a variety of different deadlines. It also manages your billing, your invoices, your fiscal management needs. And then it's also a collection of all the communication. So this can be communication between you and your clients, you and vendors, supervisors, schools, maybe even CAP, or appeals can be in there. And then also generally they provide some support in data analytics, gives you some real-time updates when things change like the 911 requirements, quick access to data, and then also it can be used for agencies to analyze the effectiveness of their employees. So you often see expectations of your reporting and your employment -- your employee performance evaluations. This is just a brief example really quickly to show that there are a lot of other things you have to do in addition to the 911, so just kind of in summary of what we've been talking about. But you've got case notes, form letters, source documentation. All of these things not included in the RSA-911 report. But many of these are used to tell or say that something happened for an individual. So a participant is attending postsecondary training, for example, under an IPE. The agency requires that transcripts are uploaded into the case management system, or copies are kept in the hard case file to show that the individual has passed all of their classes. It's also used to show that they are making progress toward their credential and IPE goal. And it also shows that taxpayer funds are being used in accordance with policy, and measurable skill gains are being made. The VR counselor is required to document case notes along the way to tell the story of the case. So in that scenario, I think that most of you can probably relate to that, that there are a lot of different purposes for our documentation. But what actually gets reported in the RSA-911 report are the services provided, the date of IPE, the enrollment date of the training program, the date of the MSG, and the date of the credential attainment. WIOA and the Rehab Act require additional documentation that's not reported in the RSA-911. However, all of these requirements must be met. Okay, after that I'm going to turn it over to Chris. He's going to talk more about the WIOA reporting requirements.

>> Christopher Pope: Thanks, Rachel. So like there are reporting requirements that stem from the Rehabilitation Act, many of these requirements stem from WIOA. So on this slide here, we're listing all of those comments performance measures we've been referencing and mentioning that the 911 collects, the data needed to report on these indicators. So there are three really related to employment status after the individual exits the VR program. That's the employment rate in the second quarter, in fourth quarter after exit, and the median earnings in the second quarter after exit. The next two, credential attainment rate and measurable skill gains rate are related to progress that individuals make while they are pursuing their credential, or when they have actually obtained that credential. And the last indicator is related to effectiveness in serving employers, so the statewide measure of all of the core programs' efforts to engage with business in the state. So the 911 collects all of the information that we need to report on the VR program for measures one through five, as listed on the slide. So the 911, as we've mentioned, also collects information about people the VR agencies are serving. And we call those "participant characteristics". Some of those things might be like age, race, ethnicity, as Rachel mentioned. But they also collect new requirements that WIOA has labeled "barriers to employment". Having a disability is considered a barrier to employment under WIOA. Being homeless is a barrier to employment. Being a single parent or a displaced homemaker is also considered to be a barrier. So all of them are listed here. And RSA obtains the information about participants in the VR program and their barriers through the 911. It's important that we receive this information because RSA uses it as we build what's called "statistical adjustments models". And these models are used to predict performance on the WIOA indicators. So on this next slide, we have some details here about the statistical adjustment model and it talks about how these models are regression models that are used to estimate performance levels, or predict future performance. We also use these models to adjust negotiated levels of performance. So we use the model before the program year begins to arrive at predictions of where performance is going to be. After the program year ends, we run the model again to adjust for characteristics of the participants who were served in that program year, and the economy in that program year, to arrive at what we call an "adjustment factor" that will account for any changes in participant mix, or any changes in the economy. Those economic conditions might -- do look at unemployment rates and job gains or losses in particular industries. So the statistical adjustment model is required by WIOA, and it's one of the good things because it allows RSA and state to factor in real-life things that might be happening in the state when we take a look at whether a state met or did not meet the performance goals established. So the 911 also helps RSA understand the extent to which VR program participants might be enrolled in other core programs. So in this slide, we have laid out the information it collects for co-enrollment. So we look at whether a VR program participant may be enrolled in the adult education program under Title II of WIOA. We may have a student with a disability who is also receiving services from Title I of WIOA in their youth program. So we look at -- we obtain that information through the 911 and we report that in an annual report at the end of the year. And that's our segue to the next content Rachel and I wanted to share with you, some details about those WIOA annual reports. So these reports are due after the program year ends to RSA by October 1st. And they include four quarters' worth of RSA-911 data. And we aggregate that over the course of the year and populate that into these annual reports. So you'll see on this slide that the annual report is actually one of the information collections that's managed by our federal partners at the Department of Labor. However, all of the core programs in the Workforce Development system use it, including the VR program in our Department of Education. So WIOA requires that RSA and the Department make available performance reports for each VR program at the state level, and a national summary of the VR program across the country at the end of each program year. When we do that, RSA publishes these annual reports on our website, and we transmit letters to Congress to inform them that these reports are available, that they may assess the progress and performance of the VR program. So at that point, they sort of take a sort of national outlook and a more formal type of outlook than we've had to do in the past with other reporting requirements. So now on the next slide it outlines where we are with those WIOA annual reports as of now. We have published two sets of WIOA annual reports. So for the first time in program year 17, which is when we had begun collecting WIOA data, we published an annual report that included performance information on just one of the WIOA indicators that was measurable skill gains, rates. Just this spring, in the spring of 2020, we published our second set of WIOA annual reports for program year 2018. And those reports included performance data for three of the WIOA indicators, measurable skill gains, again, for the second time, and for the first time, information about employment in the second quarter after exit. So those two other indicators, employment rate and median earnings in the second quarter after exit, were included in the program year of 2018 reports. In program year 19, which is about to wrap up at the end of June 2020, we will publish performance results for all five of the WIOA indicators in the program year '19 reports, with the exception of the effectiveness in serving employers measure because that performance indicator is still being piloted by the departments. So we've talked a little bit about these performance indicators and how we use that statistical model to adjust for them, and how we publish all of this data in reports and we send it to Congress. And the other side of this is what's called the "negotiations and sanctions process". So WIOA outlined several new requirements for performance accountability. We implemented those provisions and regulations. In just this past winter, RSA and the other federal agencies issued joint policy guidance that explains those regulations and those processes the departments will follow in implementing them. So the joint guidance on negotiations and sanctions really outlines two things. It talks about how we will establish negotiated levels of performance with WIOA core programs, and it described the instances in which a state or state programs might be sanctioned for failure to report or failure to meet the levels of performance as adjusted. Right now in the spring of 2020, RSA is negotiating performance levels with VR agencies for one indicator, because we have enough baseline data to establish those levels. So for program year 20 and program year 21, RSA is in the process of negotiating performance levels for measureable skill gains. All of the other performance measures for program year 20 and 21 will remain a baseline. We won't establish performance targets for those other measures. However, in the next two-year patch of the state plan, for program year 22 and program year 23, RSA plans to negotiate performance levels for all five of the WIOA indicators for the VR program specifically. So earlier, I mentioned sanctions, and this slide describes what we're actually talking about when we talk about a sanction. The term "sanction" is a monetary sanction. And it refers to a reduction in the governor's discretionary funds by five percent of the maximum available amount in the program year. So this is the governor's discretionary funds for workforce development activities in his or her state. Keep in mind that these funds are awarded to the governor and his or her state, under Title I of WIOA. These are not VR program funds awarded to state VR agencies through the VR support of employment grant awards. However, if these funds were sanctioned, and ultimately reduced, it's not just the detriment to the Title I program, it affects all statewide initiatives related to the workforce development system, and may very well negatively impact all partners, including the VR agency. So while the monetary sanction doesn't affect the bottom line of the VR program funding, it does affect the state funding. And the perspective, at least among federal partners and we think states, is that VR programs don't want to be in that position of being the cause for such sanction and reduction in funds. So I'm going to turn things back over to Rachel to wrap things up.

>> Rachel Anderson: Thanks so much, Chris. And, you know, I really wanted to make sure that everyone had an overall understanding of the big picture of the RSA-911 requirements. Chris, you mentioned this before, and I just -- I remember being a VR counselor and just doing the best I could to serve people. And that was really my goal, and I think most people's intent. However, you know, when my case management system -- or when I didn't understand a certain requirement, I would do things to the best of my ability following policies and documenting what was accurate, but I didn't understand the depth of the information. I didn't understand once it left my desk -- or the impact it had on the VR program either at the statewide level or even national level. So we're really hoping that this kind of paints that bigger picture for you and connects some of the dots, and really emphasizes those key places where what you're entering in your case management system for every individual you're serving really truly matters. And some of it does have huge implications, depending on the person's circumstances. So I think we really respect and understand that data collection and reporting seems to be taking over a lot of the VR counselors' role. And we're hoping that just the more we get used to it, the more our case management systems develop, and the more we know how all of this connects, I think that the burden will feel less and less as well; and in addition to some of the changes RSA is making like taking away some of the duplicative things that you're required to do right now. So I just know that myself, I would have been a much more well-rounded VR counselor had I really understood the big picture of the RSA-911. So okay so after today we're hoping that you have a better understanding of the information that's collected in the RSA-911 report. We also hope that you have at least a basic understanding of the additional requirements outside of the RSA-911. We wanted to make it clear that just because something doesn't happen to get reported in the RSA-911 doesn't mean it's not required. Those source documentation and data validation examples that we provided, and some of the timelines, all of those are tied to regulations and expectations under the Rehab Act under the law, so they're still very, very important. And then we hope that you understand the various considerations and expectations for all the VR programs, including all the policies that you have to have. And, you know, some states are still implementing, and changing, and adapting to WIOA. So you're probably still feeling some of those changes. And then also there are a lot of tools and resources available for you if you want to learn more. But again, we would just encourage you to make sure that you truly understand the requirements outlined under your own program for just reporting. So we provided a lot of resources throughout the training and the presentation, but a couple more here. For those of you that really want to deep-dive and actually learn a little bit more, we've got both versions of the 911, the current version and the PD-19-03 that's going into effect on July 1 of 2020 that Chris discussed. We've also got our RSA-TAC-17-01. That one actually provides you a lot more in-depth information about the WIOA performance measures, kind of as a whole for your state, but also some details on the VR program if you're interested in reading more about that. That's actually my favorite read of the resources. And then we've got our RSA-TAC-19-01. That one discusses the data validation requirements that Chris talked about. So that's where it talks about, yes, you've got to have a transcript or a report card to show the measurable skill gains for someone that's in a training program. And then also on behalf of the WINTAC, we've worked with RSA on a lot of different resources and tools like Chris mentioned. We've got a measurable skill gain guide and a credential attainment guide if you're needing more support or information about really wrapping your head around how to define measurable skill gains and credentials, how to document them, what counts, what doesn't count, and that kind of information. So and like Chris said, there's a lot of other information on both RSA and WINTAC's websites. And then just here is our contact information if you have any follow-up or questions. But we hope that this really helped really explain the requirements for reporting for the VR program, and that you guys can process it through whatever lens your role is in the VR agency. So Chris, any last words?

>> Christopher Pope: Other than to say, thank you Rachel, for your partnership and helping us deliver this training. We appreciate it. Thank you.

>> Rachel Anderson: Thanks so much.