A Guide to Intake, Random Assignment, and Data Collection for the
Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG 2.0)
National Evaluation

Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County

Health Workforce for the Future

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## Contents

1. Overview of the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation ................................................................. 3
2. What is Random Assignment? .................................................................................................. 9
3. Random Assignment Procedures for Health Workforce for the Future ......................... 17
4. Procedures for Batching and Shipping Study Forms ......................................................... 35
5. Data Collection and Data Security ...................................................................................... 37
7. Key Contacts ......................................................................................................................... 59

### Appendices ............................................................................................................................ 60

Appendix A  Random Assignment 101
Appendix B  Random Assignment Talking Points for Prior HPOG or PACE participants
Appendix C  Informed Consent Form A (Random Assignment Required)
Appendix D  Informed Consent Form B (Random Assignment Not Required)
Appendix E  Independent Investigator Agreement (IIA)
Appendix F  Alternative Services List Template
Appendix G  FAQs
Appendix H  Batch Sheet for Shipping Consent Forms
Appendix I  Notification Letters
1. Overview of the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation

Welcome! We are very pleased that the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC) is participating in the HPOG 2.0 National and Tribal Evaluation.

The HPOG 2.0 National and Tribal Evaluation (HPOG 2.0) is one component of a multi-faceted research effort funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to evaluate the Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG) demonstration programs. In 2015, ACF awarded grants to 32 grantees; 27 grantees are participating in the National Evaluation and the remaining 5 grantees are tribal organizations that are participating in the Tribal Evaluation.

The HPOG Program is administered by the Office of Family Assistance (OFA) within ACF. The evaluation is sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), also within ACF. Abt Associates is leading a team of researchers who will conduct the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation. Abt’s partners for the National Evaluation are the Urban Institute, MEF Associates, Insight Policy Research, Inc. and Abt SRBI (for the follow-up survey data collection efforts). This group of researchers is referred to throughout the manual as the study team.

The HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation is using a methodologically rigorous random assignment study design to estimate the impact of healthcare sector training programs provided by 27 HPOG grantees serving TANF recipients and other low-income individuals.¹ Most eligible program applicants will be randomly assigned:

- to a treatment group that is offered access to the HPOG program; or
- to a control group that is not offered the opportunity to enroll in HPOG. The control group will have access to all other programs and services available in their community and for which they are eligible.²

The goal of the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation is to estimate the impact of the HPOG grantees’ programs relative to programs otherwise available in the area. The evaluation will also consider how those impacts vary with participant characteristics.

Overview of the HPOG Program

Funded under the Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA), the HPOG Program awarded a first round of five-year grants in 2010, referred to here as HPOG 1.0. The purpose of the grants is to design and operate high-quality programs to train TANF recipients and other low-income individuals in the health professions. On March 30, 2015, ACF released a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for a second round of HPOG grants, and awarded grants in September 2015 to 27 organizations

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¹ The five tribal organizations funded under the second round of HPOG funding will be evaluated separately and are not discussed in this manual.

² As described in Section 2, under certain circumstances, eligible participants may bypass random assignment.
located across 21 states for a new five-year period. Approximately half of the grantees that received second round HPOG grants had also received funding for the first round of HPOG.

The HPOG Program is intended to address two pervasive and growing problems:

1. the increasing shortfall in the supply of healthcare workers in the face of expanding demand; and
2. the difficulty faced by workers without post-secondary education to earn enough to support their families.

HPOG grantees are tasked with developing programs that (1) train TANF-recipients and other low-income individuals for in-demand jobs in healthcare and (2) are aligned with Career Pathways principles; i.e., training that is organized as a series of manageable steps leading to successively higher credentials and employment opportunities in growing occupations. The FOA for the second round of HPOG grants describes well-defined career pathways as including the specific education and employment steps for the career pathway and how those steps are connected and associated with student supports. To implement programs, grantees typically work with local networks of training providers, TANF agencies, employers, and social service agencies.

OPRE is utilizing a multi-pronged evaluation strategy to assess the success of the HPOG demonstration projects. Evaluation of the first round of HPOG grants has been underway since 2010. The evaluation includes implementation, outcome and impact studies of the non-tribal HPOG grants. The first-round evaluation also includes impact evaluations in three HPOG grantees through OPRE’s Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education (PACE) project. PACE is an experimental study of nine promising career pathways programs.

Like the first-round evaluation, the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation will focus on estimating the impacts of the HPOG 2.0 Program to inform future program design and improvement. The HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation will include three key components.

- An impact study will measure the effect of the grant-funded training programs on participants’ employment, earnings, wages and job progression, as well as certification and credential attainment.
- An implementation and outcomes study will examine program operations, including participant recruitment and enrollment practices, program services, participant outcomes, and key partner roles and responsibilities.
- A cost-benefit analysis will measure the tangible impacts of the interventions and assign appropriate dollar values to these impacts (per unit of impact) from the perspectives of key stakeholders.

These research and evaluation activities aim to provide information on HPOG program implementation, systems change, outcomes and impacts. ACF and their research contractors are coordinating closely to avoid duplicative efforts, maximize the use of available data, reduce burden on grantees in terms of participating in the federal evaluation activities, and promote cross-project learning.
Evaluation Timeline

The HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation includes the following activities and phases:

- Site Design and Planning  November 2015-February 2016
- Site Training  January 2016-March 2016
- Study Implementation:
  - Pilot Period:  February 2016-April 2016
  - Full Study Period:  Beginning May 2016
- Follow-up Survey Data Collection  June 2018-December 2020
  - 15-month Follow-up  June 2017-November 2019
  - 36-month Follow-up  March 2020-December 2020
- Implementation Study  February 2016-September 2019

Each phase is discussed in more detail below.

**Site Design and Planning (November 2015 – January 2016)**. Grantees and their site liaisons from the study team are designing the evaluation processes during the planning phase, before random assignment begins. As part of the planning phase, grantees and their study team partners develop an Evaluation Design and Implementation Plan (EDIP). The EDIP includes an overview of grantees’ activities and services, as well as a detailed description of study-related procedures. Senior members of the study team and ACF review the EDIP to ensure the design and implementation plans are consistent with OFA and OPRE expectations.

**Site Training (up to 1-2 weeks prior to study implementation)**. Members of the study team conducting the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation will train program staff on the goals of the evaluation, study procedures such as publicizing and recruiting for HPOG in an evaluation context, explaining the study and random assignment requirements to prospective HPOG applicants and to program partners; obtaining informed consent; collecting baseline intake data; implementing random assignment; and providing control group members information about other services available in the community.

**Study Implementation: Pilot Period and Full Study Period**. Soon after training, program staff will implement the study. This begins with recruiting and screening applicants to identify those who are interested in and eligible for HPOG. Program staff will then collect a standard set of information – called baseline intake information – for each applicant and follow a set of well-defined procedures to randomly assign eligible individuals to the study's treatment and control groups.

There may be some HPOG participants who received assistance under the first round of HPOG grants who return for additional training. Some of these individuals will not have to go through random assignment. This group will be discussed further in Section 2.

During this period, the study team will stay in touch with program staff and provide evaluation technical assistance as needed. Grantees will receive HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation funds to help defray research-related costs. The first three months of random assignment are considered a pilot period. The study team will monitor study implementation during this period to ensure enrollment and random assignment are implemented appropriately. If the pilot goes well, those randomized during...
the pilot phase will be included in the study. If issues arise during the pilot, we will consider excluding pilot cases from the study.

Following intake, collection of the baseline intake information, and random assignment (if applicable), HPOG programs will continue to serve participants who were randomly assigned into the treatment group or who bypassed random assignment until the students exit the program, or through the end of the HPOG study period.

**Follow-up Survey Data Collection.** The study team will attempt to conduct follow-up surveys with a sample of both the treatment and control groups at two points in time after random assignment. The follow-up surveys will occur on a rolling basis, based on the date when an individual was randomly assigned. The first follow-up survey will occur about 15 months after the study participant’s random assignment date, and the second survey will occur about 36 months after the random assignment date.

The surveys will be conducted by Abt SRBI, a subsidiary of Abt Associates. The surveys include questions about the study participant’s education and employment experiences after they were randomly assigned. Those who complete the surveys will receive a small payment in appreciation of their time.

Survey interviewers from Abt SRBI will be responsible for conducting the follow-up surveys. The interviewers will use contact information collected at baseline to locate study participants for the surveys. Since the surveys will occur more than a year after random assignment, locating study participants will be a challenge. Complete and accurate contact information captured at the time of enrollment is critical to the success of the follow-up survey. Program staff can help ensure the follow-up survey success through careful monitoring of the quality and completeness of baseline data, including contact information. Researchers will use this information, including the contact information for three additional relatives or friends, to get in touch with study participants when it is time to complete these surveys.

**Implementation Study.** In addition to the random assignment impact study, the National Evaluation will include an implementation study. The implementation study has two purposes:

- to document how the HPOG program operates; and
- to help the study team interpret the findings of the impact study and describe how program design may contribute to treatment group outcomes.

For the implementation study, the study team will visit each program at two points during the study period to interview staff, observe program activities such as classes or counseling sessions, and interview key partners or stakeholders if appropriate. The team will collect information about the local program context, the design and operation of the program, staff roles, partnerships, training and support services provided, and accomplishments and challenges. When the time comes to do these two- or three-day visits, the study team will work with program staff to develop an itinerary and set up interviews.

**Organization of the Random Assignment Procedures Manual**

The HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation requires the random assignment of program applicants to either a “treatment” group that will receive the services you are providing through your HPOG 2.0 grant, or a
“control” group that will not receive the services funded by your grant. This manual provides detailed instructions on implementing the random assignment process for the Health Workforce for the Future (HWF) program.

There are two key groups of people referenced throughout this document. The study team includes members of the research organizations that work as liaisons between the researchers and the HPOG 2.0 program staff. Program staff refers to the staff at the local HPOG 2.0 programs who will be responsible for administering the program and conducting intake and random assignment.

This manual is designed to guide program staff through the intake, consent, and random assignment process. The manual is intended to be used as a reference throughout the evaluation. It has seven sections and nine appendices:

- **Section 1** provides an overview of the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation.
- **Section 2** discusses the random assignment research design and key components of the study, the general process for random assignment, and the data that will be collected for the study.
- **Section 3** gives program-specific, step-by-step instructions for enrolling individuals into the study, including procedures for collecting baseline data and conducting random assignment and scripts for staff to use to describe the study to applicants.
- **Section 4** discusses procedures for sorting and shipping completed study forms back to the study team.
- **Section 5** discusses data collection, data security, and guidelines for protecting study participants’ rights and their personal information.
- **Section 6** provides instructions for using the study’s web-based Participant Accomplishment and Grant Evaluation System (PAGES) to collect data for the evaluation and conduct random assignment.
- **Section 7** lists key study team contacts for information and assistance.
- **The nine appendices** include a random assignment reference guide, random assignment guidance for prior HPOG and PACE participants, a template for listing alternative services for control group members, copies of the informed consent documents, individual investigator agreements, additional frequently asked questions, a batch sheet for submitting consent forms to the study team, and notification letters for applicants.
2. What is Random Assignment?

In this section, we discuss the random assignment research design for the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation. We begin with a discussion of what random assignment is and why it is used in program evaluation research. We then introduce standards for the protection of human subjects in research.

What is random assignment?

The HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation is using random assignment to evaluate the impacts of programs in the study. Random assignment studies are also referred to as experimental evaluations and impact studies. For this type of study, program applicants are assigned at random using a lottery-like process to one of two groups, either a “treatment” group that receives the program or service intervention that is being evaluated, or a “control” group that does not receive these grant-funded services, but may receive other services not funded by the grant that are available in the broader community.

Why use random assignment?

Random assignment is considered the “gold standard” of research and is required by some agencies to examine the effectiveness of interventions or programs. For example, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) uses random assignment studies to determine the effectiveness and safety of new drugs. HPOG was authorized as a demonstration program. The authorizing legislation required an evaluation to determine the effectiveness of HPOG. Committed to identifying successful programs for replication, the Department of Health and Human Services has required random assignment evaluations as part of both rounds of HPOG; a willingness to participate in this type of study was required as part of the HPOG 2.0 grant application process.³

Random assignment ensures that participants in the two groups are virtually identical in all ways, except that one group receives the program services being evaluated and the other does not. Thus, any difference in outcomes between the two groups, such as their employment rates or training completion rates later on, can be attributed directly to the program intervention. Impacts measured this way have substantial credibility among policy makers and funding agencies because they answer the question, “What would the outcomes of treatment group members have been had they not had access to the program services?”

Random assignment works much like a lottery or flipping a coin. Each program applicant will be placed at random into the treatment or control group. An individual’s selection into the program is determined by chance. Personal features such as gender or race do not factor into whether or not a program applicant is selected.

For the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation, program staff will use a web-based participant tracking system (PAGES) to randomly assign program applicants as part of the program’s standard enrollment process. See Appendix A for more information about random assignment.

**Who is in the study?**

The HPOG 2.0 Program will serve two distinct groups of participants—new HPOG 2.0 participants, with no prior HPOG participation—and returning HPOG 1.0 or PACE participants. Since this is the second generation of HPOG grant awards, OPRE determined that not all individuals eligible to be served by HPOG 2.0 will be subject to random assignment. New HPOG 2.0 participants are subject to random assignment. For returning HPOG 1.0 and PACE participants, some will be subject to random assignment and some may be eligible to bypass random assignment and enroll directly in HPOG 2.0.

Research ethics suggest that individuals who want to enter an HPOG 2.0 program and who have prior relationships to the first round of HPOG or PACE programs should be treated differently in random assignment than other eligible individuals (See Appendix B for more detail.)

Participants who received services under HPOG 1.0 may be eligible to bypass random assignment if they meet one of the following criteria:

1. A person, who was *randomly assigned to the HPOG 1.0 Impact Study treatment group*, will bypass random assignment if they seek services under HPOG 2.0.
2. A person who was randomly assigned to the treatment group in the PACE study in an HPOG 1.0 location will bypass random assignment if they seek services under HPOG 2.0.
3. Participants who *received services under HPOG 1.0 but did not go through random assignment* will be able to bypass random assignment under the following conditions:
   a. If an HPOG 1.0 participant was actively receiving HPOG 1.0-funded services between March 1, 2015 and September 30, 2015, that person will bypass random assignment if they seek additional services under HPOG 2.0 until March 30, 2016. If they do not seek additional services under HPOG 2.0 until after March 30, 2016, they will be subject to random assignment.
   b. If an HPOG 1.0 participant was receiving HPOG 1.0-funded services after September 30, 2015, that person would bypass random assignment if they seek additional services under HPOG 2.0 until September 30, 2016. If they do not seek additional services under HPOG 2.0 until after September 30, 2016, they will be subject to random assignment.
4. In addition, participants previously assigned to the control group in the HPOG 1.0 Impact Study or PACE are temporarily excluded from enrolling in HPOG 2.0 for a specific period of time, known as an *embargo period*. This embargo period for control group members is necessary to ensure that participation in HPOG 2.0 does not jeopardize the researcher’s ability to compare outcomes for the treatment and control groups in those studies. For HPOG 1.0 control group participants, the embargo period ends December 31, 2017. The embargo period for PACE control group participants in an HPOG 1.0 site ends 2.5 to 3 years after random assignment, depending upon the program in which they previously participated. When an individual’s embargo ends, they may receive program services without going through random assignment.
5. WDC participants who are incumbent workers referred through special HWF Employer Partner cohorts will be exempt from random assignment. These participants will not be identified through the PAGES RA status check. Check with the HPOG Program Manager to be clear about exemptions for each individual participating in these special cohorts. These participants should follow the enrollment process for participants who “bypass random assignment.”

Program staff will use the PAGES system to conduct a random assignment status check on each applicant to determine whether or not the applicant is subject to random assignment. You must enter key information (name, social security number, date of birth and gender) for every applicant into PAGES. PAGES will indicate whether the applicant is:

- subject to random assignment;
- able to bypass random assignment; or
- on hold during the embargo period.

These distinct groups of participants have different intake procedures and it is important that you understand where the differences occur. Exhibit 2-1 shows the basic flow of participants in each of these three groups.

**Exhibit 2-1. Participant flow based on random assignment status check result**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject to Random Assignment</th>
<th>Bypass Random Assignment</th>
<th>Unable to enroll; under embargo period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obtain Informed consent</td>
<td>Obtain Informed Consent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consent Form A</td>
<td>Consent Form B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect Intake Data</td>
<td>Collect Intake Data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct random assignment</td>
<td>Begin HPG Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notify applicant of RA result</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin HPG Services if T;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide alternate services list if C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’m sorry my records indicate that you are not eligible to participate in the HPOG program at this time because of your prior participation in an earlier research study. You may be eligible to participate in the study after [insert date described in PAGES]”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How will the random assignment process work?

Staff members in your program play a very important role in implementing the evaluation. The study team relies on your program staff for the following:

- To inform individuals applying to the program about the study from the time of recruitment through the point that applicants are randomly assigned;
- To use PAGES to determine whether or not individuals applying to the program are subject to random assignment and to confirm with the HPOG Program Manager the participants bypassing random assignment through a specialized employer cohort of incumbent workers.
- To obtain applicants’ consent through a signed informed consent form that indicates the individual understands the study, including the risks and benefits of participation, and that the individual agrees to participate;
- To administer the study’s baseline intake information via PAGES to collect data and contact information for the individual at the time of study enrollment and random assignment;
- To conduct random assignment and inform the individual of the outcome of random assignment (i.e., assignment to the treatment group or the control group);
- To ensure that no control group members access HPOG 2.0 grant-funded program services during the embargo period; and
- To maintain the security and privacy of study participants’ data.

Below we introduce the participant tracking system, the two informed consent forms, and baseline intake form. Each of these is described in further detail in Section 3 of the manual. Examples of the forms can be found in the Appendices.

Participant Accomplishment and Grant Evaluation System (PAGES)

The Participant Accomplishment and Grantee Evaluation System (PAGES) is a web-based system for both program management and evaluation purposes. Program staff at HWF will use PAGES to enter information on participant characteristics and program activities, track program information, and report on program performance. PAGES is also used for evaluation purposes such as recording receipt of informed consent, storing intake information and conducting random assignment. A set of information about the person must be entered into PAGES before random assignment can take place. This includes the applicant’s name, date of birth, gender, social security number, and contact information. In addition, case managers must collect and enter a set of intake information on each potential participant.

Once program staff members indicate that an individual has signed the informed consent form, is eligible to participate, and has provided the baseline intake information, random assignment can proceed. Once program staff select the option to “Trigger RA” in PAGES, the system will immediately return the results of random assignment for that individual, either treatment or control. Your program staff then inform the individual of their random assignment status, which will be maintained through the duration of the HPOG 2.0 study period.
Informed consent forms

After describing the study to program applicants, the evaluation requires that individuals eligible for the program consent to being part of the study by reviewing and signing an informed consent form. There are two versions of the consent form for the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation.

- **Consent Form A (Appendix C):** The first form is for those eligible participants who are subject to random assignment. Most participants in the HPOG 2.0 national evaluation will complete this form. The form describes the purpose of the study, indicates that program applicants will be assigned by lottery to one of two different groups, that data will be collected about these individuals as part of the study, and that all information collected will be private and used only for the study. The form also explains the risks and benefits of study participation.

  Participation in the study is voluntary. Program staff will ensure that applicants know that agreeing to participate in the lottery and complying with the HPOG 2.0 evaluation requirements are priorities for the grant. Staff will ask applicants to read and sign the informed consent form to confirm that they are willing to be part of the study. Individuals who sign the form to indicate their consent will also complete the study’s baseline intake information and will ultimately be randomly assigned.

  New applicants who do not sign the informed consent form will not be randomly assigned into the study, nor can they enroll in the HPOG 2.0-funded program. Instead, they may enroll in other programs or services offered by your organization or others in the community that are not funded by the HPOG 2.0 grant.

- **Consent Form B (Appendix D):** The second consent form will be used for individuals in the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation who are not subject to random assignment. The form is yellow, to distinguish it from Consent Form A. This form describes the purpose of the study, indicates that data will be collected about these individuals as part of the study, and that all information collected will be private and used only for the study. The form also explains the risks and benefits of study participation.

  There are two main differences between the two consent forms. First, Consent Form B is for individuals who bypass random assignment, including those who are assigned a wild card or are part of an approved exemption group (incumbent worker cohorts developed in partnership with employers), and therefore do not have to agree to be subject to random assignment. The form asks for the participant’s consent to use their data for program reporting and for the outcomes and implementation studies. In addition, individuals may still receive HPOG services even if they choose not to be included in the research.

As noted above, all applicants will complete informed consent form A unless the applicant is a prior HPOG or PACE participant, assigned a wild card, or part of an approved exemption group. PAGES will indicate which consent form should be completed if a prospective applicant is a prior HPOG or PACE participant. Applicants who are assigned a wild card or are part of an approved exemption group will sign form B.
Baseline intake information

The baseline intake information collected from applicants provides important information to help answer important questions for the study. The items include demographic characteristics, educational background, employment status, and income. In addition, the form collects contact information for the individual as well as for three relatives or friends who may be able to help locate the individual for follow up surveys in the future. Because the information collected on the intake form is essential to the evaluation, it is important that individuals answer the questions to the best of their ability and as completely as they can.

Program staff will administer the intake form to applicants using PAGES, which has been designed specifically for this evaluation. Individuals can choose not to answer some questions on the intake forms. However, there are certain fields—first name, last name, date of birth, gender, and social security number—that require responses in order for an individual to be in the study (and therefore to have a chance of being randomly selected into the program.)

If your program has received approval to use paper intake forms, please review the paper forms for completeness, accuracy and legibility before the applicant leaves, if possible. This will help to ensure that the data are as accurate as possible when entered into PAGES. If applicants complete the baseline intake information on paper, program staff must change the intake completed status from “no” to “yes” in the PAGES system. This action indicates that the applicant completed the baseline intake information and signed the consent form, and allows random assignment to take place before data entry from a paper intake form is complete. We encourage staff to input the intake data as soon as possible in order to minimize lost or damaged forms. Furthermore, if after 14 days the information is still missing, the PAGES system will send out frequent reminders that information is still missing. (See data security procedures in Section 4 for guidance on how to safely store the forms until data entry is complete and to destroy the forms thereafter.)

Protection of human subjects in research

The study team and ACF take the protection of human subjects during research very seriously. We are required to follow internationally accepted guidelines, federal regulations, and institutional policies and procedures to protect the rights of human subjects participating in this evaluation. In order to carry out this study, the study team obtained approval for all activities involving human subjects—including informed consent, random assignment, and data collection—from the Abt Associates Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The IRB confirmed that the study design, consent process, and other study documents comply with the aforementioned guidelines, regulations, and policies.

As program staff involved with intake and random assignment procedures, you are agents of the study; that is, program staff are carrying out research activities on behalf of the study team. You are therefore required to follow the same human subject research protection standards as the study team. The study team will provide training for all program staff involved in the study. The study team is

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4 Unless specific authorization has been received from ACF, staff must administer the baseline intake form via PAGES. In approved scenarios, some sites may be allowed to use the paper intake form approved by ACF.
also available as requested to train new program staff members as they come on board. As part of the program staff, you will sign an Individual Investigator Agreement (IIA) upon completion of training that acknowledges your awareness of, and agreement to follow the standards and requirements of protecting human subjects in research (See Appendix E).

In order to comply with human subject research regulations, all members of the study team and local program staff are required to follow the instructions in this manual and use only the OMB- and IRB-approved study materials and consent form (which is also a legal document). Any materials used in a random assignment research study must undergo review by an institutional review board. All materials used in this study have been approved by the Abt Associates IRB and by OMB. Therefore, no changes, not even the most minor change, can be made. If you feel you need to make changes to the approved study materials, please contact your study team for guidance.
3. Random Assignment Procedures for HWF

This section of the manual provides details on the random assignment process for HWF. It begins with a flow chart that illustrates the program intake and random assignment process, which is based on the HWF program design and modified in consultation with the study team. Each step is then described in detail. At the end of this section, we provide a checklist for the basic steps in the random assignment process and answer some common questions staff may have about random assignment. Exhibit 3-1 depicts the process for intake into the HWF program.
Exhibit 3-1. Random assignment flow chart for the HWF program

**WDC HWF Enrollment**

**Steps in Intake Process**
- Recruitment: Individual learns of HWF from TANF case manager, a Navigator at a community based organization, and/or materials at community based and city/state agencies, and/or marketing materials for the general public and/or the website.
- **Step 1: Brief Introductory Conversation via Phone or In-Person:**
  - Individual is referred to HWF Navigator or self-refers
  - Navigator calls individual to: introduce the program, collect background and interest information, describe the study, discuss eligibility documentation required, and schedule an in-person meeting.

**Step 2: Initial Intake Session**
- Review program, health career, and study information
- Review and document economic eligibility
- Assess fit and suitability
- Conduct RA Status Check
- Obtain permission for background check
- Schedule second intake session

**Step 3: Centralized Eligibility Check by TRAC Manager**
- Verify eligibility
- Conduct the PAGES RA Status Check in instances where the RA Check was not completed
- Perform background check

**Step 4: Second Intake Session**
- Obtain consent
- Complete PAGES Intake
- Conduct Random Assignment.
- If treatment group, individual schedules first service.

**Step 5: First Service: Career Planning Meeting**
- Enter required data into PAGES and complete paper forms/Complete intake directly into PAGES/PAGES record initiated
- Random Assignment

**Exit Before Impact Study**
- Enrollment

- Individual does not express interest and/or does not schedule an in-person meeting with the Navigator
- Individual
  - Does not attend Initial Intake Session
  - Does not meet economic eligibility or is not eligible to work in the US
  - Is not suitable for health careers
- Individual not eligible for HPOG 2 based on embargo from HPOG 1 or PACE control group
- Individual is determined not eligible
- Individual does not schedule or attend Second Intake Session, is determined not eligible, and/or decides not to participate.

- Individual does not consent to participate in the study
- Individual is assigned to control group and informed of alternative resources
- Individual bypasses RA due to enrollment status in HPOG 1 or PACE treatment group or due to incumbent worker/business partner exemption
Step by step instructions for random assignment

This section describes each step of the process for intake and random assignment.

Recruit individuals for the program

The first step in the process is recruiting applicants for the HWF program. Recruitment for HWF will include the following:

- Referrals from WorkSource, TANF offices, housing authority, employer/industry partners, community sites, public health clinics, libraries, adult basic education, and ESL providers
- Flier distribution
- Advertising
- Outreach activities and events

The Abt Associates Institutional Review Board (IRB), which reviews data collection procedures to ensure that they comply with applicable federal regulations and those governing the protection of human subjects, requires that applicants be informed of the factors involved with study enrollment, particularly random assignment. In particular, when describing HWF to applicants, program staff must make it clear to individuals that to participate in the program, they must also participate in the study. The IRB has approved the language in italics below for use in recruitment materials and in-person recruitment.

Recruitment materials. For the purposes of the study, recruitment materials and messaging about the program, such as applications, webpages and fliers should include the following pieces of information:

- The nature and benefits of the services;
- The following statement informing individuals about the study:

  HPOG is a study funded by the federal government which is being conducted to determine how these training opportunities help people improve their skills and find better jobs. During the study, all new eligible applicants will be selected by lottery to participate in these training opportunities. Not all eligible applicants will be selected to participate in these opportunities.

In-person recruitment script. In addition to any standard information provided about your program as part of your recruitment effort, below is a script that should be used when speaking directly to potential study participants.

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5 At the point of initial recruitment, you will not yet know whether or not the applicant is subject to random assignment. Thus, all applicants will receive the same study approved recruitment language.
Hello. I’m here to provide information to you about HWF. This program is being offered by the WDC, in partnership with TRAC Associates and Neighborhood House, with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Program staff members describe program and eligibility.

You may be eligible to participate in this program if you meet the eligibility criteria. If you meet the eligibility criteria, you will also need to agree to participate in a study being conducted by Abt Associates and its partners in order to participate in this program. This study will examine how well the HPOG program helps people improve their skills, find jobs, and advance in healthcare careers. During the study, all new eligible applicants will be selected by lottery to participate in these training opportunities. Not all eligible applicants will be selected to participate in these opportunities.

**Step 1: Brief introductory conversation via phone or in-person**

The first interaction the HWF Navigator has with a referred client will typically be a brief in-person or phone conversation to introduce the program, learn about the individual’s employment and education history, gauge general level of interest in a health care career, and schedule an in-person meeting. During this conversation the Navigator will also outline the program eligibility requirements and inform the individual of the documentation he or she should bring to the initial meeting to confirm eligibility. The Navigator will also describe the study and random assignment as a lottery-like process.

These conversations will be the first opportunity for Navigators to stress the importance to potential participants of bringing the necessary documentation to the first meeting to confirm eligibility. Navigators will reinforce to potential participants that eligibility confirmation and random assignment is a precondition of receiving full navigation services.

**Step 2: Initial intake session**

The purpose of the initial intake session is to provide information about the program and the study, assess eligibility, and assess fit for the program.

The initial meeting takes place at the Navigator’s location or in the community. The initial intake session can occur both one-on-one and, in some cases, as a group session. During the meeting, Navigators and applicants will discuss:

- An overview of the requirements and components of the HWF program
- Suitability for healthcare careers (including constraints and opportunities related to criminal background and drug use and abuse)
- An overview of the study, informed consent, and random assignment (See the subsection “Describe the Study and Random Assignment” below)
- The eligibility documents individuals bring to the meeting

Navigators and participants will:

- Document eligibility using the HPOG HWF Eligibility Verification Checklist as a guide
- Complete the HWF Program Assessment
- Schedule the Second Intake Session with the program Navigator.
Participants will be asked to complete the following materials:

- HPOG HWF Eligibility Verification Checklist
- Background check permission form

Navigators will conduct PAGES RA Status check (first and last name, date of birth, gender, and social security number) when in a location with a secure computer. See Step 3, the “Centralized Eligibility Check” for information about conducting the PAGES RA Status Check when in a location without access to a secure computer.

For the PAGES RA status check, you will need to enter key information about study applicants in order to determine whether or not the applicant is subject to random assignment. Specifically you will enter the name, date of birth, social security number and gender of each applicant into PAGES. PAGES will automatically determine which individuals are subject to RA and whether they can enter the program. If the applicant is subject to random assignment, proceed to Step 4A (describe the study and random assignment). If an applicant is not subject to random assignment, proceed to Step 4B (obtain informed consent). If the applicant is subject to an embargo, explain that the system indicates he/she is not eligible to enroll in the study at this time.

**Step 3: Centralized Eligibility Check**

The Centralized Eligibility Check is conducted by the HWF Manager located at TRAC. TRAC is a subcontractor to WDC for the HPOG 2 program.

When Navigators meet customers in convenient and accessible locations that do not have access to a secure computer, the PAGES RA Status check will occur during the Centralized Eligibility Check. Navigators and the HWF Manager will use information from the background check permission form to conduct the PAGES RA Status Check.

As noted above, you will need to enter key information about study applicants in order to determine whether or not the applicant is subject to random assignment. Specifically you will enter the name, date of birth, social security number and gender of each applicant into PAGES. PAGES will automatically determine which individuals are subject to RA and whether they can enter the program. All applicants will proceed to Step 4 unless otherwise notified by the Navigator they are not eligible for HWF. If the applicant is subject to random assignment, proceed to Step 4A (describe the study and random assignment). If an applicant is not subject to random assignment, proceed to Step 4B (obtain informed consent). If the applicant is subject to an embargo, explain that the system indicates he/she is not eligible to enroll in the study at this time.

Managers from the TRAC offices will then verify documentation of eligibility.

Among eligible individuals, the local HWF data coordinator located at TRAC will conduct a background check using a verified and secure online vendor with whom TRAC holds a contract, and based on the information from the background check permission form. Please see Step 2 for additional description of the content and security measures of the Form.

If applicants appear to be eligible, the TRAC Manager will confirm eligibility with the Navigator and the Navigator will proceed with the second intake session, as scheduled. The TRAC Manager will notify Navigators of individuals who are not eligible via phone and cancel the appointment for Step 4,
the second intake session. In these instances the Navigators will suggest that individuals connect with the WorkSource Office to learn about additional training opportunities and, if appropriate, re-connect with their HWF referral source.

**Step 4: Second intake session**

The purpose of the second intake session is to obtain informed consent, complete the PAGES Intake on paper and/or directly into the PAGES system, and conduct random assignment.

For individuals who are eligible for random assignment, Navigators obtain consent from individuals using the process defined and approved by the Abt IRB. See Section 4A and 4B below. For individuals who are not eligible for random assignment, Navigators will obtain informed consent, see Section 4B.

After obtaining consent, Navigators administer PAGES baseline intake either by entering data directly into PAGES or by using paper forms. See Step 4C below. When PAGES intake data are collected through paper forms, Navigators will enter the required information to perform random assignment. Individuals who bypass random assignment also engage in the PAGES intake process.

After entering all intake data into PAGES (in the case of direct entry) or the intake data required for random assignment (if using paper forms), Navigators immediately perform random assignment for individuals eligible for random assignment. See Step 4D below. Individuals who bypass random assignment schedule a Career Planning Meeting with the Navigator immediately after PAGES intake.

Upon random assignment, staff immediately inform individuals of control/treatment group status described in Step 4E. If assigned to the control group, Navigators and individuals review the study language provided for individuals assigned to the control group and Navigators provide a list of alternative resources in the community. If assigned to the treatment group, Navigators assist individuals in the process of scheduling a Career Planning meeting with the Navigator.

**Step 4A: Describe the study and random assignment**

As part of any intake meeting or information session, program staff must provide program applicants with a brief explanation of the evaluation and the random assignment process. The script below shows the major points that staff should explain to applicants.

- *For the next 10 years, this program will be part of a national study to explore the effectiveness of the HWF/HPOG program in getting people trained and employed in good jobs in healthcare.*

- *Abt Associates, an outside organization under contract to the federal government, is conducting the study, along with its partners MEF Associates, the Urban Institute, Insight Policy Research, and Abt SRBI. We are one of about 37 programs across the country that were selected to help government funding agencies understand how well training programs work in helping people improve their skills, find a job, and advance in their health careers.*

- *To have a chance to participate in the HWF program, you must be determined eligible and you must agree to be in the study. To agree to be in the study, you must read and sign an informed consent form. The consent form explains your rights and the study-related activities you will be asked to participate in.*
• If you are eligible for HWF and agree to be part of the study, you will be assigned by a lottery-like process to one of two groups. One group will receive the training/education services part of the HWF program, and the other cannot enroll in this program, during the study period (over the next 10 years) but may participate in other programs and receive other services elsewhere in the community.
  o This process is like a lottery or pulling a name out of a hat – everyone eligible will have the same chance of being selected for the HWF/HPOG training program.
  o A small number of people will not go through random assignment because they had a prior relationship to the impact study of the first round of HPOG or the Pathways to Advancing Careers and Education (PACE) study.

• As part of this study, you will be asked to provide certain information about your educational, occupational, and personal background.
  o Some information will be collected today. Other information will be collected over the next few years through a survey and from administrative records describing your earnings and other income sources and/or program participation. For instance, we plan to use your social security number to learn about your quarterly earnings from a federal data collection system called the National Directory of New Hires. This system collects information on employment and wages for most employed people in the United States. We may also use your social security number to find out information about healthcare training credentials you may receive. All personally identifiable information collected (including social security numbers) will be kept private.
  o Information will be collected from all individuals who participate in the study, regardless of whether they are randomly selected for the program or not.
  o Researchers and program staff have to follow all federal and state laws to protect your privacy. Your name will never appear in any report or with any research findings. In general, your de-identified information will only be shared with people outside of this project when it is combined with information about many other people in the program. This way, someone cannot identify you specifically.

Program staff must allow program applicants the opportunity to ask questions so that they can understand what is involved in random assignment.

Step 4B: Obtain consent (during one-on-one meetings)

After describing the study, the program staff should distribute the informed consent form and review it with the program applicant. Appendices C and D have the informed consent forms for reference. Following exactly the guidelines provided in this manual for conducting the consent process and random assignment is crucial for ensuring that individuals are fully informed about what it means to be included in the study.

Briefly explain the form and allow individuals to read it. Some important points to cover when reviewing the informed consent forms include:

Consent Form A: Random assignment required
  ✓ Participation in the study is voluntary.

Consent Form B: Random assignment not required
  ✓ Participation in the study is voluntary.
Choosing not to participate means the individual will not be randomly assigned into the study and cannot enroll in the HPOG 2.0-funded program.

An individual cannot choose its study group. Individuals are assigned to a group randomly by a computer.

Individuals will be asked to complete surveys specifically for this study, both at the time of intake and in the future (approximately 15 and 36 months after random assignment).

All information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law.

The risks and benefits of participation.

Who will have access to their data and for what purposes?

Choosing not to participate will not preclude provisions of HPOG services.

Individuals will be asked to complete surveys for this study at the time of intake.

All information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law.

The risks and benefits of participation.

Who will have access to their data and for what purposes?

Allow enough time for the applicant to read the informed consent form (or have the form read to them). Individuals may have questions or may not understand some of the language. You should answer any questions they have. Take the time to carefully address each question. Refer to your technical assistance materials, consult a supervisor, or call your study team liaison if necessary. Accurately answering questions from applicants is important to ensure that the individual understands the purpose of the study and what participation entails.

**Check for comprehension and have individuals sign the form.** Once you have answered the applicant’s questions (if any), the next step is to ensure that the individual understands all of the information in the consent form. To check for comprehension, use the following script as a guide:

*Ok, since you don’t have any more questions, let’s just review what the consent form contains. We want you to know what you are signing and understand what participation in the study entails.*
 Consent Form A: Random assignment required

I just need to confirm with you that you understand that in order to participate in this program, you will also be participating in a study conducted for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The purpose of this study is to understand how well the HPOG program helps people improve their skills, find jobs, and advance in healthcare careers. Individuals who apply to this program will be assigned to one of two groups: either to a group that will receive HPOG services or to a group that will not receive these services. Both groups can apply to other programs or services in the community.

The decision on which group you’re in will be made through a lottery. The actual decision is made by a computer; it is similar to flipping a coin. Some people will be chosen by the computer to receive services and some will not.

Participation in the study is voluntary and you may choose not to participate. However, if you choose not to participate, you will not be able to apply to receive HPOG services. If you decide you no longer want to participate in the study at a later time, there are steps you can follow to withdraw from the study.

If you choose to sign the consent form, your name will be entered in the computer and it will randomly decide which group you are in and I will tell you the outcome today.

If you are selected by lottery to participate in the program, I will provide you with further information about program enrollment. If you are not selected by lottery to participate in the program, you can still apply to any other training programs or services you would like in the local community. If you are not selected to participate in the program, you will still be participating in the study.

Consent Form B: Random assignment not required

I just need to confirm with you that you understand that this form is seeking consent to use your data in a study conducted for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The purpose of this study is to understand how well the HPOG program helps people improve their skills, find jobs, and advance in healthcare careers. If you choose not to consent to participating in the study, you will still be able to participate in the HPOG program.

Participation in the study is voluntary and you may choose not to participate. If you choose not to participate, you will still be able to receive HPOG services.

You can choose not to participate in the study at any time without penalty, even after enrolling in the program.
Is the lottery process clear to you?

Agreeing to participate in the study means that the study team conducting the study will gather information about you from the government and other sources in order to answer important research questions about how effectively the program is serving its participants. Any information collected will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. If you agree to participate, you will be contacted by the study team to take two surveys in the future (about 15 and 36 months from now). You will also be contacted every three months or so just to update our records and make sure we have your most current contact information on file. In addition, it means that you give permission to the research firm conducting this study—not us—to use your social security number to collect data on your employment and earnings and educational attainment. And if you are placed into the group that receives services, information about your participation will be shared with the research firm.

The research firm conducting this study is strongly committed to keeping your data private. Your name will never appear in any public document or data file produced as part of this study.

Ok, now I just need to confirm with you that you have understood everything I said, and everything you have read in the consent form.

If you agree to participate in the study, please sign the consent form. If not, please keep the study information form and feel free to come back if you change your mind.

Those who agree to participate in the study should sign and date the consent form. For those who sign the form and consent, program staff will collect the signed version. Staff should provide a copy of the consent form to the individual. You should retain the original signed copy for submission to Abt Associates following the procedures outlined in Section 4. Individuals with a signed consent form will then proceed with completing the baseline intake information, as discussed in Step 4C.

Individuals subject to random assignment who do not consent will not be part of the study, cannot be served by HPOG, and therefore will not complete the baseline intake information. These individuals
will not be entered into PAGES nor randomly assigned. Instead, these individuals can be given a list of other services available in the community (see Appendix F). Since participation in the study is voluntary, it is alright if an applicant who is subject to random assignment does not want to participate in the study, but they will not be able to participate in your HPOG 2.0 grant-funded program either.

Individuals that are able to bypass random assignment and choose not to consent to participate in the study are still able to receive HPOG services.

**Step 4C: Administer the baseline intake information**

All HPOG 2 participants are required to complete the baseline intake information. Applicants subject to random assignment must sign informed consent form A prior to providing the baseline intake information. Applicants who are able to bypass random assignment must provide the baseline intake information even if they do not consent to participate in the study. If an applicant bypasses random assignment and does not consent, their information will be used for program management and reporting only, not for research. The baseline intake information includes basic demographic, educational, and economic information. The following script can be used to administer the baseline intake information.

_As part of the study, the researchers need to collect some information about you on a survey, the baseline intake information. Your answers to these questions will not affect your chances of getting into this program. The information will be used for research purposes only and will be kept private. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. Thank you very much for helping us with this important study._

In most instances, you should complete the intake form online in PAGES during a one-on-one meeting with the applicant. If you use a paper intake form, when the individual has finished filling out the form on paper, he or she should notify you or another staff member. Most items are optional and an individual can choose to skip an item. The exception is individuals who are not willing to provide their first and last names, social security number, date of birth and gender. This information must be provided in order to check prior participation in HPOG or PACE through PAGES. An applicant who refuses to provide this information cannot take part in the study and consequently cannot enroll in the HPOG 2.0 grant-funded program. While it is acceptable to skip items in the intake form, you should encourage applicants to complete all items, including providing complete information on alternative contacts. Navigators should review PAGES paper intake forms with each applicant when the intake form is complete to encourage complete responses and respond to questions.

**PAGES Paper Baseline Intake Forms: Data Quality, Collection, Entry, Storage, and Security Procedures.** When individuals have completed the baseline intake form, Navigators will briefly review the form to assure that it is properly completed, answer any questions, and, if appropriate, help individuals complete the form. Then, Navigators will enter only the data required to complete random assignment. Paper forms will be returned to Navigators during the same appointment to protect the privacy of individuals and security of the forms and data. Within the required 14 days of random assignment, Centralized data entry staff enter PAGES intake/baseline data. WDC provides training and support for Navigators and centralized data entry staff. The Navigator team meets bi-weekly to discuss program operations, including data collection and data entry.
As noted above, HWF staff will store and destroy the forms in compliance with data collection, entry, storage, and security procedures of the WDC and/or required by state policy. The forms are stored in secure facilities in accordance with current state and local protocols and requirements for existing paper files. In addition, paper forms will only be used at the Navigator site in private locations within the organization. The State of Washington is transitioning to a new statewide MIS system for WIOA and other WorkSource-based programs. This transition is driving the development of revised policies related to collection of customer data, and the WDC will continue to apply prevailing policy/protocol requirements related to secure storage of electronic and paper records to the HWF program.

**Step 4D: Randomly assign individuals using PAGES (applicable only to those who are subject to random assignment)**

Once the intake form is completed in PAGES (or a paper form has been collected and the status indicating intake is complete is set to yes), staff can proceed with random assignment. Using a computer, the staff member then logs into PAGES. Proceed to the “My Contacts” tab to select the participant for random assignment. Remember: to protect the privacy of those in the study, you should ensure that no one else can see your screen.

Once logged into PAGES, the staff member locates and clicks on the name of the individual who has just completed the intake. In the “contact” tab that opens, it is a good practice to double check that the individual’s name is spelled correctly and that the date of birth is correct. The social security number will not be visible and so cannot be checked.

Random assignment cannot occur until all of the following steps have been completed: (1) the individual has consented to participate in the study; (2) the individual has completed the baseline intake information directly into PAGES or on paper and the paper forms have been reviewed by staff; (3) staff members have collected the signed informed consent form; and the following required fields have been entered into PAGES:

- First and last name;
- Social security number;
- Date of birth;
- Stratum (see Section 6); and
- Gender.

After these steps are complete, the staff member can randomly assign the individual using PAGES. Step-by-step instructions for navigating PAGES and conducting random assignment can be found in **Section 6** of this manual.

Once a staff member clicks the “trigger RA” button in PAGES to randomly assign the participant, the computer generates an assignment immediately, placing the individual into either the treatment or control group. Staff then informs individuals of their status, as described in **Step 4E**.

**Step 4E: Inform individuals of their group assignment**

After staff has conducted random assignment using PAGES, they will inform the individual of his/her group assignment using the scripts below. If possible, staff should inform the individual in person. If
not, staff may inform the individual by email or phone. Sample language for the email is below. Staff should attach a copy of the list of alternate services for those assigned to the control group.

**If randomly assigned to the treatment group:** Once you learn the individual is in the treatment group, help the individual understand how to proceed with the next steps for program enrollment.

> The computer assigned you to the treatment group, which is the group that will participate in the program. You can enroll in the program and you will schedule an appointment with me, the Navigator, for a career planning meeting.

For individuals assigned to the treatment group, a staff member explains the next steps to the participant. If assigned to the treatment group, Navigators assist individuals in the process of scheduling a Career Planning meeting with the Navigator.

**If randomly assigned to the control group:** Once you learn that the individual is in the control group, help the individual understand that he/she will not be able to enroll in Health Workforce for the Future (HWF), but will still be part of the study. Provide a copy of the alternative services list and answer any questions that the participant may have.

> The computer assigned you to the control group, which is the group that will not participate in the HWF program. However, you will still be an important part of the study. This means that the research firm conducting the study may contact you to complete one or more additional surveys sometime in the next few years. They may contact you every few months to make sure that they keep your contact information up to date. You may still apply for other services in the community. We have provided you with a list of other available services in the community for your reference.

For individuals assigned to the control group, review the list of other services available in the community. Answer any questions the individual may have about next steps.

**For both groups, remind them of the following:**

> Remember, the researchers may contact you every three months or so by mail, email, or text to keep your contact information up to date. They may also contact you about 15 or 36 months from now to complete a survey. Information about you will also be collected from other sources, as we discussed. The researchers will keep all of your information private and secure.

**Questions about the lottery or random assignment.** Individuals may have questions about the random assignment process after learning of their results. Some common questions and suggested responses are listed in Appendix G.

**Informing individuals via email.** If possible, inform an individual of his/her random assignment status in person; otherwise you can do so by email, phone or in a letter. The following is sample language to use:

If randomly assigned to the treatment group:

> Thank you for applying to participate in HWF. The computer assigned you to the treatment group, which is the group that will participate in the program. You can enroll in the
program. You will schedule an appointment with me, the Navigator, for a career planning Meeting.

Remember, the researchers will contact you from time to time over the next three years to keep your contact information updated. They may also contact you to participate in a survey 15 and 36 months from now. Information about you will also be collected from other sources, as we discussed. The researchers will keep all of your information private and secure.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (Navigator phone number) or by email at (Navigator e-mail).

If randomly assigned to the control group:

Thank you for applying to participate in HWF. The computer assigned you to the control group, which is the group that will not participate in the program. However, you will still be an important part of the study. This means that the research firm conducting the study may contact you from time to time over the next three years to keep your contact information updated. They may also contact you to participate in a survey 15 and 36 months from now. Information about you will also be collected from other sources, as we discussed. The researchers will keep all of your information private and secure.

You may still apply for other services at the in the community. Attached is a list of other available services community for your reference.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (Navigator Phone Number) or by email at (Navigator E-mail).

Step 5: Send the informed consent forms to Abt Associates in batches

As you enroll participants in the study, you will send the hard copies of the original, signed informed consent forms to Abt Associates. The study team asks that you ship the forms in batches on a biweekly basis, or on a schedule determined and agreed upon in consultation with the study team. For detailed instructions on how to send these materials, please refer to Section 4 of this manual.

Step 6: Maintain research group status for the duration of the program

Once individuals are assigned to the treatment or control group, they will remain in that status for the duration of the study. Staff must ensure that only individuals assigned to the treatment group receive grant-funded services. If an existing study participant reapplies for the program, PAGES will identify that person as having already been randomly assigned.

If PAGES shows that the individual was in the control group, then staff should remind the applicant of their status and that as a member of the control group he/she cannot participate in the program. Staff may remind the participant that the study team will contact him/her to participate in follow up surveys in the future. If PAGES shows that the individual was in the treatment group, then he or she may participate in the program, according to the program’s criteria.
Checklist for random assignment activities

The following checklist summarizes the key activities that must be completed for random assignment.

- As part of any recruitment efforts, briefly inform individuals of your program’s offerings and eligibility requirements and introduce them to the study. Notify them that the program is part of a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services study and that entry will be determined by a lottery-like process. Then determine an individual’s eligibility to participate in your program.

- Check PAGES to determine whether the applicant is eligible for random assignment and what to do if the applicant is eligible to bypass random assignment. Confirm participation in incumbent worker cohorts developed with employer partners with the HPOG 2 Program Manager.

- After determining eligibility for your program, explain the study in greater detail using the talking points and scripts in this section as a guide.

- Distribute and explain the informed consent form (using the Informed Consent Form Script in this section as a guide), answer questions, and give participants the opportunity to sign the form. (If they do not sign it, they will not be in the study and cannot enroll in your HWF program.) Provide a copy of the signed consent form to the participant.

- Explain the need to collect intake information to those who consented to be in the study if subject to random assignment, or those who are able to bypass random assignment regardless of whether they signed a consent form. Set the individual up for a one-on-one administration of the intake form directly into PAGES or, if previously approved, hand them a paper version and ask them to complete it. Collect the completed paper form; review it for completeness, legibility, and accuracy. Enter the paper intake form into PAGES as soon as possible, but not later than 14 days after enrollment. Shred paper forms after confirming PAGES data entry is complete.

- Randomly assign individuals using PAGES.

- Notify the study participant of his/her group assignment (e.g., treatment or control) using the script in this section as a guide.
  - Treatment group members then continue with your program’s usual enrollment process.
  - Control group members receive information on other services not funded by the HPOG 2.0 grant. These services may be provided through the grantee organization (but not funded by this grant) or available in the broader community.

- Ensure that all information from the intake form is entered into PAGES.

- Send the original signed informed consent forms to Abt Associates in batches (see Section 4).
## Common questions from program staff about the evaluation

This section contains responses to questions program staff may have about random assignment and the evaluation. If you have a question that is not answered here, please contact the study team for additional guidance.

- **What will I have to do for the random assignment process?** The study team has worked with your program to develop a random assignment process from the point of recruitment through eligibility determination and finally enrollment into the study. Your staff’s role involves recruiting individuals for the program, informing them about the study, checking individuals’ prior participation in HPOG 1.0 or PACE, determining eligibility, and ensuring that the individual consents to participate in the study (if applicable) and completes the baseline intake information in the study’s web-based PAGES.

  If the applicant is subject to random assignment, you will also use PAGES to conduct random assignment and then notify the participant of their random assignment status (i.e., treatment or control). If any adjustments to the intake and random assignment process need to be made, please consult with the study team.

- **Why is it important to create a control group?** Service providers, instructors, and practitioners are in their field to help program participants, and it is understandable that they believe that the program works. However, it is important to be able to provide reliable estimates of program benefits both to improve the program and to provide strong evidence to stakeholders and program funders, including policymakers, practitioners, advocates, and the community. Creating a control group through random assignment will allow researchers and stakeholders to learn what would have happened to program participants if they had not participated in the program. Since we cannot know with certainty how the program participants themselves would have done without the program, we need to have another group of comparable applicants who do not participate in the program to compare with those who do participate. Using random assignment is a fair and reliable way to decide who will be in the treatment or control groups. Refer to the “RA 101” document in Appendix A for more information.

- **What should I tell individuals who are concerned about providing personal information?** Please reassure them that all information provided to the study team is kept private by the researchers and that their personal information will never appear in a public report or document. A social security number (SSN) is needed for this study. However, once entered in PAGES, the SSN will be masked so that it is not visible and can be accessed only by the study team. Only the program’s intake staff and the study team have access to the other personal information in PAGES.

- **What do I do if someone refuses to sign the Informed Consent Form?** Participation in the study is voluntary, and some individuals may decline to participate. If they are subject to random assignment and they decline to participate in the study, then they will not continue with the application and intake process for your program and will not have a chance of participating in the HWF program. Individuals who do not wish to sign the informed consent form will still be able to access other programs and services available through your broader organization or in the community. The informed consent form outlines these points. Those who do not wish to participate in the study will return the unsigned informed consent and will not complete the
baseline intake information. Staff may provide them with a list of alternative services available in the area. They cannot participate in the program funded by the HPOG 2.0 grant. They also cannot participate in other HPOG-funded programs in other locations.

If individuals are eligible to bypass random assignment and they decline to participate in the study, then they will still be eligible to receive HPOG services. Those who do not wish to participate in the study will return the signed informed consent indicating they do not want to be part of the study but will still complete the baseline intake information.

- **What happens to people who are assigned to the control group?** Participants assigned to the control group may not participate in the HWF program or any other HPOG program for the remainder of the study period. They may, however, apply to and enroll in any other programs or services at your organization or others, for which they qualify.

- **What should I tell individuals who are not selected for the program?** Once random assignment is conducted in PAGES, you should inform the participant of their status, which will be either treatment or control (see Section 3.2 for a sample script). Because you addressed any questions they had after reading the Informed Consent Form, most people should not be surprised if they are assigned to the control group—individuals should have a full understanding of the possible results. However, they may be disappointed or upset. Remind disappointed individuals that the assignment was based on chance and that the outcome was not based on factors like age, gender, race, or ethnic group. Also remind them that they can seek out the other services listed on the alternative services list.

- **What should I do if someone has a strong negative reaction related to the study, either during the intake process or after random assignment?** While the informed consent process, from recruitment through intake, is designed to ensure that individuals are aware of the study and what it means to participate in it, occasionally some people are upset about a matter related to the evaluation. Staff should try to address their concerns using the talking points, scripts, and other information provided in this manual. The study team must be made aware of instances where an individual has had a strong negative reaction to the study. Therefore, please get in touch with the study team within 24 hours if such an incident occurs. We will ask for an account of what happened, including the date, time, location, and staff involved, as well as the circumstances surrounding the incident and staff responses.

- **What do I do if I find out that someone is not eligible for the program after they have been randomly assigned?** Ideally, we want to randomly assign only individuals who are found to be eligible to help us better identify program effects. Once an individual has been randomly assigned, his/her status remains the same throughout the study and the study team will continue to collect information about the individual. If you realize that someone is not eligible after they have been randomly assigned, please notify the study team so that they can determine the appropriate action. **This information should be communicated via PAGES. However, if email correspondence is necessary, it is imperative that you only refer to the individual by his/her unique participant identification number, assigned by PAGES.** Accidental email of personal identifying information (PII) such as participant name is a breach of PII and must be reported to the study team, the Abt Associates IRB, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services immediately.
What if a participant wants to be assigned to the same group as a relative or friend? No one, neither an individual participant nor a HWF staff member, can choose someone’s random assignment group. In order for the process to create the comparable groups that the study requires, as well as to be truly fair, it must be conducted by a random lottery-like method, which in this study is performed by a computer. This point should be made clear to participants when reviewing the informed consent.

What happens if a participant drops out of the program after being randomly assigned? For research purposes, those who drop out of the program are still part of the study. Those in the treatment group will still be part of the sample that the research firm tracks over time. Researchers will continue to collect follow-up data through one or more surveys, and other administrative records. Participants who drop out and return to the program or reapply for the program during the study period will return to the group to which they were originally assigned. Treatment group members can re-enroll in accordance with the program’s standard procedures. Control group members cannot enroll in the program but can pursue other opportunities in the community.

What if a participant wants to withdraw from the study? After random assignment, if a participant would like to withdraw from the study, she/he may do so at any time without penalty. This means that members of the treatment group may continue to participate in training, and members of the control group will still not be permitted to enroll in the training program for the duration of the study period. No additional data will be gathered about the participant and the participant will not be contacted for additional data collection. However, the participant will remain in the sample. In order for the individual to withdraw from the study, she/he must contact the study team. Information about how to contact the study team is included in the informed consent form.

I feel bad about doing random assignment when so many people in my community need services and the control group will not get the services they need. We recognize that it may not be easy for staff to actively recruit for a program and then inform some individuals after random assignment that they will not be able to enroll in the program. Random assignment will NOT reduce the number of people served by your program, so with or without it, there will be individuals in need who cannot be served. In addition, random assignment is a fair way of allocating these scarce program slots, while also providing important, reliable information on the effectiveness of HPOG programs. If the programs are effective, this information can contribute to policy decisions that direct funding to support effective programs, so in the long run the objective is to help more people.

In the short term, while your organization is participating in the study, the study team will work with you to ensure that all individuals are well informed about the study from the moment they first learn about the program. Because individuals have been told that the program has a limited number of spaces available and that people will be selected using a lottery-like process, they should be prepared for the possibility that they will not be admitted to the program.
4. Procedures for Batching and Shipping Study Forms

Throughout the period of intake and random assignment, grantees in the study will collect all informed consent forms from individuals after intake. You should ship these forms every two weeks to the study team at Abt Associates, unless you have fewer than four forms to send. If you have fewer than four forms, wait until you collect four (but do not wait longer than one month). Please follow the instructions below to prepare the forms for mailing.

Sort Forms

1. Ensure that you have a signed informed consent form for each individual who has completed the intake form in the web-based PAGES. Make a photocopy of the signed informed consent form before mailing to the study team. Store the forms in a locked filing cabinet.

2. Review PAGES to determine whether any individuals started the intake form but did not complete it and/or decided that they did not want to go through with random assignment. For an individual who began filling out the intake form and then decided not to participate, please write "Declined to participate" across the top of the informed consent form and ship it back to the study team.

Create Batches

1. Count up to 25 informed consent forms for a batch. (A batch may contain fewer than 25 documents, but not more than 25.)

2. For each set of 25 informed consent forms (or fewer), complete a Batch Cover Sheet. An example can be found in Appendix H.

3. Use a paperclip to secure the Batch Cover Sheet to the top of the batch. Then secure the entire batch and its cover sheet with a rubber band or binder clip.

4. Place each batch into a security envelope provided by Abt Associates and seal it, then place the envelope and its contents in a FedEx envelope provided by Abt Associates. This “double enveloping” procedure is required by the Abt IRB to protect participant information during the shipping process.

5. If shipping more than 25 document sets, repeat the preceding batch steps to create more sets of batches. Multiple batches may be shipped in the same FedEx envelope or box.

Complete the Batch Log

At the start of the study, your organization will set up a **batch log**, electronically in an Excel spreadsheet (recommended) or Word document. This log will enable you to record pertinent information about the shipments. This information will be useful if a shipment goes missing or the study team has questions. The example sample batch log below shows the minimum fields we recommend you record. Note that batch numbers 002 and 003 were shipped in the same Priority Mail envelope on the same date. Document set 002 contained 25 forms and 003 contained 18 forms.
Data Collection and Data Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Batch Number</th>
<th>Batch Date</th>
<th>Batch Count</th>
<th>Prepared By</th>
<th>FedEx Tracking Number</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>001</td>
<td>04/25/2016</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Jane Pinkney</td>
<td>XXXX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>002</td>
<td>05/09/2016</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Joe Greene</td>
<td>YYYY</td>
<td>Mailed with 003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>003</td>
<td>05/09/2016</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Joe Greene</td>
<td>YYYY</td>
<td>Mailed with 002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Fill in one line on the Batch Log for each batch that is being sent to Abt Associates (note that you may send multiple batches in a single shipment).

2. Enter the sequential batch number, the date the batch is being sent, and the total number of batches in the shipment. Also include the name of the person preparing the batch.

3. Maintain this log for your files and update it for each future shipment, continuing to number batches sequentially.

**Ship the Batches**

1. Prepare the mailing using the FedEx labels provided by Abt Associates. These labels have been pre-filled with a FedEx account number and the Abt Associates mailing address.

2. Ship the batches via FedEx next day shipping. Batches of documents should be sent every two weeks to Abt Associates. If you have multiple batches to mail at the same time, you should combine them in the same shipment in order to reduce mailing costs.

If you have questions about this batching and mailing process, please contact the study team.

The study team will provide you with an electronic copy of the batch cover sheet that you will be able to use throughout the study.
5. Data Collection and Data Security

This section describes the types of data the study will collect and the process that program staff will follow to provide data to the study team. We also review the importance of maintaining data security and provide guidelines for doing so and for reporting data security breaches.

Data Collection

Complete and accurate data are essential for measuring the true effects of the program. If we have inaccurate or missing data, our findings may not accurately reflect how the program is working. It is therefore crucial to be thorough and careful when dealing with study-related data.

This section describes the types of data that the study will collect.

Informed Consent and Baseline Intake Data

The HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation will gather a detailed portrait of participant characteristics at baseline (e.g., at program application or entry) prior to random assignment. Many analyses require characteristics at enrollment. Measuring characteristics at baseline allows the study researchers to check on the integrity of the random assignment process by comparing control and treatment member characteristics and to adjust for random imbalances in the final analysis. Most of these characteristics will change over time for at least some participants, for example, due to program experiences and other factors. In addition, how people answer, as well as their willingness to do so, may change once individuals know their random assignment status. Therefore, it is crucial to measure these characteristics at baseline, prior to random assignment and to not change these answers in PAGES after they are collected.

Before individuals are randomly assigned into the treatment or control groups, you will ask them to read and sign an informed consent form (the specific form will depend upon whether they are subject to or will bypass random assignment) and provide baseline intake information. Program staff should enter baseline intake information directly in PAGES. If prior approval is granted, some prospective applicants will provide baseline intake information on paper.

Regardless of how the baseline information is collected, it is essential that all HPOG participants sign a consent form and provide complete baseline intake information for PAGES before they (1) are randomly assigned (unless determined not to be subject to random assignment) and (2) before they receive any type of service or activity provided by the HPOG program. To enforce this order of events, PAGES will not allow program staff to randomly assign anyone until a PAGES entry confirming receipt of a signed consent form and completed intake form is made. As described above in Section 4, all grantees need to make and maintain a paper copy of the consent forms in a locked cabinet and send the original signed consent forms to the study team.

Follow-Up Surveys

As part of the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation, the study team will ask a sample of study participants, including both treatment and control group members, to respond to two surveys in the future -- one at approximately 15 months after random assignment and another at approximately 36 months after random assignment. These surveys will have questions designed to measure how participants are
faring on a range of education, training, and employment outcomes. The study team will be responsible for administering the follow-up survey data collection. It is crucial that the survey interviewers have complete contact information in order to locate study participants so far after random assignment. HPOG program staff can help maximize response rates by ensuring that baseline intake information is complete.

**Program Records**

In order to accurately describe the experience of treatment group members enrolled in HWF, the study team will use PAGES data to obtain information about treatment group participant experiences and service receipt in the HPOG 2.0 program. Researchers will use these records to measure skills gains among program participants, identify the degree to which they utilize program support services, and track when they reach education and career milestones. Because the Urban Institute, a member of the study team, maintains PAGES records for all HPOG grantees, the study team will have immediate access to individual files. HPOG program staff will continue to be responsible for entering information about students (treatment group members) on a timely basis.

**Administrative Data**

The HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation will draw on data from other available sources as well for treatment and control group members. We plan to use Unemployment Insurance (UI) earnings data from the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) to identify the earnings and employment status of study participants. Since unlike program records, UI earnings data are nearly universal for both treatment and control group members, this information will help us compare outcomes of people in the two groups. For example, by collecting employment records, researchers will be able to show if those who were offered the chance to participate in your program earn more on average than people in the control group who did not participate. Use of the NDNH requires having an accurate social security number and name, so it is critical that this information be captured and accurately recorded at baseline. The study team is responsible for collecting this administrative data.

**Interviews with program staff and observations of program activities**

For the evaluation’s implementation study, the study team will conduct at least two visits to the program to interview key program staff, partners, stakeholders, and employers, as appropriate. In addition, we may ask to sit in on classes or observe counseling sessions. The purpose of these visits is to learn in detail about the program design and operations so that we accurately describe it in reports and understand it when analyzing data.

**Data Security**

According to general accepted ethical principles and federal law, individuals own their data; program staff and researchers do not. When study participants provide us with information about themselves, they trust us to protect it. Doing so is a collective responsibility of program staff, the study team, Abt’s IRB, and the Department of Health and Human Services. The study team takes the protection of human subjects during research very seriously. The study team is required to follow internationally accepted guidelines, federal regulations, and institutional policies and procedures to protect individuals participating in this evaluation. In order to carry out the HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation, the study team obtained approval for all activities from the IRB and OMB to ensure compliance with these guidelines, regulations, and policies.
One of the primary ethical concerns in human subject research is protecting the identity and information of the individuals participating in the study. In particular, the study will collect personally identifiable information (PII) that, as the term suggests, identifies an individual. The study also collects sensitive information that is considered personal and private. The items listed below are considered both sensitive and personally identifiable information.

- First name and last name
- Social security number
- Date of birth
- Financial information, such as income
- Information on public assistance received, such as SNAP, TANF, unemployment benefits

Some of the fields are personal identifiers on their own, such as social security number, while others are sensitive when tied to an identifier. For example, a salary amount on its own is not considered personally identifiable information (PII), but when tied to an individual’s name and date of birth or social security number may be sensitive. In order to maintain participant privacy and prevent the occurrence of a data security breach, specific guidelines for securely working with participant and program data are provided in this section.

**Guidelines for maintaining security of data**

**Program staff** members play an important role in collecting data of interest for the study and in transferring it to the study team. The study team, in consultation with Abt’s IRB, has developed a number of measures to maintain the security of data collected for the study. These measures to maintain security include training program staff on evaluation and data security procedures, and establishing protocols for storing and transferring forms and data.

**Staff training and completion of agreements**

All program staff engaging in study activities, including recruitment, intake, and data collection, must complete training delivered by the study team and sign an Individual Investigator Agreement/Confidentiality Agreement (IIA/CA) prior to conducting any data collection activities. In the event of staff turnover, contact the study team to schedule training for new staff members.

**Storage and shipment of paper forms**

All paper documents containing information collected from study participants, including the Informed Consent Forms and any paper copies of the intake form that individuals complete must be kept in locked file cabinets until the point at which paper forms are shredded. Only staff that have completed the study’s training and have signed an IIA/CA with Abt Associates may have access to these documents. Staff should not leave paper forms lying on a desk unattended. If you must step away from your desk even for a moment, be sure to take the paper forms with you or lock them in your drawer since you may be away from your desk for longer than expected or someone may pass by your workspace unexpectedly and view or take the forms. The study team must account for all paper forms so it is important for them to be secured while on site and for completed forms to be shipped back to the study team in a timely manner.

Program staff will send forms to Abt Associates via FedEx with delivery confirmation. Guidelines for sending the forms are in **Section 4**. Please make copies of the consent forms prior to shipping the
originals to the study team and store them in a locked cabinet or office as backup. Once the study team has received the originals, we will notify you that the copies may be shredded.

**Access to PAGES**

Only staff members who have signed the Data Security Agreement form and completed the PAGES Security Awareness training will have access to PAGES. This training can be viewed at the following URL: [http://tiny.cc/HPOGPages](http://tiny.cc/HPOGPages). To access PAGES each authorized staff person will receive from the study team his/her unique username and password. Because PAGES contains personal information about participants, it is extremely important to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Never log-in to the system and leave it open when you are not present. Be sure to log out of the system even if you plan to leave the room for only a few minutes. It is also good practice to lock your computer if you plan to leave, even for a few minutes.

- Never share your username or password with anyone else. Take precautions to keep your log-in information secure. For instance, if you must write down your username and password, store them out of sight, preferably in a locked drawer, and do not post them on or near your computer where they might be easily found.

- Inform the study team immediately when new staff begins working on the project or when staff members leave. New staff members must complete PAGES training with the PAGES Support Team and random assignment training provided by the study team. New staff must also sign the IIA/CA and complete required PAGES security paperwork before they can use PAGES.

- If a staff member departs, notify PAGES Support. The PAGES Support team will disable PAGES accounts for staff members who leave.

The table below outlines some best practices related to keeping data secure. Note that this list is not comprehensive. **When in doubt, ask the study team for assistance.**

**Exhibit 5-1. General do’s and don’ts for keeping data secure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do…</th>
<th>Don’t…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do refer to study participants by their Participant ID (found in the study’s PAGES System) when corresponding via email or voicemail.</td>
<td>Don’t refer to study participants by their names, dates of birth, or social security numbers in emails or voicemails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do share “minimum necessary” data needed by the requester.</td>
<td>Don’t provide a full output of your data collection system unless authorized and absolutely necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do minimize printing paper copies of participant records; lock up printouts; shred when finished.</td>
<td>Don’t throw data report printouts in a trash or recycle bin without shredding first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do fax to non-public area machines.</td>
<td>Don’t fax to an unattended fax machine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do use computers with full drive encryption (if unsure, ask your IT department or a consultant).</td>
<td>Don’t store PII on a personal computer or unencrypted on a portable device.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do choose passwords that are difficult to guess and keep them confidential.</td>
<td>Don’t share your password or write it down on a Post-It note next to your computer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Collection and Data Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do...</th>
<th>Don’t...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do use your official work email account for communication.</td>
<td>Don’t use your personal Gmail, Yahoo, or other account for work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do delete or destroy copies and data collection outputs after they have been stored or sent.</td>
<td>Don’t retain extra copies of data “just in case.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data breaches and incident reporting**

What exactly is considered a data breach or data security incident? In general, if data has been viewed by someone other than the study participant who provided it, program staff who has been trained on evaluation procedures, or the study team, then the privacy of the data has been compromised and the incident must be reported. Similarly, if the data is at risk of being compromised because it has not been stored securely, then it might also be considered an incident. **If uncertain about whether something is an incident or not, it is best to consult with a member of the study team.**

**Important:** Never, under any circumstances, should you communicate sensitive information about study participants to the study team or PAGES Support via email. Email is not a secure way to send personally identifiable information, and sending data via email—either as an attachment or in the body of the email—is considered a data security incident that must be reported immediately to Abt and PAGES Support to be addressed by our data security teams. Abt also must report it to ACF within 24 hours of the incident. If you need to communicate sensitive information to PAGES Support, you can do so directly through PAGES. If you need to communicate sensitive information to the study team, you can call your study team liaison to discuss the case. Do not leave sensitive information in a voicemail; leave a message for your study team liaison to contact you if you get voicemail.

Exhibit 5-2 offers some examples of scenarios that should be reported to the study team.

**Exhibit 5-2. Incident scenarios and suggested alternatives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Scenario</th>
<th>Reason Scenario is Considered an Incident</th>
<th>Secure Alternatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A program staff member emailed to the study team the name of an individual who, when he learned his status as control, became extremely emotional, charged that his status was based on his race and stormed out.</td>
<td>Email is not a secure way to send personally identifiable information because emails can be intercepted by hackers and can be easily forwarded beyond the original recipients for whom the message was intended.</td>
<td>The information should have been sent via email using only the Participant ID assigned to the individual in PAGES or the information could have been provided in a phone call with the appropriate study team member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During a one-on-one intake meeting, the case manager collected intake information on a paper form. The case manager has to step away from the desk for a moment. When he returns, the applicant has left, taking her completed intake form with her.</td>
<td>The study team is responsible for the security of the data on study forms and must account for all forms. Even though the individual who completed the form took it, the study team has lost a measure of control over the security of the data.</td>
<td>The case manager could have taken the form with him or locked it in his desk when he stepped away.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is important that program staff notify the study team as soon as they learn of a data security incident. Notification can be done by telephone or email to a member of the study team—just be sure not to include any PII in the message and refer to the individual by their PAGES Participant ID. Contacting the study team site liaison by telephone or calling the study toll-free number is often best for this type of communication. Timely notification enables the study team to take immediate steps to limit the extent of the issue. We will ask you for an account of what happened, including the time and location of the incident, who was involved and in what capacity, and a description of what happened. We will then provide guidance on the measures or steps that need to be taken to remedy the situation.

This section of the procedures manual provides a user guide for initial participant entry through random assignment in PAGES. It has a brief review of guidelines for security, data entry and login procedures, followed by illustrated, step-by-step instructions for conducting intake and random assignment in PAGES:

- Facilitating completion of the baseline intake information;
- Checking an applicant’s prior HPOG or PACE involvement;
- Randomly assigning a participant; and
- What to do if PAGES is not working.

General information on all of the additional features of PAGES and how to use the system is available in the training materials “PAGES User Basic Training Part I and II” available on the welcome page of PAGES and from PAGES Support.

Security

You will enter personally identifying information into PAGES including social security numbers, contact information, and income. It is crucial that you adhere to the security guidelines outlined in the Data Security Agreement you signed and Security Awareness training video you viewed to gain access to PAGES. Some highlights of these guidelines to make sure the information in PAGES stays protected include:

- Whenever possible, always use a desk in a private place to assure that information in PAGES cannot be viewed by other individuals and to offer some privacy for the individual when random assignment is conducted.
- Never leave the system open when you are not present. Be sure to log out of PAGES even if you plan to leave the room for only a few minutes.
- Never share your login information or password with anyone else.
- Inform the PAGES Support immediately when a new staff member begins working on the project or current staff leave. To receive a PAGES account, a program staff member must submit a PAGES User Request form and new staff members will need to sign the Data Security Agreement and view the security training before they can receive an account. The PAGES Support team will remove access privileges for PAGES staff who leave the project.
- Never email a participant’s name or any other personal information. If you need to discuss a participant with your study site liaisons, refer to him or her by the unique participant ID number found in PAGES.

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6 New staff must be trained on the study recruitment, intake and random assignment procedures as well as PAGES before they can begin intake and random assignment.
Password-protect any data downloaded and saved from PAGES, store print-outs from PAGES in a locked file cabinet, and shred all PAGES printouts when you no longer need them.

**Data entry**

The information you enter into PAGES will be used for two purposes:

1. Program operations and reporting; and
2. Evaluation support.

It is critical that you review the information you enter in PAGES for clarity, accuracy, and completeness. While all of the baseline intake information captured in PAGES is important to the study, this is particularly true of participant contact information (name, address, phone number, and email). Accurate participant contact information allows program staff to communicate with participants as needed. Complete and accurate participant contact information—along with similar information for alternate contacts—friends or family of the study participants—is critical for the follow-up survey efforts the study team will conduct over the next three years. If contact information is missing or inaccurate, then the survey interviewers will have a difficult time locating participants to complete the follow-up surveys. This will result in decreased response rates. Low response rates jeopardize the overall integrity of the research findings and can inaccurately represent findings for your program.

You can change any baseline intake information up until the point you randomly assign a participant or click “Yes” on “Confirm and Lock.” This is true for all baseline intake information. Contact information and all other information entered into PAGES can be edited at any time except the participant’s social security number, which becomes locked after the “contact” tab is saved for the first time. It is important for you to make sure that the intake information you have entered is correct before clicking on “Confirm and Lock.”

If you notice a mistake after the record has been locked, you can contact PAGES Support to have them make the change or unlock the section. You should also let your study team liaisons know of the error, being sure that you follow the data security guidelines provided in this manual.

**Reminders about logging into PAGES**

Each PAGES user will receive a unique username and password. The first time you login to PAGES you will need your user name and your temporary password (both sent to you from PAGES Support).

1. In order to use PAGES, you must have access to the internet. From a computer, open a web browser (e.g., Microsoft Internet Explorer 10, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox,) and go to https://pages.crm9.dynamics.com/. The screen will appear as follows:
The first time you login to PAGES you will be asked to change your password. You will also be asked to set up two-factor authentication. Two-factor authentication provides an additional code for verification to enter the system when you login. When you carry out this initial setup, you will choose how to receive these codes via cell phone or office phone, text, or mobile app. Instructions for set up are sent with your initial login information from PAGES Support.

Checking Prior Participation Status

Contacts are the list of applicants entered into PAGES, along with their core information. The first step to entering any applicant into PAGES is creating a Contact. As described in Section 2, there is a relatively small subset of potential applicants—those who may have previously participated in HPOG 1.0 or PACE—who may bypass random assignment or may not be eligible to enroll until the embargo period is over. Creating a new contact allows you to check the applicant’s prior HPOG/PACE participation status in PAGES and determine if the applicant is subject to random assignment, is able to bypass random assignment, or is not eligible for HPOG under an embargo period. Whether the prospective applicant is subject to or will bypass random assignment determines which consent form the applicant needs to sign.

In order to conduct this check, click on the “Contacts” link under PAGES menu. This will take you to the Contacts list, which is called “My Participants.” By default, it will only display participants that you yourself have entered into PAGES or have been assigned to you by a site or grant manager in PAGES:
Click “+ New” above and to the left of My Participants, to open a new Participant Contact form. This is the first step in adding a new HPOG participant to PAGES.

You must enter the following Core Participant Information to check on prior participant status and move forward with a new record.

- First name, middle initial (optional), last name
- Social security number (SSN)
- Gender – Male, Female, Not Reported
- Date of birth – use the two digit month, followed by two digit day, followed by four digit year (mm/dd/yyyy) DO NOT use the European date format.
- Grantee Site – lookup field (For many users your site name will already be displayed. If not, you will need to select it from the list of sites.)

Once you enter the core information above and save, PAGES will search to see if someone with that same SSN is already in the system. In most instances, the SSN will be unique and, PAGES will create a new contact and you can proceed to the next stage to enter contact information (see below).

If the applicant SSN is in PAGES already, a pop-up box that says “Duplicates Detected” will open indicating that this is a duplicate SSN. Please click on the participant ID number which will take you
to the Participant contact screen for the individual. On this screen, PAGES will display one of the following messages, depending on the person’s prior status:

- Applicant subject to RA (lottery). Complete **Informed Consent Form A (Adult Lottery Required form)**.
- Applicant not subject to RA (lottery). Complete yellow **Informed Consent Form B (Adult Lottery Not Required form)**.
- Applicant cannot participate in HPOG 2.0 until after embargo date due to HPOG 1.0 control group status. If current date is post embargo date, applicant can participate and is not subject to RA (lottery). Complete yellow **Informed Consent Form B (Adult Lottery Not Required consent form)**. (See example screenshot below.)

Here is an example of a portion of the Contact Screen that will appear with the message:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prior RA Status Group</th>
<th>HPOG1-Impact C</th>
<th>Assignment Location</th>
<th>Brookdale Community College</th>
<th>Embargo End Date</th>
<th>12/31/2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRS ID</td>
<td>999998</td>
<td>Assignment Date</td>
<td>10/15/2012</td>
<td>PACE ID</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Case RA Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Current Case RA Status**

- Applicant cannot participate in HPOG 2.0 until after embargo date due to HPOG 1.0 control group status. If current date is post embargo date, applicant can participate and is not subject to RA (lottery). Complete yellow **Informed Consent Form B (Adult Lottery Not Required form)**.

If the person is not a prior HPOG/PACE participant but has been entered into PAGES already (by another case worker or in another HPOG 2.0 program) you will also receive an error message that the participant is a duplicate. In this situation you will not be allowed to continue and should contact PAGES Support for more information.

If the individual is not a prior participant or already in PAGES and not embargoed from participating in HPOG 2.0, you will be able to move forward to enter the person’s contact information. If you do not want to enter contact information at this point, you can exit PAGES (or look up another person). This may be the case if you are conducting the look-up to check on whether participants are eligible to participate in HPOG or will bypass random assignment, but have additional steps to determine eligibility before entering additional information. However, you have added this person as a contact and generated a participant ID. When you are ready to move forward with data entry, you can look up this person by name in the list of “My Participants” and continue with data entry.

**Adding Contact Information (address/phone/email).** The bottom half of the Participant Contact information form is where you enter contact information, such as address and phone numbers. This is required information, and you will need to fill it out before moving on to the next stage. Before entering the contact information, change the question “Contact Info Recorded” from “No” to “Yes.”
Once you change “Contact Info Recorded” to Yes, complete the participant contact form. Remember, fields with a red asterisk (*) are required fields. Save this record and a unique participant ID will be generated.

Once you have saved the participant’s contact information you can add alternate contacts. These are other people who can be contacted when trying to locate the participant. Typically these alternate contacts are friends or family who are close to the participant but who do not live with them. They are extremely valuable for program management and for the evaluation follow-up surveys because they can be used to find participants who have moved or changed phone numbers. We recommend that at least one alternate contact be entered for all participants. Alternate contacts can be added at the bottom of the Contacts screen and can be input by clicking on the + sign (which applies to all new PAGES entries).
A contact relationship form pops up.

Choose the relationship from the dropdown menu. Then click on the magnifying glass at the far right of the related contact box.

This opens a lookup window. Do not select any of the available participants. Instead, click the “+New” button on the bottom right of the lookup screen.

A popup window will open and this is where alternate contact information can be entered. When done, hit save.

Once this information is saved, you can proceed to the next step.
Entering Eligibility Determination

You have now created a Case for this participant. This means you are able to add additional information for the participant.

As you move through participant flow you will see the various stages checked off on the navigation bar as you complete them. For example, “Contact Info” is now checked off as completed, and you are on the next stage (Eligibility):

PAGES includes the option to record detailed participant eligibility information for your program.

Adding Eligibility Screenings/Assessments. PAGES allows you to record screenings and assessments carried out as part of your eligibility process. Entering this information is optional, but may be helpful for grant management.

To enter, scroll down on the Eligibility page and find the Eligibility box. There is a “+” button on the right side to add a new activity:

When the + is clicked, a drop-down menu will appear.

Select the activity that you would like to record, and then click “Completed” to change it to “Yes” if the Screening or Assessment was completed. Then click “Save” in order to add the Assessment record. The saved record now appears on the Assessment list:
Depending on your program’s eligibility and intake procedures, it is possible you will have created contacts and cases for individuals that you later find are NOT eligible for your HPOG program. This is not a problem. You do not have to worry about deleting these records. PAGES can easily display only eligible participants who enroll in your program.

After you determine a participant is eligible, there are several steps for entering eligibility information into PAGES. These include:

- **Informed Consent** – Applicants that are subject to random assignment must complete and sign informed consent form A. Applicants subject to random assignment that do not sign informed consent form A will not be eligible to enroll in HPOG. Indication that the applicant has signed the informed consent form, which is a mandatory pre-cursor to undergoing random assignment.

  A separate informed consent will be used for applicants not subject to random assignment (those who will bypass random assignment). This form, informed consent form B, will authorize the study team to use the applicant’s information in the outcome evaluation. Informed consent form B requires that applicants that are able to bypass random assignment indicate whether or not they agree to participate in the outcome and implementation evaluation. Thus, this form must be signed either way. However, applicants that indicate they do not agree to participate in the study can still receive HPOG services.

- **Program Eligibility Check-off** – Indication that the applicant has been found to be eligible for the HPOG program by grantee intake staff. Eligibility criteria vary by program. The PAGES system includes an affirmation that the participant has met all eligibility requirements of your program.

Once a participant is found eligible and signs the appropriate informed consent form, you should record each in PAGES. Select “Yes” for informed consent. Click on the “No” next to Eligible to change it to “Yes”:
The screen should look like this after indicating that the participant is eligible:

NOTE: For participants subject to random assignment, at this point participant status is locked as “Pre-Eligibility” and Random Assignment will be locked as “Yes”.

Save your participant’s data and click “Next Stage”.

The intake of the participant you are working with (Participant 18 in this case) will appear – click it to move on to Participant Intake.

**Completion of the Baseline Intake Information**

The baseline intake information can be collected and entered into PAGES in two ways:

1) a program staff person can enter an applicant’s intake information directly into PAGES while in a meeting with the individual, *or*

2) an individual can fill out his or her information on a paper intake form, and then staff can enter the data from the paper form into PAGES afterwards. ACF approval is required before programs can collect the baseline intake information on paper.

**Paper Intake Collection and Delayed Entry in PAGES.** If you have been approved to collect intake information outside of PAGES, you can continue to the next steps in PAGES before entering
that intake information into the system. This option is provided to assist grantees in streamlining their random assignment process. To continue to the next stage, you change “Intake Collected” from “No” to “Yes” (see below). Changing this to yes attests you have collected the intake information on paper.

You must enter the intake information you collected on paper into PAGES as soon as possible, but at least within 14 days. This information is critical to the evaluation. Reminders to enter this information will be sent to you and to site managers.

Once you have indicated the intake information has been collected, you can move onto the next stage. Whether completed on paper or directly into PAGES, the entry of the intake data is the same.

When you are on the Intake page, to fill out the intake information, scroll down. There are a number of specific items. This manual provides the generic instructions for filling out the intake section.

The intake process captures data on several key topics:

- Characteristics at intake
- Personal demographics
- Family size
- Income
- Benefit receipt
- Past/Current education and employment
- Expectations: This section is a series of questions about participants’ expectations for their future. These will be used by the impact evaluation and will only be filled in for participants being randomly assigned. To make these useful for evaluation, please use the exact wording of the questions as they appear in PAGES when asking participants.

Items have one of the following types of data entry format:

- **Drop Downs** – When clicked, several options will be available for you to click on to choose.

- **Check Boxes / Buttons** – Buttons that can be checked to indicate “Yes,” the participant satisfies the criteria.

- **Narrative / Numerical fields** – The field allows you to either enter text or a number in order to provide a response.
• **Conditional Fields** – Fields of any of the three types above that can only be answered depending on previous responses given. They will have a “Lock” symbol next to them until you provide a response that makes them required.

Definitions of some intake data elements can be found in the PAGES Glossary, which can be found on the Welcome Page.

Some questions on the intake form have “hover-over” messages. When you hold the mouse over the question, additional information will display. These hover-over messages can be useful in determining how to respond to a question. For example, here is the hover-over for the “United States citizen” question which provides additional information about responding to that item:

**Personal Characteristics**

![Image of personal characteristics]

**Missing Data Protections.** It is important to provide answers to all the intake items.

Reports will be available of the number of intake items with missing data for each participant. Please try to fill in all information before completing the intake form.

If for some reason you cannot fill in information for a specific item or need to stop before completing intake with a participant, you will be able to save your entry with missing data. **If you leave intake data missing, you will need to enter it as soon as possible, but it must be done within 2 weeks of saving the participant record.** If it is not entered PAGES will prompt you with reminders.

Once you have entered all intake information, change Intake Collected to “Yes” and “Confirm and lock” to “Yes”. If you have missing intake information either because the person refused to answer certain questions or you attempted to collect missing data from the applicant but were not successful, PAGES will stop sending reminders once you click “Confirm and Lock”.

**Do not click “Confirm and Lock” unless you have completed all intake information as much as possible.** You will be prompted to confirm that you are sure if you do click on it. **This locks the intake form. You will not be able to make changes after locking this information.**

“Confirm and Lock” is used to ensure that participant intake information is not updated at a later date. It should only be recorded once - at the time of intake.
Then click “Next Stage” to move to the next stage

**Staff member conducts random assignment**

For this portion of the process, the Study Team recommends that you use a computer in a relatively private place away from heavy foot traffic, such as the corner of a room or at the staff member’s desk.

For participants subject to random assignment, you will now be at the Random Assignment Stage. Before conducting random assignment, you will click on what strata (if any) the individual is in. This is also where you will enter if a person is a “wild card” and will not be randomly assigned (see below).

**Selecting strata.** Strata are used in circumstances where you want to ensure you do not randomly get especially long strings of controls in a row, such as if there are multiple intake sites or training types and you want to make sure that treatment and control group members are assigned somewhat evenly over time. Decisions about strata were worked out with your study team during the development of your EDIP.

Your program has defined the following strata: TANF and Non-TANF. In order to select strata, click the Strata lookup (magnifying glass) and select the appropriate strata prior to Random Assignment.
Assigning Wild Cards. “Wild cards” allow automatic enrollment of a very small number of applicants directly into HPOG without going through random assignment. They enable grantees to serve a few participants that the program wants to serve, without subjecting them to random assignment.

Each program is allowed to assign the greater of 3 participants or one percent of its projected study enrollment as a wild card. The HWF is allowed 7 wild card slots. The decision to assign a participant as a wild card must be made PRIOR to random assignment. A wild card cannot be used to change the treatment status of a participant after random assignment.

Only program directors have the ability to approve and assign a wild card. Prior to flagging an applicant as a wild card in the PAGES system, program staff will need to explain to the program director why they want to assign a wild card slot to a particular participant. They need to review this with their program director and the program director has final approval. Once the program director approves the wild card, he or she (or their designated representative who has grant manager level account in PAGES) will go into PAGES and set the individual as a wildcard. The program director will change the “Approved for Wildcard” field to “Yes”. After this step is complete, the staff member will go to the “Strata” field (see above) and select “wildcard”. You will proceed to the trigger RA step. Although this will not randomly assign the person, it will finalize the wildcard status and allow you to enter additional information into PAGES.

The number of wildcards that have been used is tracked in PAGES and can be viewed by staff.

**Complete Random Assignment.** To conduct RA, click on “Trigger RA” and you will get a popup window asking you to confirm the participant’s identifying information:
Confirm participant information and click “Ok:”

After you click “OK”, you can click in the box to the right of “Trigger RA” and select Yes. You will see the RA result code for the participant displayed next to “RA Result Code” on the screen, T for treatment and C for control. (For wildcards, a W will appear.)

At this point, the participant has been randomly assigned, and their assignment group will not change.

Using the scripts provided in Section 2 above, inform the participant of their random assignment outcome and what the next steps should be. Refer to your Quick Reference Guide for easy access to the messages.
PAGES Troubleshooting

While PAGES is the primary means for applicants to complete the baseline intake information and for staff to conduct random assignment, unforeseen circumstances could make PAGES inaccessible. For instance, a power outage or issues with internet connectivity could prevent use of PAGES at a time when program staff members need to proceed with intake. Should PAGES stop working for any reason, you may contact PAGES Support staff:

- Email at PAGESSupport@urban.org. They will return your message within 2 business days
- Leave a voicemail at (855) 217-9320 (toll-free) – they will return your message within 2 business days

The Study Team liaisons are also available to help you troubleshoot, but in the event they cannot be reached, you may also use the hotline, 844-717-4691, for immediate assistance.
7. Key Contacts

The HPOG 2.0 study team is available to answer questions and address any issues that arise during the course of the study. Below is contact information for the study team members working with your program as well as the leadership team for the project. You may contact any of the following people to ask about the study or report an incident. The study team will be responsible for ensuring you are routed to the appropriate person.

For systems-related issues regarding PAGES, please contact PAGES Support team at PAGESupport@urban.org or by phone (855) 217-9320 (toll-free). For more general questions regarding random assignment processes, contact the study team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HPOG 2.0 Study Hotline and Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPOG 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Team Site Liaisons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan DeCoursey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carly Morrison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire Ma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Team Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gretchen Locke (Project Director)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A. RA 101

The Impact of

Testing the Effectiveness of the Health Profession Opportunity Grants

Learning about HPOG’s Impacts
Congress created the Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG) Program as a “demonstration project” and provided funding to test the program’s effectiveness. The government is evaluating whether adding HPOG to the services available in a community improves people’s lives. The best way to determine this is to conduct an experiment, where a lottery-like process called “random assignment” chooses which eligible individuals get invited to participate in HPOG (the “treatment group”) and which do not (the “control group”). The control group’s experiences represent what would have happened in the absence of HPOG. The difference between what happens to treatment group members and what happens to control group members is the effect of HPOG. In a world of scarce resources, using random assignment is a fair way to determine who gains access to limited training slots, in addition to supporting a rigorous evaluation. While other evaluation activities are considering the program’s implementation, outcomes, and participant experiences, the experimental impact study, which uses random assignment, is best suited to discovering the program’s effects.

Why Random Assignment is Important
The illustration on the next page shows how comparisons that do not use random assignment can be misleading. Although the groups might look alike, many factors can influence individuals’ lives and could be mistaken for program effects. These factors include: historical forces that could explain why people find jobs more quickly in a strong economy than in a weak one, for example; self-selection into the program by the people most likely to succeed and benefit from it; and maturation that explains how people learn and grow over time in ways that affect their outcomes even without a program’s stimulus. Using random assignment as part of an evaluation accounts for all of these various other explanations for why people change. As a result, the evidence that an experimental evaluation produces is highly reliable and can be very persuasive to policy makers faced with decisions about whether to continue, retool, or discontinue the programs and policies that they fund. Although it can be challenging to implement random assignment in practice, it is important to do so because of how much we stand to learn about program effectiveness.

FAQs about Random Assignment: Do We Really Have to?

Why can’t we compare HPOG participants’ situations before and after the program to show their progress?
Tracking HPOG participants’ outcomes can show whether they complete a program, get a certificate or a degree, and find employment. That information alone cannot tell us whether those outcomes are any different from what would have happened without HPOG. It is possible that these individuals would have earned a certificate or degree or would have found employment without HPOG. It is even possible that they might have achieved these things faster in the absence of HPOG. Without a control group, it is impossible to know.

Why can’t we compare HPOG participants’ outcomes to those of some other people who are not part of our program?
The illustration on the next page shows why it can be problematic to compare a treatment group to another group that was not formed by random assignment. Researchers can compare those who applied and were eligible for the HPOG Program to a group with similar characteristics—such as their age or education levels—and use statistical methods to try to identify the effects of a program. However, because those in a non-randomized comparison group did not apply to be in the program, they are unlikely to be similar on unobserved characteristics, such as their levels of motivation or perseverance; and these characteristics also influence individuals’ changes in outcomes. For example, HPOG applicants might be more motivated than non-applicants to find better jobs, and we cannot be sure that it is not such motivation—or even some other unknown factor—that makes their later outcomes better than those of a non-randomly assigned group. In addition to having all the same traits as an HPOG treatment group, a randomized control group can access other services in the community, which means that it fully represents what would have happened in the absence of HPOG.

What am I supposed to say to a person who gets randomized to the control group?
For the part of the evaluation process that involves random assignment, researchers rely on front-line staff to be the “face” of the evaluation. It is understandably difficult to tell someone who is otherwise eligible for HPOG that the random assignment process placed her in the “control” group. The evaluation team will provide materials and training to ensure that staff feel confident conducting random assignment and talking to HPOG applicants about it. For example, even before the lottery happens, all applicants must be informed about the research, including why randomly choosing individuals is a fair way to decide who gets into HPOG, given the limited and temporary funding. Staff will be trained to explain to individuals chosen for the control group that they still have access to other services available in the community.
For more Information about HPOG or its evaluation, please contact:

Hilary C. Forster, HPOG Evaluation Team Lead
Social Science Research Analyst
Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
370 L’Enfant Promenade, SW, Washington, DC 20447
Email: Hilary.Forster@acf.hhs.gov
Phone: (202) 619-1790

Gretchen Locke, HPOG2 National and Tribal Evaluation Project
Director
Abt Associates Inc.
55 Wheeler Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Email: Gretchen.Locke@abtassoc.com
Phone: (617) 349-2373
HPOG 2.0:
Random Assignment
Status Guidelines for Prior
HPOG/PACE Participants
Talking Points

- The non-Tribal grantees awarded under the second round of the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG 2.0) will be evaluated using an experimental evaluation design that will randomly assign eligible individuals to treatment and control groups.

- However, not all individuals eligible to be served by HPOG 2.0 will be subject to random assignment. Research ethics suggest that individuals who want to enter an HPOG 2.0 program and who have prior relationships to the first round of HPOG or Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education (PACE) programs should be treated differently in random assignment (RA) than other eligible individuals. (PACE is an experimental study of nine promising career pathways programs; three first-round HPOG programs are included in the PACE study. The first round of HPOG is also being evaluated through an experimental evaluation.)

- The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) used two main rules to guide decisions regarding Random assignment status of individuals:
  1) An individual should not have to go through RA twice; and,
  2) An individual’s current program of study should not be interrupted for the sake of RA.

This guidance applies both to individuals who are included in the experimental study of the first round of HPOG or the PACE study, as well as other prior participants in the first round of HPOG or PACE who are not in the experimental studies.

- Abt Associates and its partners, Urban Institute, MEF, and Insight Policy Research are conducting an evaluation of the National HPOG 2.0 Program. They have established a help line that your staff or other individuals can call who have questions or concerns. The number is 1-844-717-4691.
HPOG 2.0 grantees will not be required to determine whether an individual eligible to be served by HPOG 2.0 is subject to RA. The PAGES system will automatically determine which individuals are subject to RA and whether they can enter the program, and users will be alerted to this when entering a participant into the system. Below is a description of the different groups and their relationship to the first round of HPOG and PACE programs and whether they will be subject to RA and, if so, when that can occur.

Exhibit A.1. Prior Participants Status and Rules Related to Receiving HPOG 2.0 Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Category</th>
<th>Will Receive Services Under HPOG 2.0? (Yes/No)</th>
<th>If Yes, Date When Services may be Received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPOG1.0 Treatment group members</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>May immediately enter HPOG 2.0.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPOG 1.0 Control group members</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>After January 2018. (I.e., after final survey data collection for HPOG 1.0 ends, in accordance with their consent to participate in the HPOG 1.0 Impact Study)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACE Treatment group members from HPOG programs (Pima, San Diego, Seattle, Instituto)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>May immediately enter HPOG 2.0.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACE Control group members from HPOG programs (Pima, San Diego, Seattle, Instituto)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>After 2.5 to 3 years (varying by program) from when they were RA’ed for PACE in accordance with their consent to participate in the PACE evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACE Treatment and Control group members from non-HPOG programs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>May immediately enter HPOG 2.0.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First round HPOG participants* active** at any time in the HPOG program in the 6 months prior to 9/30/15 (most likely entered into HPOG 1.0 after the period of RA ended)</td>
<td>Yes until 3/30/2016</td>
<td>Allowed to enter HPOG 2.0 until 3/30/2016 without being subject to RA. After 3/30/2016, all additional applicants who have not sought HPOG services are subject to RA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Category</td>
<td>Will Receive Services Under HPOG 2.0? (Yes/No)</td>
<td>If Yes, Date When Services may be Received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First round HPOG participants* not active* at any time in the HPOG program in the 6 months prior to 9/30/15 (most likely entered into HPOG 1.0 before the period of RA started)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>This group will be subject to RA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First round HPOG participants* enrolled in an ongoing healthcare training course using HPOG 1.0 no cost extension funds</td>
<td>Yes through 9/30/2016</td>
<td>Allowed to enter HPOG 2.0 until 9/30/2016 without being subject to RA. After 9/30/2016, all additional applicants who have not sought HPOG services are subject to RA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First round HPOG participants* who begin a healthcare training course after 9/30/15 using HPOG 1.0 no cost extension funds and HPOG participants who are first enrolled in HPOG during the no-cost extension period</td>
<td>Yes through 9/30/2016</td>
<td>Allowed to enter HPOG 2.0 until 9/30/2016. After 9/30/2016, all additional applicants in this group are subject to RA. (Note: This group may not be automatically flagged by the PAGES system.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*First round HPOG participants are defined as those who participated in HPOG 1.0 prior to and after random assignment.

**Active is defined as “enrolled in HPOG with a service/training activity (open occupational training, pre-training activity, employment development, or support service) recorded in the HPOG Performance Reporting System (the data system used by the first round of HPOG) at any time in the prior six months.” Not active includes anyone who does not fall under the active definition.
Appendix C. Informed Consent Form A: Adult Random Assignment (Lottery) Required
AGREEMENT TO TAKE PART IN THE
HEALTH PROFESSION OPPORTUNITY GRANT PROGRAM (HPOG) RESEARCH STUDY

FORM A: ADULT LOTTERY REQUIRED (and parent permission box for minors)

You are invited to take part in an important study of healthcare training programs. The study is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Several research organizations – including but not limited to, Abt Associates and its partners, MEF, the Urban Institute, Insight Policy Research, Abt SRBI and other researchers – are running the study for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Your taking part in the study will help us learn more about how the HPOG program helps people improve their skills, find jobs, and advance in healthcare careers.

Over the next 10 years, researchers will use information about people in the program to do the study. This form: 1) describes the HPOG Impact study and 2) requests your participation in the study. We need to tell you about the study and what it means to be part of it. Only individuals who agree to participate in the study will be able to enroll in our Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County Health Workforce for the Future (HWF).

What does it mean to be part of the impact study?

We expect a total of 43,000 people at up to 27 HPOG programs across the country to participate in this study. Entry into the HPOG program will be by computer lottery. Participation in the study is voluntary. You can choose not to be part of the study but that also means that you will not be part of the lottery and have a chance to be in the HPOG program. If you choose not to be part of the study you can, however, enroll in any other non-HPOG program or services in the community for which you are eligible.

1) If you agree to take part, staff at Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County Health Workforce for the Future (HWF) will first see if you are eligible for the program. If you are eligible, then staff will explain that you must be in the lottery. The lottery will decide at random, whether or not you can take part in the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County Health Workforce for the Future (HWF). If you are not selected, you will not be able to enroll in the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County Health Workforce for the Future (HWF). However, you can still enroll in any other service or program for which you are eligible.

2) The study team will collect data from all people who apply for HPOG and meet Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County Health Workforce for the Future (HWF) eligibility requirements. This will happen when people first apply to the program and meet its eligibility rules.

3) The study team also plans to follow up with some of the people who participate in the study. The study team will keep track of people who participated in the lottery and were invited to enroll in the program. The study team also plans to follow-up with those who were not invited to enroll in the program. The study team will contact this group every three months to make
sure that it has people’s current phone numbers and addresses. They will also have phone or in
person interviews with this group approximately one and three years after they agreed to be in
the study.

**What type of information will the study collect?**

If you agree to participate in the lottery, researchers would like to collect the following information about
you:

4) Information you provide when you first apply to the program including:
   a. Current information about you, your family, your education, your income and your work
      history. This includes social security numbers.
   b. If you have children, researchers would like to request information about their
      birthdates and names. Researchers may contact you in the future about including your
      children in a related study. You can participate in this study even if you do not want your
      children to participate in a study in the future.

5) Information you or other organizations provide to the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-
   King County Health Workforce for the Future (HWF) staff about the training and services you
got while you are in the program.

6) Information from follow-up surveys. Some of the people in the study will be asked to answer
   a 60-minute phone or in-person survey. You can choose whether you want to participate in
   the survey or not. If you decide to participate in the survey you can choose not to answer any
   question. Whether or not you choose to participate in the survey will never affect any benefits
   or services you receive now or in the future. If you are selected you will be asked for:
   a. Updated information about you, your family, your education, your income, and your
      work history;
   b. Information about the training and education or employment support services you
      have received;
   c. If you have children, updated information on your children including their educational
      experiences such as grades, socialization skills, goals and support system; their activities
      outside of school, family routines and other outcomes;
   d. Updated contact information every three months or so to make sure the study team
      knows the best way to reach you. The research study team (Abt Associates and Abt
      SRBI) may contact you via email, text or social media if you indicate it is okay to do so in
      your intake interview.

7) Information from government sources so researchers can learn more about your future
   employment, earnings, and post-secondary education over the next few years. Abt will use your
   name and social security number to get some of these data from the National Directory of New
   Hires and the National Student Clearinghouse. We will collect these data for you and up to
   43,000 others study participants. The researchers will collect data for the 12 month period
   before you enrolled and up to five years after you enroll in the study.

**Will my information be kept private?**

The research organizations conducting this study will have access to the data being collected about you.
These organizations are committed to keeping your personal information private. Any researchers using
information to study the program must follow strict data security procedures and sign a privacy
agreement. However, there is a small risk of a loss of privacy. We will take strong precautions to make
sure this does not happen. Any piece of paper that includes your name or other identifying information will be kept in a locked storage area and will be destroyed after the study ends. Any computer files with your name or other identifying information will be protected by a password and will be stored on a secure network. Your personal information will be protected to the extent allowable by law. Our reports will combine your responses with responses from others. People who read the reports will not be able to identify responses you give. Any data sets that are developed for sharing with other researchers will be stripped of information that would make it easy to identify you.

**Requesting Permission**

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you participate, we will ask you to disclose your social security number. Abt will use your name and social security number to get some of these data from the National Directory of New Hires and the National Student Clearinghouse. This collection is part of research activities authorized by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (H.R. 3590, Title V, Subtitle F, Sec. 5507, sec. 2008, (a)(3)(B)).

This agreement is effective from the date you sign it (shown below) until the end of HHS’s research on HPOG grants, or when you choose to withdraw permission. You may choose to withdraw your participation in the study at any time. If you do withdraw, researchers will continue to use information collected during the time you consented. To withdraw from the study, please call toll-free at 844-717-4691 (the Abt help line).

You will receive a copy of this form for your records. An agency may not collect information and a person is not required to respond to an information collection request unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

For questions or concerns about the research, call Abt Associates toll-free at 844-717-4691. For questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, call Teresa Doksum at the Abt Associates Institutional Review Board at toll-free 877-520-6835.
(Office Use Only -- HPOG ID Number: ____________)

Statement

"I have read this form and agree to participate in the Health Profession Opportunity Grant Program research study.

- I know that I must agree to be in the research study before I can enroll in the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County Health Workforce for the Future (HWF).
- I know if I agree to be in the research study, I will be selected by the lottery to be in the HPOG program. I understand that even if I am not selected to be in the program, I will still be in the research study."

PRINT YOUR NAME ABOVE DATE

SIGN YOUR NAME ABOVE

Parent or Guardian Permission Box:

For HPOG applicants under the age of 18, your parent or legal guardian also must sign below:

By signing this participation agreement, I confirm that I have read and understood the description of the HPOG Research Study.

☐ I AGREE TO LET MY CHILD ____________________________ BE IN THE HPOG RESEARCH STUDY
   CHILD NAME

☐ I DO NOT AGREE TO LET MY CHILD ____________________________ BE IN THE HPOG RESEARCH STUDY
   CHILD NAME

PRINT NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE DATE

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13), no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0970-0460. The described information collection is voluntary. If you have comments or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, OS/OHRP/PRA, 200 Independence Ave., S.W., Suite 336-E, Washington D.C. 20201, Attention: PRA Reports Clearance Officer.
Appendix D. Informed Consent Form B: Adult Random Assignment (Lottery)
NOT Required
FORM B: ADULT LOTTERY NOT REQUIRED (and parent permission box for minors)

You are invited to take part in an important study of healthcare training programs. The study is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Several research organizations — including MEF, the Urban Institute, and Insight Policy Research and other researchers — are running the study for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Your taking part in the study will help us learn more about how the HPOG program helps people improve their skills, find jobs, and advance in healthcare careers.

Over the next 10 years, researchers will use information about people in the program to do the study. This form: 1) describes the HPOG Outcome study and 2) requests your participation in the study. We need to tell you about the study and what it means to be part of it.

What does it mean to be part of the Outcomes study?

We expect a total of 43,000 people at up to 27 HPOG programs across the country to participate in this study. Participation in the HPOG Outcome study is voluntary. You can choose not to be part of the study and still receive HPOG services.

The study team will collect data from all people who apply for HPOG and meet Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County Health Workforce for the Future (HWF) eligibility requirements. This will happen when people first apply to the program and meet its eligibility rules.

What type of information will the study collect?

If you agree to participate in the study, researchers would like to collect the following information about you:

1) Information you provide when you first apply to the program including: current information about you, your family, your education, your income and your work history. This includes social security numbers.

2) Information you or other organizations provide to the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County Health Workforce for the Future (HWF) staff about the training and services you get while you are in the program.

3) Information from government sources so researchers can learn more about your future employment, earnings, and post-secondary education over the next few years. Abt will use your name and social security number to get some of these data from the National Directory of New Hires and the National Student Clearinghouse.

Attachment B: Informed Consent Forms   pg. 1
Will my information be kept private?

The research organizations conducting this study will have access to the data being collected about you. These organizations are committed to keeping your personal information private. Any researchers using information to study the program must follow strict data security procedures and sign a privacy agreement. However, there is a small risk of a loss of privacy. We will take strong precautions to make sure this does not happen. Any piece of paper that includes your name or other identifying information will be kept in a locked storage area and will be destroyed after the study ends. Any computer files with your name or other identifying information will be protected by a password and will be stored on a secure network. Your personal information will be protected to the extent allowable by law. Our reports will combine your responses with responses from others. People who read the reports will not be able to identify responses you give. Any data sets that are developed for sharing with other researchers will be stripped of information that would make it easy to identify you.

Requesting Permission

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you participate, we will ask you to disclose your social security number. Abt will use your name and social security number to get some of these data from the National Directory of New Hires and the National Student Clearinghouse. This collection is part of research activities authorized by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (H.R. 3590, Title V, Subtitle F, Sec. 5507, sec. 2008, (a)(3)(B)).

This agreement is effective from the date you sign it (shown below) until the end of HHS’s research on HPOG grants, or when you choose to withdraw permission. You may choose to withdraw your participation in the study at any time. If you do withdraw, researchers will continue to use information collected during the time you consented. To withdraw from the study, please call toll-free at 844-717-4691 (the Abt help line).

You will receive a copy of this form for your records. An agency may not conduct and a person is not required to respond to an information collection request unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

For questions or concerns about the research, call Abt Associates toll-free at 844-717-4691

For questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, call Teresa Doksum at the Abt Associates Institutional Review Board at toll-free 877-520-6835.
Statement

"I have read this form and I know that my participation in the study is voluntary and I still may receive HPOG services if I choose not to participate.

☐ I AGREE TO BE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY
☐ I DO NOT AGREE TO BE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

PRINT YOUR NAME ABOVE

SIGN YOUR NAME ABOVE DATE

Parent or Guardian Permission Box:

For HPOG applicants under the age of 18, your parent or legal guardian also must sign below:

By signing this participation agreement, I confirm that I have read and understood the description of the HPOG Study.

☐ I AGREE TO LET MY CHILD ____________________________ BE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY
       CHILD NAME

☐ I DO NOT AGREE TO LET MY CHILD ____________________________ BE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY
       CHILD NAME

PRINT NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE DATE

Institutional Review Board
Study#: 0816
Study Year: 8/21/15-6/20/16

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13), no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0970-0362. The described information collection is voluntary. If you have comments or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, OS/OOI/PRA, 200 Independence Ave., S.W., Suite S36-E, Washington D.C. 20201, Attention: PRA Reports Clearance Officer.

Attachment B: Informed Consent Forms pg. 3
Appendix E. Individual Investigator Agreement
Individual Investigator Agreement

Institution and Federalwide Assurance (FWA) #: Abt Associates Inc. FWA #: 00000664

Study Partner’s Name: ________________

Study Covered by this Agreement: ________________ HPOG 2.0 National Evaluation

(1) The above-named Study Partner has participated in training required by Abt and has reviewed the following materials: materials/manual describing the study protocol to be followed, including procedures to recruit and obtain informed consent from participants, and procedures to maintain participants’ privacy and protect confidentiality of participants’ information. The study protocol and documents have been reviewed and approved by Abt’s research ethics committee called the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

(2) The Study Partner understands and hereby accepts the responsibility to comply with the standards and requirements stipulated in the above documents and to protect the rights and welfare of participants involved in the study conducted under this Agreement. The Study Partner acknowledges that the participant’s rights and welfare must take precedence over the goals and requirements of the study.

(3) The Study Partner will abide by all determinations of the Abt IRB as communicated by the Abt representative and will accept the final authority and decisions of the IRB, including but not limited to directives to terminate participation in designated study activities.

(4) The Study Partner will report promptly to the IRB (via Abt representative) any proposed changes in the study conducted under this Agreement. The Study Partner will not initiate changes in the study without prior IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants.

(5) The Study Partner will report immediately to the IRB (via Abt representative) any unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or others in the study covered under this Agreement and any deviations from the study protocol and/or data security procedures.

(6) In accordance with the study protocol, the Study Partner agrees not to email personally identifiable information (PII) of study participants. The Study Partner must notify Abt Associates of any security incidents related to the study immediately (within 1 hour). The definition of security incidents includes, but is not limited to, the unintentional or intentional communication or transmission of PII of study participants via a non-secure transmission protocol.

(7) The Study Partner, when responsible for enrolling participants, will obtain, document, and maintain records of informed consent for each such participant or each participant’s legally
authorized representative as stipulated by the IRB. The Study Partner will not begin to enroll participants in the study until approval (by the IRB) has been communicated by the Abt representative.

(8) The Study Partner acknowledges that he/she will be allowed access to confidential information and/or records so that he/she may perform his/her role in this study. Study Partner further understands and agrees not to disclose or use confidential information and/or records outside the scope of his/her assigned role in this study without the prior consent of the appropriate authority(s).

Study Partner Signature: ________________________________ Date ________________

Name: ____________________________________________________________

(Last)   (First)

Work Address: __________________________________ Work Phone #: ______

____________________________________ Work Email: ______

(City)   (State)   (Zip)

Abt Associates FWA Institutional Official (or Designee): __________ Date ____________

Name: Doksum Teresa Institutional Title: IRB Chair

(Last)   (First)

Address: 55 Wheeler Street Phone #: 617-349-2634

Cambridge, MA 02138 Email: irb@abtassoc.com

(City)   (State)   (Zip)
Appendix F. Template for list of alternative services available in the community

At the time they are notified of the outcome of random assignment, individuals assigned to the control group will receive a list of other services available in the community. Your program may already have such a list to provide them with, or may use the following template to design a handout.

Community Resource List

[Seattle-King County]

The following is a list of some resources available in King County and within the City of Seattle. You may contact these resources whether or not you choose to participate in the ISIS study. Please note that each program has its own eligibility criteria and service availability. Please contact programs/organizations of interest to find out more information.

- **WorkSource of Seattle-King County**
  
  [http://www.worksourceskc.org](http://www.worksourceskc.org)

  *WorkSource* is the name for the “one-stop” system in Washington State. WorkSource is a joint venture of many organizations who together provide services to adults, youth, and businesses throughout King County and connect jobseekers with employers. There are 7 WorkSource locations in Seattle-King County. In addition, 13 WorkSource Connection sites can connect you virtually to WorkSource resources and services. To learn more about WorkSource and find a location near you, use the website above.

- **Community & Technical Colleges**
  

  There are 10 community and technical colleges in King County, including 4 in the Seattle Community College District and 6 in other parts of King County (Shoreline, Kirkland, Bellevue, Renton, Auburn/Kent, and Highline). Many of these colleges offer specialized programs and tuition assistance, such as BFET, WorkFirst, Worker Retraining, and Pell grant funding. For more information about specific colleges, including links to websites for each campus, or to explore careers, use the websites above.

- **Seattle Jobs Initiative Career Pathways Program**
  
  (206) 461-4554 x26
  

  Seattle Jobs Initiative’s Career Pathways Program provides linked short-term and longer-term training at area community colleges in four industry sectors: Automotive, Healthcare, Office Occupations (BiT), and Welding & Manufacturing. The objective of Career Pathways is to help participants advance to a one- or two-year college credential that will provide them with excellent opportunities for a well-paying career in their chosen industry sector. If you
are 18 years or older, live in Seattle or White Center, and your household income is less than 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) you may be eligible for this program. Contact the number above to learn more about the healthcare career pathway, or visit the website for more information on all the SJI career pathways.

- **Seattle Goodwill Career Pathways & Community College 101**
  1400 S Lane St.
  Seattle, WA 98144
  (206) 860-5791

  Career Pathways prepares individuals for college with Community College 101 (a six-week class offered 4 times per year). Seattle Goodwill then supports participants’ next steps as they transition to community or technical college and throughout their first year in school.

- **Public Libraries** The Seattle and King County Library systems have libraries in neighborhoods throughout the county. Most libraries have computers with internet access available for use free of charge, and many also offer special resources to help with job search and connections to education and training. To find a library near you, use the phone numbers or websites below.

  In Seattle:
  206-386-4636

  In King County outside Seattle:
  425-462-9600 or 1-800-462-9600
Appendix G. FAQs
Common questions from applicants about the study and random assignment

Individuals may have questions about the study and the random assignment process. Some possible questions applicants may ask of program staff and suggested responses are listed below.

- **Can I choose the group I want to be in?** No. So that we can learn how well the program services work, each group has to be chosen randomly. That way, everyone has an equal chance to be in one group or another, and it will be possible to see how well the program services work.

- **Will program staff decide which group I get into?** No. The research firm that’s doing the study designed a web-based system to make the decision. We can’t affect the lottery process itself—we have no control over who is selected for which group. A computer determines that randomly. Even though we enter information that you fill out on the study’s baseline information form into the computer system, the information we enter has no impact on what group you end up it.

- **How long will I remain in this group?** You will remain in this group for the duration of the program operating here. If you come back to re-apply, you will remain in the group you are assigned to today your assignment will not change.

- **How do the groups differ?** Some individuals will be assigned to a group (the treatment group) that can participate in the training program provided here, while the other group (the control group) cannot participate in this program. Otherwise both groups are eligible for all other services or supports in the community.

- **How is the lottery conducted?** A computer does it. It is random, like flipping a coin.

- **How will I find out the results of the lottery?** Once the computer randomly assigns you, the program staff will notify you immediately if done in person, otherwise they may notify you via email, or by phone to inform you of the results.

- **What if I move out of the area?** You will remain in the group you are assigned to even if you move away from the area where you can receive services. If you are in the treatment group and you move to an area served by a different HPOG program, you may receive services there. If you are in the control group, you will not be able to receive services at any HPOG program. The researchers will still be interested in learning about your experiences and they will use the contact information you provided on the baseline information form to help locate you for the follow up surveys.

- **I don’t think the selection process is fair.** The lottery process is like picking numbers out of a hat so everyone is treated equally. This means that you have the same chance to be in either of the two research groups as anyone else. Remember, the decision has nothing to do with anything about you, including things like age, sex, race, ethnic group, or education. Also, when there are more people who want to enter a program than slots available, a lottery is the fairest way to allocate spaces so that everyone has the same chance of getting in. You do not have to participate in the lottery, but if you choose not to, you will not be eligible to participate in HPOG.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization name:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong></td>
<td>(e.g. your city or site location)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Batch number:</strong></td>
<td>Refer to your Batch Log to find the next sequential number. Your log should begin with the number 001, with each batch assigned a sequential number after that so that each will be used only once during the entire evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of documents in this batch:</strong></td>
<td>Enter the total number of informed consent forms in the batch. You may include up to 25 documents in a batch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Form A</strong></td>
<td><strong>Form B</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of documents being mailed in this package:</strong></td>
<td>Record the total number of forms being mailed in the current Priority Mail shipment. You may send multiple batches in the same envelope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date batched:</strong></td>
<td>Enter the date that the forms are being batched.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Batch prepared by:</strong></td>
<td>Print your name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comments:</strong></td>
<td>Record anything you think Abt Associates and the research team need to know about what is being shipped. For instance, note whether any forms were marked unusable, error, or declined to participate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I: Random Assignment Notification Letters
Letter for HPOG 2.0 Control Group Members

Date

Dear __________________________________________,

On ___/____/____, you agreed to participate in a study about the Health Profession Opportunity Grant, or HPOG, program. HPOG is a study funded by the federal government, which is being conducted to determine how these training opportunities help people improve their skills and find better jobs. The local HPOG program name is called Health Workforce for the Future (HWF).

When you agreed to participate in the HPOG study you were told that during the study, all new eligible applicants will be selected by lottery to participate in these training opportunities. Not all eligible applicants will be selected to participate in these opportunities.

This letter is to inform you that the computer assigned you to the control group, which is the group that will not participate in the HWF program. However, you will still be an important part of the study. This means that the research firm conducting the study may contact you to complete one or more additional surveys sometime in the next few years. They may contact you every few months to make sure that they keep your contact information up to date. You may still apply for other services in the community. We included a list of other available services in the community for your reference.

Sincerely,
Dear _____________________________,

On ___/____/_____, you agreed to participate in a study about the Health Profession Opportunity Grant, or HPOG, program. HPOG is a study funded by the federal government, which is being conducted to determine how these training opportunities help people improve their skills and find better jobs. The local HPOG program name is called Health Workforce for the Future (HWF).

When you agreed to participate in the HPOG study you were told that during the study, all new eligible applicants will be selected by lottery to participate in these training opportunities. Not all eligible applicants will be selected to participate in these opportunities.

This letter is to inform you that the computer assigned you to the treatment group, which is the group that will participate in the HWF program. You can enroll in the program by contacting:

[NAME OF PROGRAM STAFF]

at [PHONE NUMBER AND EMAIL].

Sincerely,
Letter for Embargoed Prior HPOG or PACE Participants

Dear ____________________________.

On ___/____/____, you agreed to participate in a study about the Health Profession Opportunity Grant, or HPOG, program. HPOG is a study funded by the federal government, which is being conducted to determine how these training opportunities help people improve their skills and find better jobs. Your local HPOG program name is called Health Workforce for the Future (HWF).

When you agreed to participate in the HPOG study you were told that during the study, all new eligible applicants will be selected by lottery to participate in these training opportunities. Not all eligible applicants will be selected to participate in these opportunities.

Our records indicate that you are not able to participate in the HPOG program at this time because of your prior participation in an earlier research study. You may be eligible to participate in the study after [END OF EMBARGO DATE]. If you are still interested in participating in HPOG, please feel free to contact us at that time.

Sincerely,
Letter for HPOG 2.0 Prior Participants who Bypass Random Assignment

Dear ____________________________,

On ___/____/____, you agreed to participate in a study about the Health Profession Opportunity Grant, or HPOG, program. HPOG is a study funded by the federal government, which is being conducted to determine how these training opportunities help people improve their skills and find better jobs. The local HPOG program name is called Health Workforce for the Future (HWF).

When you agreed to participate in the HPOG study you were told that during the study, all new eligible applicants will be selected by lottery to participate in these training opportunities. Not all eligible applicants will be selected to participate in these opportunities.

This letter is to inform you that because of your prior participation in the HPOG 1.0 or PACE study, you do not have to go through the lottery. You are able to participate in the HWF program. You can enroll in the program by contacting:

[NAME OF PROGRAM STAFF]

at [PHONE NUMBER AND EMAIL].

Sincerely,
Letter for HPOG Participants Who Are Assigned a Wild Card, or Are in a Group Approved for Exemption

Date

Dear ______________________________,

On __/__/____, you agreed to participate in a study about the Health Profession Opportunity Grant, or HPOG, program. HPOG is a study funded by the federal government, which is being conducted to determine how these training opportunities help people improve their skills and find better jobs. The local HPOG program name is called Health Workforce for the Future (HWF).

When you agreed to participate in the HPOG study you were told that during the study, all new eligible applicants will be selected by lottery to participate in these training opportunities. Not all eligible applicants will be selected to participate in these opportunities.

This letter is to inform you that you are able to participate in the HWF program. You can enroll in the program by contacting:

[NAME OF PROGRAM STAFF]

at [PHONE NUMBER AND EMAIL].

Sincerely,