



# **Toolkit | Obtaining Administrative Data for DOL Research and Evaluations, Insights from Employment and Training Research**

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This toolkit represents successful practices in negotiating agreements to obtain and use administrative data in DOL program evaluations.<sup>1</sup> It includes detailed instructions, recommendations, and lessons learned on how to obtain data from various data providers including state workforce agencies, community colleges, criminal justice agencies, and other DOL grantees, primarily by establishing data use agreements. Although state workforce agencies, community colleges, and criminal agencies can also be DOL grantees, the instructions in this toolkit are particularly important when these data providers are not grantees because they do not have a contractual obligation to share data for DOL studies. This toolkit also includes resources evaluators can use during the data provider outreach and negotiation process.

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<sup>1</sup> This toolkit includes information learned from negotiating and fully executing approximately 23 DUAs and amendments with 21 state workforce agencies, as well as establishing eight DUAs with community colleges, eight state criminal justice agencies, and 32 DUAs with other DOL grantees across four DOL impact studies: Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) Evaluation, America's Promise Job Driven Grant Program Evaluation, Re-entry Employment Opportunities Evaluation, and Analysis of Strategies for Expanding Apprenticeship.

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## Purpose of this toolkit

Mathematica developed this toolkit to help DOL and DOL program evaluators<sup>2</sup> (primarily research organizations) navigate the process of establishing data use agreements (DUAs) to obtain administrative data for the purpose of conducting DOL-funded research and evaluations. While DUAs can be established with various institution types to support evaluations of a range of DOL programs, this toolkit focuses on obtaining data on employment and training programs from four common data providers: state workforce agencies, community colleges, criminal justice agencies, and other DOL grantees.<sup>3</sup> Evaluators are often the data applicant and establish DUAs directly with these four data providers. In some cases, DOL may obtain administrative data directly from these sources. The instructions in this toolkit therefore applies to both evaluators and DOL staff.

This toolkit has three key functions:

1. Provide step-by-step instructions and recommendations on how to prepare for and conduct outreach to data providers; develop tailored DUAs; submit data applications, if applicable; fully execute DUAs; and request data from various data providers for DOL studies
2. Document common challenges and lessons learned in negotiating DUAs with data providers
3. Share materials to assist DOL and its evaluators in conducting outreach and developing and establishing DUAs with various data providers

This toolkit does not discuss how to obtain data from the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) because DOL is the provider of those data and manages related DUAs.

It also does not address how to access data from the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) because DOL is the applicant for those data and similarly manages related DUAs. See the box in the next section for more information on the WIPS and NDNH.

### Common toolkit terms:

- **Data use agreement (DUA):** A legal contract between two entities, the owner of the data and data recipient, for the exchange of specific data. A DUA contains terms and limitations on how data can be shared and used. Components of a DUA may include privacy protection, data security, points of contact, and more. A DUA template example is provided in Appendix I.<sup>4</sup>
- **Evaluators:** DOL's contractors and subcontractors tasked with establishing DUAs to conduct research and evaluations; these are often research organizations. Although evaluators typically negotiate and execute DUAs, DOL staff may choose to enter DUAs with data providers in the future. In these instances, DOL staff can follow the instructions for evaluators described in Section 2.<sup>5</sup>
- **Data providers:** For the purposes of this toolkit, data providers include state workforce agencies, community colleges or community college systems, other DOL grantees, and criminal justice agencies. Other organizations could be relevant data providers for other DOL studies.
- **Administrative data:** Official information gathered through routine tasks about program participants and the services they receive (OPRE 2016). This is distinct from primary data, such as survey or interview data.

<sup>2</sup> The term "evaluators" is used for brevity, but the administrative data discussed in this toolkit are also relevant for other types of research beyond evaluations, such as descriptive studies.

<sup>3</sup> Four DOL studies—Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) Evaluation, America's Promise Job Driven Grant Program Evaluation, Re-entry Employment Opportunities Evaluation, and Analysis of Strategies for Expanding Apprenticeship—obtained administrative data from four types of institutions: state workforce agencies, community colleges, criminal justice agencies, and other DOL grantees. This toolkit does not include instructions for obtaining data from the WIPS and the National Directory of New Hires, as DOL manages those processes, and the authors of this toolkit did not obtain those data directly from those data sources.

<sup>4</sup> Information in this definition comes from: <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/emergency-preparedness/data-use-agreement/index.html>

<sup>5</sup> The term "evaluators" is used for brevity, but the administrative data discussed in this toolkit are also relevant for other types of research beyond evaluations, such as descriptive studies.

## Section 1. Commonly requested data for DOL research and evaluations

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) regularly contracts and subcontracts with nongovernmental research organizations to conduct studies of DOL employment and training programs. Evaluators who conduct these studies often need administrative data from various sources to measure key outcomes of interest such as employment, earnings, and recidivism. DOL evaluators commonly establish DUAs with various data providers to obtain these data.

To start the process of pursuing DUAs, the study team, in partnership with DOL, should determine the data required for the study and the organizations that hold these data. State workforce agencies, community colleges, criminal justice agencies, and other DOL grantees often hold the data DOL evaluators need for their studies, but other institution types may also hold relevant data, depending on the nature of the study. This section describes data commonly needed to conduct DOL research and evaluations. Please note that this section is not meant to be comprehensive, as your study may require additional data.

Most DOL programs currently report to the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS), which contains detailed data on the characteristics of DOL program participants and the services they have received. Through a DUA between DOL and evaluators, DOL can provide data from the WIPS to evaluators, but the elements included in the data from the WIPS might not be sufficient to conduct the evaluation. For example, records for individuals who are not enrolled in DOL-funded programs may be needed to form a comparison group, and these data are not available in the WIPS. In addition, evaluations often require additional elements not included in WIPS, such as employment and earnings data, criminal justice data, and detailed education or training services data. Table 1 outlines common data, such as personally identifiable information (PII), that might be requested from various data providers to conduct DOL evaluations.

### What is an impact evaluation?

An assessment of whether and how a program or intervention affects outcomes.\*

\* Information in this definition comes from: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/our-work/impact-evaluations>

### Data sources

#### What is WIPS?

The [Workforce Integrated Performance System \(WIPS\)](#) is the central performance reporting system for the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education. The DOL-specific portion of WIPS contains participant-level data pertaining to people who receive Employment and Training Administration (ETA) services. Formula programs (such as Wagner-Peyser Employment Services), discretionary and population-specific programs (such as Reentry Employment Opportunities), and grantees that receive funding through grant programs report information about their participants to the WIPS. Participant-level data submitted to WIPS can be requested from DOL for evaluation studies.<sup>a</sup>

#### What is NDNH?

Operated by the Office of Child Support Enforcement in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the [National Directory of New Hires \(NDNH\)](#) is a national repository that contains person-level earnings and employment data, among other data. NDNH data include records from the State Directory of New Hires, quarterly wage and unemployment insurance data from the state workforce agencies, and new hire and quarterly wage data from federal agencies (OCSE 2013). PII (names and SSNs) is required to obtain NDNH data.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The publicly available Participant Individual Record Layout file, which is the set of data elements each program is required to submit to the WIPS, is available at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/reporting>

<sup>b</sup> Information in this definition comes from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/css/outreach-material/national-directory-new-hires>.

**Table 1. Commonly requested data and purpose of request, by data provider**

Data provider	Purpose of data request	PII (such as names, SSNs, dates of birth)	Administrative variables (such as course enrollment)	Demographic variables (such as race, age, gender)
<b>State workforce agencies</b>	To obtain PII associated with participants in the WIPS to link data from the WIPS to other data sources (such as NDNH)	✓		
<b>Other DOL grantees</b>	Primarily to obtain PII of DOL program participants to link data from the WIPS to other data sources; also to obtain other variables not included in the WIPS, such as geographic data	✓	✓	
<b>Community colleges</b>	Primarily to obtain education and training services data, such as on course enrollment and degrees obtained, as well as demographic data; PII allows linking to other data sources	✓	✓	✓
<b>Criminal justice agencies</b>	To obtain arrest, conviction, and incarceration data to use as pre-program characteristics, outcomes, or both	✓	✓	

DOL = Department of Labor; NDNH = National Directory of New Hires; PII = personally identifiable information; SSN = Social Security number; WIPS = Workforce Integrated Performance System.

### Why are administrative data needed for DOL research and evaluations?

Depending on the type of evaluation, obtaining administrative data may allow evaluators to determine how successful the DOL grant program was in helping DOL program participants increase their earnings and rate of employment, depending on the goals of the program. Common reasons to request administrative data from data providers for DOL research and evaluations include:

**1. To obtain data not included in the WIPS, such as measures of services, outcomes, pre-program characteristics, and demographic information**

Evaluators may need data on study participants that are not included in the WIPS, or they may need additional data elements for program participants in the WIPS. Evaluators may obtain data from **community colleges**, who are key training providers for DOL program participants, to collect data on a comparison group not included in the WIPS. Similarly, evaluators may request arrest, conviction, and incarceration data from **criminal justice agencies**, which could be used as pre-program characteristics or as outcome measures for participants in the WIPS.

**2. To obtain PII associated with participants in the WIPS to link data from the WIPS with databases (such as NDNH and criminal justice agencies) that hold outcomes data (such as earnings and employment)**

Data from the WIPS that DOL provides to evaluators may not have PII such as names and Social Security numbers (SSNs), but PII may be needed to link the data from the WIPS to sources such as the NDNH or data from community colleges and criminal justice agencies. Therefore, evaluators may need to request PII from **state workforce agencies** and **other DOL grantees**.<sup>6</sup> State workforce agencies have PII associated with participants of DOL core programs such as Wagner-Peyser Employment Services. Other DOL grantees, on the other hand, may have PII associated with participants of DOL grant-funded programs. In addition, grantees could have other data elements that are needed for the study and that they are not required to submit to WIPS such as geographic location.

<sup>6</sup> Researchers commonly submit a list of PII to criminal justice agencies and request agencies to attach administrative variables. However, in some cases criminal justice agencies may send a larger universe of records, along with PII, and the researchers use the PII to determine which records are associated with study participants.

## Section 2. Five steps for establishing DUAs to obtain data for DOL research and evaluations

After deciding what type of data is required for the evaluation—which should be outlined in the research design plan—and who holds these data, you can begin the process of establishing DUAs with the necessary data providers. If there is an existing or prior DUA with a data provider, it is recommended to start the DUA negotiation process by updating your agreement to account for your new study and leverage knowledge from those agreements when approaching the data provider again. In many cases, evaluators may be establishing a DUA with a data provider for the first time, and this toolkit includes the resources and templates to help navigate that process. Additionally, DOL staff act as partners to the evaluators and can help make introductions with some data providers, especially other DOL grantees, and assist with negotiations as needed.

Although other DOL grantees are required to provide administrative data for DOL research and evaluations as a requirement of their grant, most data providers are not required to participate in federally led research and evaluations. Therefore, it is important to prioritize rapport building from the first interaction with the data provider and be flexible throughout the negotiation process to accommodate requested changes to the DUA as much as possible. The negotiated terms of what data will be shared and how it will be shared are reflected in a signed DUA, capturing each party’s responsibilities for sharing and handling data. Typically, DOL does not sign the DUA.

This section outlines five steps (Figure 1) and recommendations you can take to establish DUAs with various data providers to obtain data for DOL evaluations. Some steps might not always be applicable, depending on the unique needs and requirements of individual data providers.

**Each step includes additional instructions, as applicable, pertaining to each data provider. The key below will be used throughout the toolkit to denote a step or recommendation related to a specific data provider, as indicated by the following icons:**



State workforce agencies



Criminal justice agencies



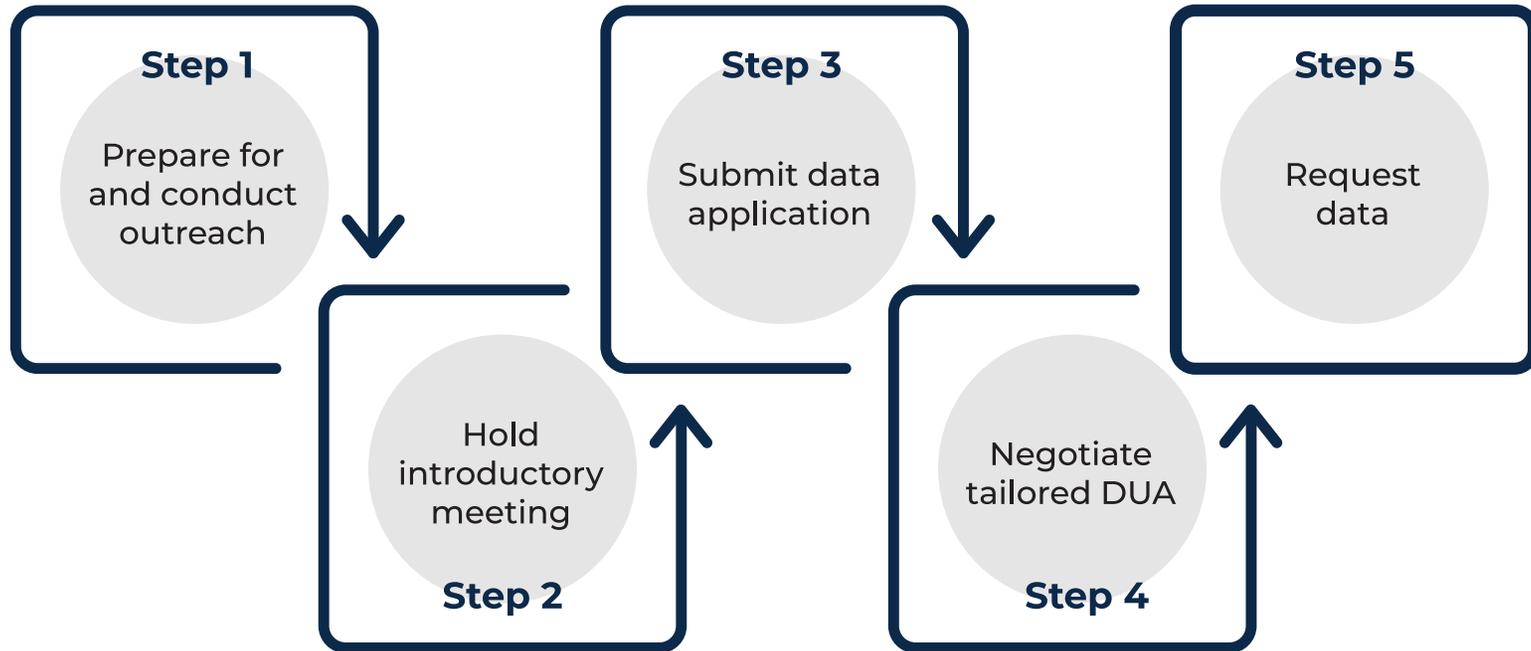
Community colleges



Other DOL grantees

To avoid putting subjects at risk of liability or damaging the subjects' financial standing, employment, educational advancement, or reputation in research and evaluations, IRBs independently review research protocols. In cases where the research does not put subjects at risk, the study can be exempt from IRB review. It may be helpful to discuss the study in advance of IRB submissions with your IRB to identify potential exemptions and address any IRB concerns.

Figure 1. Five steps for establishing DUAs



## STEP 1: Prepare for and conduct outreach

After you review your research design plan and determine an initial outreach strategy, including the states of interest, types of data providers, and the timing of each data request, evaluators can begin preparing for outreach to data providers. To prepare for outreach, evaluators can develop tracking tools, identify appropriate contacts, and create and gather outreach materials. Tracking tools will help your team stay organized throughout the negotiation and outreach process across various data providers. Take time to identify contacts for each data provider and consider drafting outreach materials to make sure outreach is conducted consistently across data providers. When you are ready to conduct outreach, follow up with data providers until you schedule an introductory meeting. Be prepared to persistently follow up after sending the initial outreach email if data providers are unresponsive. This step also includes links to sample outreach materials.

### ✓ Develop and update tracking tools

- **Create and maintain an internal database** to keep track of outreach efforts across data providers, key information learned throughout the outreach and negotiation process, and data provider names and contact information to use as a directory. Remember to update your internal database with the correct agency, contacts, and contact information after the data provider has confirmed this information.
- **Determine a data request schedule for each type of data provider**, accounting for the time needed to contact each data provider and to negotiate the DUA. For example, depending on your study design, you may want to start with outreach to state workforce agencies because the length of negotiations will likely take longer than for other DOL grantees. It may be helpful to know what state workforce agency data your study obtains to inform which other data providers you pursue.

### What is the purpose of the DUA template?

A DUA template includes placeholders for the name of the data provider, the specific data elements requested, and signatory contact information. Develop a separate DUA template for each type of data request that outlines specific details of the request. Share this with data providers after the introductory meeting to provide more specific information about the data request, including security procedures. Some data providers might have and prefer to use their own DUA template, which should be closely reviewed by the evaluator's legal team.

### Why should you schedule an introductory meeting?

The introductory meeting is an opportunity to explain the purpose of the study and data request, to ask questions about the process for submitting a data request, to answer the data provider's questions, and to begin establishing trust with the data provider. Providers sometimes misunderstand the nature of the data request in the outreach email so holding an introductory meeting with them is critical. Even if a data application is required, you can use an introductory meeting to ask questions and overcome hurdles that otherwise could lead to a rejected application. Information on how to hold an introductory meeting is provided in Step 2.

## STEP 1 *continued*

- **Create a tracker of common DUA concerns** to internally capture concerns raised by data providers and responses or solutions that you or your team identified to address those concerns, including modified or additional DUA language.

### ✓ **Create outreach materials**

- **Draft an outreach email** to send to the data provider contacts to introduce the study and data request, to confirm the correct contact for the request, and to schedule an introductory meeting. In the outreach email, be clear on the request, including what data you are requesting and how you plan to use the data, and avoid using technical language. Also, keep the email brief and focused on the purpose of the data request.
- **Confirm within your organization if a DUA already exists with the data provider.** If so, consider tailoring your outreach email to request adding your new data request as an amendment to your existing agreement.
- **Prepare a high-level description of the study** to include as an attachment to the outreach email.
- **Obtain a letter from DOL** showing support for the study and data request. The letter should also name your organization as a DOL contractor or subcontractor for the evaluation.
- **Draft a DUA template for each type of data provider** developed in collaboration with your internal project team and legal or contract department to ensure contractual language aligns with internal policies and study requirements.

- **Draft a meeting script, with a prepared list of questions,** to use in the introductory meeting with the data provider.
  - **Include answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs)** at the bottom of the meeting script, to make it easier to respond to common questions from data providers during the meeting.



**Draft a data request letter template** to send to the data provider after the introductory meeting to formally request data for the study and provide more detailed information about the data request.

It can be complicated to obtain data from criminal justice agencies compared to other data providers because the criminal justice system is decentralized and varies widely by state. The evaluator's request may vary by criminal justice agency, which can make it difficult to explain the data request in a short email. By drafting and sending a data request letter to agencies where there is no formal data application process, you are helping the criminal justice agency clearly understand the type of data being requested for the study. If an agency has a data application process, the request letter template can be used to help fill in information in the application. For all other data providers, you can send a draft DUA template after the introductory meeting to further explain the details of the data request and begin working toward finalizing the DUA.

## STEP 1 *continued*

### ✓ Identify data provider contacts

- **Search online to identify data providers** in each state of interest that might have the data you need for your evaluation.



**Refer to the State Workforce Agency Spreadsheet** that accompanies this toolkit for the list of state workforce agencies in various states.<sup>7</sup>



**Determine whether there is a regional or statewide community college system** in each state of interest, and if applicable, identify the data provider that maintains statewide or regional community college data. This way, you can pursue one DUA with that institution rather than multiple DUAs with community colleges. Try contacting the department of higher education or community college boards within a state, which might have community college data across multiple colleges.



**Identify agencies of interest that maintain arrest, conviction, and incarceration data**, and be prepared to request data from multiple criminal justice agencies within a state (for example, conviction data and arrest data might be held by separate agencies). Try contacting state departments of corrections for incarceration data and state administrative court offices or law enforcement departments for arrest and conviction data. The University of Michigan's Criminal Justice Administrative Records System is a data repository for criminal justice data for select states, but the completeness of these data varies by state.

- **Check online to see if the data provider has data request procedures or a formal data application**, which is common for criminal justice agencies and some community colleges or community college systems. Schedule an introductory meeting even if the data provider has an application process for data requests. During this meeting, you can confirm the provider has the data you need and answer specific questions.
  - **Note:** A data application might still be required even if you don't find this information online. In these cases, contacts will likely make you aware of the application in the introductory meeting.
- **Search online for multiple contacts** in the research, data, analytics, evaluation, or another department that might be familiar with a research or data request.



**Review** DOL's grant materials to identify the point of contact for each grant application or request a contact list from DOL.

- **Call the data provider to confirm the correct contacts** for the data request if the data provider does not list email addresses on its website. In some cases, you may not have success confirming the correct contacts through your online searches or over the phone, but you should still proceed to Step 2 after you create outreach materials. You may not confirm the correct point of contact until after sending the outreach email or holding the introductory meeting.

<sup>7</sup> The State Workforce Agency Spreadsheet is a separate Excel attachment to this toolkit. It contains the names of State Workforce Agencies in each state along with information learned throughout the author's DUA negotiation experience with various agencies across states.

## STEP 1 *continued*

### ✓ Contact data providers

- **Address the outreach email to a specific person**, identified through your online research or phone call to the identified data providers.
- **Send the outreach email and copy additional contacts** to increase the chances that someone responds and that the correct contact is included on the email. At the end of your email, ask the contacts to forward the email to the correct contact, if that person is not copied on the email.
- **Include options for an introductory meeting** with the study team in the body of the email by listing several dates and times in the data provider's time zone.
- **Submit a form** on the data provider's website if you can't find an email address online.

### ✓ Follow up and schedule the introductory meeting

- **Send follow-up emails** if you don't receive a response within a reasonable time frame (about one to two weeks).
- **Continue to follow up** more frequently, including making phone calls, until you make contact and schedule an introductory meeting.
- **Include staff who understand the data request**, including any technical aspects, in the introductory meeting.

### How long does it take from initial outreach to execute a DUA?

Based on our review of the date of initial outreach for 23 agreements to state workforce agencies and the date the DUA or amendment was signed, the estimated time frame for establishing DUAs for state workforce agencies was approximately 8.5 months, ranging from 1 month to 17 months. It is important to build sufficient time into the project schedule to reach an agreement. Evaluators may apply lessons learned from previous DUA negotiations with a data provider to help expedite future DUA negotiations, but this is not always the case.

## STEP 1 *continued*

### Staffing for Step 1

Several staff are involved in preparing for and conducting outreach:

- **Staff with technical skills** needed to create an internal database in Excel or Access, for example
- **Senior researchers** who understand the study design, requested data, and how data will be used to draft or review outreach materials
- **Legal staff** to help draft or review a DUA template to ensure it includes your organization's necessary legal language

### Step 1 recommendations

- Begin the outreach process early to allow enough time to create your tracking systems, customize your materials, and identify the correct data providers and points of contact. This early scheduling also gives the data provider enough time to review the data application or finalize the DUA if the data provider is busy, short-staffed, or has a lengthy internal review process.
- Do your best to stay organized throughout the outreach process to help your team keep track of who you reach out to and what you learn.
- Be comfortable with sending the outreach email to points of contact without being certain they are the correct contact. You may not be able to confirm the data provider houses your data or who the correct point of contact is until after the introductory call.

### Appendix Resources for Step 1

- [DUA template for multiple data providers](#). The DUA template should include:
  - Authorization to perform the study as a DOL contractor or subcontractor
  - Brief description of the study's purpose
  - Description of why the study needs the requested data
  - Data management and security practices
  - Names of other agencies that will have access to the data
  - Data elements you will send to and request from the data provider
  - Timeline
- [DOL letter of support](#) for the study
- Email templates for outreach to:
  - [State workforce agencies](#)
  - [Community colleges](#)
  - [Other DOL grantees](#)
- Scripts and FAQs for introductory meetings with:
  - [State workforce agencies](#)
  - [Community colleges](#)
  - [Other DOL grantees](#)
  - [Criminal justice agencies](#)
- [Letter template for requesting data from criminal justice agencies](#)  
 This template may include:
  - Information about the research design
  - Requested data
  - How you as the evaluator will use the data provider's data
  - Data confidentiality information

## STEP 2: Hold introductory meeting

Your study team can use the introductory meeting with the data provider to explain the purpose of the study and data request, to ask questions about the process for submitting a data request, and to answer the data provider's questions. The introductory meeting is also an opportunity to build rapport with the data provider and establish trust. This is important because most providers are not required to share their data, and they might be hesitant to do so if they've never worked with your organization. After the introductory meeting, follow up in a timely manner on agreed-upon next steps and maintain consistent communication to keep momentum toward finalizing an agreement.

### ✓ Run an effective introductory meeting

- **Tailor the introductory meeting script** for each data provider and include information you've found online, if applicable.



**Inform states** of the relevance of potential findings to their state or to their work. State workforce agencies are likely to be interested in studies that generate evidence for workforce programs.



**Remind grantees of their DOL requirement** to accommodate your data request as a condition of their DOL grant award, if the grantee raises concerns or objections about the data request.



**Explicitly note that your study requires bulk data** and not a background check for an individual, a common request criminal justice agencies receive. Departments that run background checks are rarely familiar with research requests for bulk data.

- **Make time for introductions** at the start of the meeting; include names, title, location, and information about your organization, if the contact does not know these.
- **Follow the introductory meeting script** to introduce the study and basic information about the data request, including a description of how the study team will be careful stewards of the data provider's data.
  - **Be clear on the scope of the request**, including the frequency of requests, the data you are requesting, and how you will use the data to achieve the study's goals. Be precise when describing the data you are requesting, as misunderstandings about the type of data being requested are common.
  - **Highlight the purpose and goals of the study**, including the intended outcomes of the DOL program being studied, such as improving employment or educational outcomes. This information might help motivate the data provider to accommodate your request. Emphasize that your team is conducting the study for DOL and that it is not an academic research study.
- **Pause frequently** to allow the data provider to ask questions, rather than overloading them with information. See the FAQs in the introductory meeting script document for common questions from data providers, including concerns about sharing PII and data security.
- **Take notes during the meeting** to send to attendees afterwards. Update your internal database with these meeting notes, including questions the data provider asked.

## STEP 2 *continued*

- **Ask questions** during the meeting, included in the introductory meeting script, to confirm important information about the data request, including the process for submitting a data application, which may vary depending on the data provider and the type of requested data.
- **Establish rapport with data provider contacts in every interaction** by being patient, answering questions, and showing empathy and understanding of their data-sharing concerns or constraints.

### What are common questions to cover in the introductory meeting?

- Ask the data provider contact if they have the data you need and if they are willing to accommodate your request. If they are hesitant to fulfill your request, ask why.
  - Ask about the data request process, including whether there is a data application and questions you have about the application.
  - Criminal justice agencies commonly require a data application to obtain data and it is common to have fees associated with the data request.
  - Ask about the timeline for approving the data request or DUA, including the number of reviews and who has final approval.
  - Ask about the provider's data-sharing concerns, if any.
-  Offer technical assistance or compensation, if available, to encourage the data provider to accommodate your request.

- **Clarify action items and next steps** before ending the meeting. These might include submitting a formal data application or beginning to work toward negotiating a DUA with the data provider.
- **Obtain the phone number of the designated point of contact** before ending the introductory meeting in case they do not respond to follow-up emails.
- **Schedule a follow-up meeting before ending the introductory meeting** to begin working on the DUA or to continue the conversation about the provider's data-sharing concerns.
- **Identify a main point of contact** moving forward for future communication about the data request.

### Follow up in a timely manner

- **Send a follow-up email** shortly after the meeting to recap key points and next steps discussed.
  - **Attach the DUA template to the follow-up email** to provide more information about the data request after the introductory meeting, if a data application is not required. Remember to fill in the data provider's information in the DUA template before sending.
-  **Use the data request letter** to request data from the data provider to provide detailed information about the study and the requested data. If a criminal justice agency requires a data application, complete the application using information from the data request letter.
- **Send a calendar invitation** for the agreed-upon date and time of the next meeting shortly after ending the meeting.
  - **Proceed to Step 3** if the data provider requires a formal data application or **proceed directly to Step 4** to begin DUA negotiations.

## STEP 2 *continued*

### Staffing for Step 2

Several staff are involved in the introductory meeting:

- **Personable and knowledgeable staff** who can easily translate technical information for a non-technical audience
- **Entry-level staff** who can take notes during the meeting
- **Senior researchers** who can answer questions about data security, data request, and the study design.

### Step 2 recommendations

- Use the introductory meeting to build rapport with the data provider, to confirm they have the requested data and are willing to accommodate your request. Explain the purpose of the request and how their data will be used in the study.
- Be flexible and patient with the data provider to address their questions and concerns, and be prepared with answers to their questions, as well as with incentives including compensation, technical assistance, and potential benefits from the study.

## STEP 3: Submit data application

This step will not apply to all data providers, so it is important to confirm whether each individual data provider requires a data application. Data providers such as criminal justice agencies and community colleges are more likely to require a data application, whereas state workforce agencies are less likely to do so. After confirming the data provider requires a data application, begin to work toward understanding the overall application process, which will be unique to each data provider, before submitting the application. If the data provider does not require a DUA after approving the data application, account for any legal protections you will need and where to apply them.

### ✓ Understand overall application process

- **Review data application** questions and requirements.
- **Communicate questions about the data application** or draft responses with the data provider via email or in scheduled check-in calls, as needed.
- **Submit data application and supporting documents** following the application instructions, if applicable.



Examples of supporting documents required for applications to criminal justice agency data may include:

- Curricula vitae of principal investigators
  - Institutional review board (IRB) letter
  - Letter of support from DOL
  - Research instruments or consent forms
- **Continue to check in with data provider** on the status of the data application review and approval process.
  - **Make requested revisions** to the data application, if applicable.

- **Proceed to Step 4 to negotiate tailored DUA** language if the data provider requires a DUA to obtain data after the data application is approved.

### ✓ Account for legal protections if a DUA is not required

- **Check internally with your organization** to determine if you need to add any legal protections to the approved data application, if the data provider does not require a signed DUA.



It is common for criminal justice agencies to use an approved data application as an agreement to obtain data, instead of a signed DUA.

- **Proceed to Step 5** to request data if a DUA is not required after the data application is approved and signed.



### Staffing for Step 3

Several staff are involved in submitting the data application:

- **Staff who understand the study design** and data request to complete the data application
- **Senior researchers** who can review the draft application before its submitted
- **Legal staff** to review the approved data application, if it takes the place of a signed DUA

## STEP 3 *continued*

### Step 3 recommendations

- Confirm that the data provider houses the data needed for your study and learn about the application requirements and process, including time frames, before submitting the data application. Some applications can take several months to get approved, especially if there is a backlog.
- If the approved data application takes the place of a signed DUA, make sure your legal team reviews the document and adds any legal protections for your organization, if necessary.

## STEP 4: Negotiate tailored DUA

After data providers indicate they are willing to accommodate your data request, begin formal negotiations with each provider to modify the DUA to fit each provider's specific needs and concerns. In most cases, you will ask the data provider to review your DUA template, where the data provider can make requested changes and provide comments. In cases where the data provider prefers to use its own DUA, the process is flipped, with you reviewing the data provider's contract and providing suggested changes. Use supports from your project team and legal department to address DUA concerns to ensure changes are consistent with the study's needs and your organization's policies, practices, and standards.

### Steps for all data provider types

#### Modify the DUA to address concerns

- **Use your DUA template as a starting point for DUA discussions.** Ask the data provider to include proposed changes to the DUA directly in the DUA template using track changes and comments to explain why it is requesting a change. If the data provider prefers its own DUA template, initiate the review and include proposed changes directly in the template using track changes.
  -  Be prepared for criminal justice agencies to request using their own DUA template, if they require a DUA rather than an approved data application.
- **Acknowledge data security and data-sharing concerns,** including requests to modify or add DUA language, early in the process, and work with your legal team to find solutions.
- **Consider amending an existing DUA** with the data provider to incorporate additional studies or obtain one DUA that outlines data required for multiple studies, if applicable.

- **Consider adding a renewal option** or contract language that allows for the contract to be extended in the event the study takes more time than initially planned.
- **Use track changes or collaborative software** (such as SharePoint or Google Docs) to keep track of edits made to the DUA template or data application.
- **Schedule and attend consistent check-in calls with data providers** (about every two weeks) to keep momentum toward tailoring the DUA for each data provider; you can cancel calls as needed. It can be helpful to use these calls to discuss particular challenges.

### Why should you have regular check-in calls?

Regular check-in calls are opportunities to discuss the data provider's concerns, answer additional questions about the DUA, and keep track of the status and progress of finalizing the DUA. Multiple calls are often needed to reach an agreement on modified, deleted, or added language to the DUA template that meets the needs and requirements of both the data provider and evaluator. Canceling a check-in call is almost always easier than to trying to schedule one.

- **Probe to understand the data provider's specific DUA language concerns** to better understand if a solution can be reached.
  -  **Define the list of variables** required for the study by working closely with the community college or system. The data available from community colleges can vary. For example, some colleges may have data pertaining to non-credit courses and programs.

## STEP 4 *continued*

- **Maintain a record of internal team decisions** on how to address DUA language concerns to help build efficiency for future negotiations.
- **Review Section 3 for additional lessons learned** to address common challenges when negotiating and finalizing DUAs with various data providers.
- ✓ **Use supports to address data provider concerns**
  - **Meet regularly as an internal team** to discuss the data provider's concerns to find and reach an agreement on proposed solutions before sharing proposed changes with the data provider.
  - **Work closely with your legal or contracting department** to determine how and when it wants to be notified of changes from the approved DUA template. If using the data provider's DUA template, make sure your legal department reviews it to identify any concerns.
  - **Involve DOL as needed** to address the data provider's concerns when related to interpreting federal data-sharing regulations with a private entity.
- ✓ **Prepare DUA for signature**
  - **Sign the DUA after both parties agree to the language in the DUA**, including any changes, and after all necessary staff (including your legal department) have reviewed the DUA.
  - **Keep a copy of the fully executed DUA** for your organization and provide a copy to the data provider for their records.

### Staffing for Step 4

Several staff are involved in negotiating the tailored DUA, although all are not required to attend each check-in call:

- **Personable and knowledgeable staff** who understand the study design and can easily translate technical information for a non-technical audience
- **Entry-level staff** who are detailed-oriented to capture the requested DUA changes and take notes during check-in calls
- **Senior researchers** who can answer questions about data security, data request, and the study design
- **Legal staff** to review the modified DUA before it is finalized

### Step 4 recommendations

- Be patient as data providers are juggling competing priorities within their organization, but maintain consistent contact throughout the DUA negotiation process by scheduling regular check-in calls. Use these calls to touch base on requested changes and internal review schedules so that finalizing the DUA remains a priority.
- Acknowledge data providers' concerns with sharing PII and be flexible to modify the DUA according to each data provider's needs, as long as data needed for the study are still obtained and changes align with your organization's internal policies (such as data security and confidentiality).

## STEP 5: Request data

Now that you have established a fully executed DUA with the data provider or have an approved data application, it is time to make the first data request. The study team should determine the timing of each data request (which should also be outlined in each DUA). After the DUA is signed, prepare the study team for the first data request to make sure it is ready to receive the data. The study team can make the data request via email to have a record of the request, and then obtain and use the data from the provider as outlined in the DUA. It is common to make several data requests to a single data provider throughout the study, so repeat these steps as necessary for each data request.

### ✓ Prepare for first data request

- **Identify the main points of contact from the data provider and evaluator for each data request** outlined in the DUA.
- **Introduce staff** if there are new points of contact from DUA negotiations; you can do this via email.
- **Set up a secure data transfer system** that is consistent with the data-sharing requirements in the DUA or use the data provider's data system, if it meets the security requirements of the agreement.
- **Use secure file transfer protocol (SFTP)** sites that use federal standards to transfer data, such as Box, which is FedRAMP certified. The Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP) is a federal government program that provides consistent security authorizations for cloud service offerings.<sup>8</sup> If the data transfer system a data provider uses is a government-sponsored application, it may meet federal approval guidelines, but check with your data and security team.

<sup>8</sup> See <https://www.fedramp.gov/> for more information.

- **Create an internal tracker** with the timing of data requests for each data provider to help the study team stay on track.

### ✓ Make data request

- **Review agreed-upon data request timelines** in the DUA to make sure you submit your team's requests to the data provider in a timely manner.
- **Communicate with each data provider about the timing** of each request to understand any additional time the provider might need to complete each request beyond the time frame included in the DUA. For example, the DUA may include a time frame of 30 days for the data provider to complete each request.
- **Consider ways to minimize the data request** such that you are only requesting the set of data you will actually use for the study.
- **Draft and send the data provider an email** outlining the details of the first request and include a time frame (for example, 30 days) or due date for the data. If helpful to the data provider, depending on the scope of your data request, consider preparing and sending an example file to show the preferred format for completing the data request.
- **Include instructions** for how to access the data transfer system in the first data request email sent after the DUA is signed.
- **Remind the data provider to never transmit data via email** but only via the secure data transfer system agreed on in the DUA.

## STEP 5 *continued*

### ✓ Obtain and use data

- **Clean the data** and ask the data provider follow-up questions as needed.
- **Follow security procedures and use the data** as outlined in the DUA.
- **Destroy the data at the end of the study**, per the time frame and guidelines included in the DUA.

### Staffing for Step 5

Several staff are involved in requesting data:

- **Staff who have the technical skills** to set up a secure data transfer system and folders for each data provider
- **Entry-level staff** who understand each data request for each provider to make timely data requests.
- **Data specialists** to review and clean the submitted data to prepare for analysis
- **Senior researchers** to oversee the process to troubleshoot questions or concerns about data submission or data cleaning

### Step 5 recommendations

- Review each data provider's signed DUA to confirm the agreed-upon data and timing of each data request.
- Remind the data provider to never transmit data via email and make sure they understand how to access the secure data transfer system to submit data for each request.

**Table 2. Recommendation summary for each step in the DUA process**

<p><b>Step 1:</b> Prepare for and conduct outreach</p>	<p><b>Step 2:</b> Hold introductory meeting</p>	<p><b>Step 3:</b> Submit data application</p>	<p><b>Step 4:</b> Negotiate tailored DUA</p>	<p><b>Step 5:</b> Request data</p>
<p>Begin the outreach process early to allow enough time to create your tracking systems, customize your materials, and identify the correct data providers and points of contact. This early scheduling also gives the data provider enough time to review the data application or finalize the DUA if the data provider is busy, short-staffed, or has a lengthy internal review process.</p> <p>Do your best to stay organized throughout the outreach process to help your team keep track of who you reach out to and what you learn.</p> <p>Be comfortable with sending the outreach email to points of contact without being certain they are the correct contact. You may not be able to confirm the data provider houses your data or who the correct point of contact is until after the introductory call.</p>	<p>Use the introductory meeting to build rapport with the data provider, to confirm they house the requested data, and are willing to accommodate your request. Explain the purpose of the request and how their data will be used in the study.</p> <p>Be flexible and patient with the data provider to address their questions and concerns, and be prepared with answers to their questions, as well as incentives including compensation, technical assistance, and potential benefits from the study.</p>	<p>Confirm that the data provider houses the data needed for your study, and learn about the application requirements and process, including time frames, before submitting the data application. Some applications can take several months to get approved, especially if there is a backlog.</p> <p>If the approved data application takes the place of a signed DUA, make sure your legal team reviews the document and adds any legal protections for your organization, if necessary.</p>	<p>Be patient as data providers are juggling competing priorities within their organization, but maintain consistent contact throughout the DUA negotiation process by scheduling regular check-in calls. Use these calls to touch base on requested changes and internal review schedules so that finalizing the DUA remains a priority.</p> <p>Acknowledge data providers' concerns with sharing PII and be flexible to modify the DUA according to each data provider's needs, as long as data needed for the study are still obtained and changes align with your organization's internal policies (such as data security and confidentiality).</p>	<p>Review each data provider's signed DUA to confirm the agreed-upon data and timing of each data request.</p> <p>Remind the data provider to never transmit data via email, and make sure they understand how to access the secure data transfer system to submit data for each request.</p>

**Table 3. Summary of specific steps for working with data providers<sup>a</sup>**

<p><b>Step 1:</b> Prepare for and conduct outreach</p>	<p><b>Step 2:</b> Hold introductory meeting</p>	<p><b>Step 3:</b> Submit data application</p>	<p><b>Step 4:</b> Negotiate tailored DUA</p>
<p> <b>Draft a data request letter template</b> to send to the data provider after the introductory meeting, if a data application is not required, to formally request data for the study and provide more detailed information about the data request.</p> <p> <b>Refer to the State Agency Workforce Spreadsheet</b> for the list of state workforce agencies in various states.</p> <p> <b>Determine whether there is a regional or statewide community college system</b> in each state of interest, and if applicable, identify the data provider that maintains statewide or regional community college data. This way, you can pursue one DUA with that institution rather than multiple DUAs with community colleges. Try contacting the department of higher education or community college boards within a state, which might have community college data across multiple colleges.</p> <p> <b>Identify agencies of interest that maintain arrest, conviction, and incarceration data,</b> and be prepared to request data from multiple criminal justice agencies within a state (for example, conviction data and arrest data might be held by separate agencies). Try contacting state departments of corrections for incarceration data and state administrative court offices or law enforcement departments for arrest and conviction data. The University of Michigan's Criminal Justice Administrative Records System is a data repository for criminal justice data for select states, but the completeness of these data varies by state.</p> <p> <b>Review</b> DOL's grant materials to identify the point of contact for each grant application or request a contact list from DOL.</p>	<p> <b>Inform states</b> of the relevance of potential findings to their state or to their work. State workforce agencies are likely to be interested in studies that generate evidence for workforce programs.</p> <p> <b>Remind grantees of their DOL requirement</b> to accommodate your data request as a condition of their DOL grant award, if the grantee raises concerns or objections about the data request.</p> <p> <b>Explicitly note that your study requires bulk data</b> and not a background check for an individual, a common request criminal justice agencies receive. Departments that run background checks are rarely familiar with research requests for bulk data.</p> <p> <b>Send the data provider a data request letter</b> to provide detailed information about the study and the requested data, if the agency does not have or require a data application. If a data application is required, which is common for criminal justice agencies, complete the application with the required information in lieu of sending the data request letter.</p>	<p> Examples of supporting documents required for applications to criminal justice agency data may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curricula vitae of principal investigators</li> <li>• Institutional review board (IRB) letter</li> <li>• Letter of support from DOL</li> <li>• Research instruments or consent forms</li> </ul>	<p> Be prepared for criminal justice agencies to request using their own DUA template, if they require a DUA rather than an approved data application.</p> <p> <b>Define the list of variables</b> required for the study by working closely with the community college or system. The data variables available at community colleges vary by college. For example, some colleges may have limited access to non-credit data.</p>

<sup>a</sup>There were no tailored instructions for Step 5

**Agency type key:**

-  State workforce agencies;  Community colleges;  Criminal justice agencies;  Other DOL agencies

## Section 3. Challenges and lessons learned in establishing DUAs

It is common for evaluators to encounter challenges while negotiating with data providers to obtain their administrative data, particularly when data providers are not required to share their data. Data providers likely have other priorities than your study's data request, and they may be unfamiliar with the type of data request you are making for your evaluation. This section includes common challenges and lessons learned from negotiating DUAs across data providers as well as with each type of data provider.<sup>9</sup> Please refer to the State Workforce Agency Spreadsheet for additional lessons learned from negotiations with 21 state workforce agencies.<sup>10</sup>

### Establishing DUAs across data providers



#### Challenge

**Request for DOL to be a party or signatory on the DUA.** In some cases, a data provider might request that DOL be added as a signatory to the DUA.

#### Lesson learned

**Refer the data provider to a DOL program officer and provide a copy of DOL's letter of support.** DOL prefers to not be a party or signatory on DUAs between evaluators and state workforce agencies for various privacy-related reasons. To show DOL's support for the study, it can be helpful to:

- Share with the data provider a letter from DOL that names the evaluator as a DOL contractor or subcontractor for the study.
- Schedule a call with the data provider and a DOL program officer to assure the data provider that the evaluation is in partnership with DOL.

#### Challenge

**Concerns with redisclosing PII data to other agencies.** A data provider might be hesitant about the evaluator sharing PII with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), for example, which is not a party or signatory to the DUA.

#### Lesson learned

**Consider including additional DUA language to address concerns such as explaining how a de-identified data file will be returned to DOL.**

- Add language in the DUA stating how an intermediary, like HHS, will create a de-identified analysis file for the study and destroy the PII they received (See Appendix I, Section 6.8).
- Explain why PII is needed to link specific data but that the evaluator will never see the PII associated with this information back from the intermediary.

<sup>9</sup> The authors and contributors of this toolkit negotiated fully executed DUAs with approximately 21 state workforce agencies, eight community colleges, eight state criminal justice agencies, and 32 other DOL grantees across four DOL impact studies.

<sup>10</sup> The State Workforce Agency Spreadsheet is a separate Excel attachment to this toolkit. It contains the names of State Workforce Agencies in each state along with information learned throughout the author's DUA negotiation experience with various agencies across states.

### Challenge

#### **Adding legal protections against loss or unauthorized access of data.**

Data providers might request specific language for reporting any confirmed loss or unauthorized access of the evaluation data.

#### Lesson learned

**Include additional DUA language to address concerns.** See Section 6.4.8 of Appendix I.

- Work with the agency to amend DUA language or add language to address concerns about legal protection and responsibility in the event of loss or unauthorized access of data.
- Data providers might also request a time frame to be notified in the event of data loss or unauthorized access. For example, in negotiations with one state workforce agency, the agency requested notification within 48 hours of data loss and asked for language to be added to the DUA (See Appendix I, 9.1–9.3).

### Challenge

**Requests to limit the scope of the data request.** Data providers might be hesitant to share data on individuals who were not served by the program being studied.

#### Lesson learned

**Explain the purpose of the data request and agree to some data request restrictions, if possible.**

- Thoroughly explain the data request and find ways to compromise with the data provider. For example, in discussions with one community college system, the evaluator explained that the purpose of the data request was to have a larger universe of data for the purposes of creating a better comparison group for DOL program participants. The evaluator agreed to restrict the data request to only include students who took courses that were similar to those taken by DOL participants, allowing the evaluator to form the comparison group.

### Challenge

**Requests for nondisclosure agreements (NDAs).** Data providers might ask evaluators to sign NDAs to ensure the data submitted will only be reviewed by the stated parties.

#### Lesson learned

**Accommodate the data provider's request by including requested language in the DUA.** If NDAs are signed as part of the DUA negotiation process, consider:

- Adding NDA language into the DUA. Staffing on the project can change, so including this language eliminates the need to sign new NDAs as new staff join the project.
- Consulting your legal department if the data provider requests information about data security practices beyond what is included in the DUA.

### Challenge

**Concerns about being identified by name in the study findings.** Data providers might be hesitant to share data if they think study findings will reference individual states, grantees, or organizations.

#### Lesson learned

**Communicate with data providers that the study report will only include aggregated findings.**

- Ease concerns by clarifying that the published report will not include findings about specific data providers.

### Challenge

**Requests to review and edit study reports before publication.** Data providers might ask to review the report before it is published.

#### Lesson learned

**Understand the data provider's concerns and clarify that DOL has sole publication rights.**

- Listen to the data provider's concerns. With DOL's permission, it may be possible for data providers to review the report before it is published. However, data providers will not be permitted to make changes unilaterally.

### Challenge

**Using a data provider's DUA template that miscategorized the evaluator.** In some cases, data providers prefer to use their own DUA template, which might include terms that incorrectly label the role of the evaluator (for example, vendor or grantee evaluator).

#### Lesson learned

**Review the data provider's DUA template carefully, with your legal department's input, and revise as necessary.**

- Check if the DUA references your organization appropriately as a data recipient. Terms within contracts might have different legal definitions and implications for your organization.
- Involve your legal team in the DUA review process, especially when using an organization's DUA template, to help identify terms or language that you might need to remove or change before signing.

### Challenge

**Providing information on evaluator's insurance and liability coverage.** Some data providers might ask for proof of insurance and liability coverage and how much liability coverage is included.

#### Lesson learned

**Obtain and save the certificate of insurance and liability coverage before agency outreach.** Be prepared to address data providers' questions by knowing how much liability coverage your organization carries and by providing a copy of the certificate, if the provider requests.

### Challenge

**Obtaining requested data quickly after DUA execution.** It may take longer to acquire requested data if a data provider is not able to easily access and share the requested data. For example, if data systems are not clearly documented or staff are unfamiliar with how requested data are stored, it may take more time and support to obtain the data.

#### Lesson learned

**Communicate the data request information early in the DUA process to address any misunderstandings and identify potential challenges to obtaining the data.** It may be helpful to:

- Clearly and frequently communicate the requested data elements and a timeline for the request, especially after time has passed during the DUA negotiation period. Remind the data provider of the timing of the next data request in subsequent emails.
- If the data provider is a criminal justice agency or community college, ask if they have a data dictionary to help define the requested data.
- Offer to meet or communicate directly with the individual or team who will pull and share the data if it is someone other than the main point of contact for DUA negotiations.

## Establishing DUAs with state workforce agencies



### Applicable agencies:

State workforce agencies

**Purpose of data request:** To obtain PII associated with data from the WIPS provided by DOL to link the data from the WIPS to other data sources (such as NDNH) to obtain outcomes data

**Is agency required to share data for DOL study?** No, and state workforce agencies might not have a formal data request process or data application. Evaluators should prioritize rapport building and be flexible to accommodate the data provider's requested DUA changes, when possible.

### Challenge

**State laws preventing sharing data with a private entity.** Although less common, some state laws do not allow state workforce agencies to share PII data with private entities.

### Lesson learned

**Ask to review the referenced state law and provide an interpretation, if possible, and include DOL in the discussion.** Although evaluators cannot provide legal advice to state workforce agencies, your legal department might be able to interpret the state law for the agency. Unfortunately, some states have strict laws about sharing SSNs with private entities, although some exceptions might apply.

- Recommend for the state's legal counsel to meet directly with a program officer at DOL to further explain the nature of the data request and answer their questions if there are concerns with federal regulations and data sharing.

### Challenge

**Confusion about laws restricting sharing of Unemployment Compensation (UC) data.** Some state workforce agencies might confuse your request for PII data associated with WIPS records with UC data.

### Lesson learned

**Be clear throughout discussions on the type of data being requested.** Federal regulations and often state laws protect the privacy of UC data, so agencies are not able to share these data.

- Clarify the type of data being requested and consider adding language to the DUA that states that UC data are not being requested or shared as part of the agreement.
- Ask a DOL program officer if they can help clarify what data are and are not related to UC.

## Establishing DUAs with community colleges



### Applicable agencies:

Individual community colleges or community college systems such as departments of higher education or community college boards

**Purpose of data request:** To obtain education and training services data, such as course enrollment information and degrees obtained, as well as demographic data. PII is also required to link data to other data sources to obtain outcomes data.

**Is insitution required to share data for DOL study?** Maybe. If the community college is a DOL grantee, it is required to share data on DOL program participants, and it is encouraged to share all requested data with the evaluator. If it is not a grantee, it is not required to share data.

### Challenge

**Data provider expressing FERPA concerns with sharing student-level PII.** When negotiating DUAs, community colleges frequently referenced the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which prohibits the disclosure of PII from education records to third parties without written consent from parents or students who are at least 18 or attending a postsecondary institution.

### Lesson learned

**Inform data providers of FERPA exceptions for federal research and evaluations and include FERPA language in the DUA.**

- Direct data providers to the [FERPA Exceptions—Summary \(ed.gov\)](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/FERPA%20Exceptions_HANDOUT_horizontal_o.pdf), which summarizes FERPA exceptions and permits the disclosure of PII without written parental or student consent.<sup>11</sup>

- Modify the DUA language to state that the study team will protect the confidentiality of the PII in accordance with FERPA.

### Challenge

**Finalizing the variable list to include in the agreement.** Community colleges often house hundreds of student-level variables, and data may be represented by different variable names depending on the community college. Colleges also might not have complete data for each variable or for students in non-credit courses.

### Lesson learned

- Try to identify which variables might have limited data and confirm the description of requested variables.** You can achieve this by:
- Sharing a list of variables your organization hopes to collect from the community college for the evaluation such as ACT or SAT scores, semester of enrollment, and field of study, and then working with the college to confirm which variables they collect and will be able to provide for the evaluation.
  - Asking data providers to include a note in the DUA indicating which variables have limited data. For example, a community college DUA once included a note that indicated which variables only had data for students taking credit classes and which variables had limited data.
  - Requesting a code book or description of variables for reference after obtaining the data.

<sup>11</sup> For more information about FERPA exceptions, see [https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource\\_document/file/FERPA%20Exceptions\\_HANDOUT\\_horizontal\\_o.pdf](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/FERPA%20Exceptions_HANDOUT_horizontal_o.pdf)

## Establishing DUAs with criminal justice agencies



### Applicable agencies:

Criminal justice agencies such as administrative court offices, state departments of corrections, law enforcement, public safety, and administrative court offices

**Purpose of data request:** To obtain data on arrests, convictions, and incarcerations (such as information on charges, sentencing, and probation) to use as pre-program characteristics or outcomes (such as recidivism)

**Is agency required to share data for DOL study?** No, but it is common for criminal justice agencies to have a formal data application process, which might replace the need for a DUA.

### Challenge

**Justice system agencies varying by state.** The set of agencies that maintain various types of criminal justice data vary from state to state.

### Lesson learned

**Take time to research how each state's justice system operates and its overall structure.**

- Try to first understand the structure of each state's justice system to help determine where to start the request process or where to pivot if progress is not being made.
- Expect the landscape to shift with greater on-the-ground investigation into agency types and departments.
- Locate which agencies have each type of criminal justice data (for example, arrest, conviction, incarceration).

### Challenge

**Lack of bulk, digital records.** Occasionally, an agency can only provide individual criminal records on paper or in a consolidated PDF file or text-based format.

### Lesson learned

**Confirm whether the agency has bulk, digital records, rather than individual files, and if it does not, build out the data set.**

- Follow up with other contacts within a given agency to double-check if bulk, digital records exist.
- Account for the time it may take to key in data or develop a "scraping" tool to create a data set from the individual-level pages. This approach might involve both the cost of developing a system for keying or scraping the data and the cost per criminal record, making data acquisition costs even higher than administrative costs. Other agencies might charge to obtain bulk data files.

### Challenge

**Obtaining data from contracted data providers.** Some states do not directly manage their data but contract out to a third party.

### Lesson learned

**Determine whether to establish the DUA with the criminal justice agency or with the contracted provider.** Consider the following:

- Naming the contracted provider in the DUA if establishing the DUA with the criminal justice agency.
- Requiring permission first from the criminal justice agency if establishing a DUA with the contracted provider.

### Challenge

**Data provider unfamiliarity with data requests.** Small or more local criminal justice agencies might be unfamiliar with research data requests.

### Lesson learned

**Allocate more time for engaging senior agency staff and confirming required agency documentation for completing the data request.**

- Discuss the data request with senior agency staff if the agency is unfamiliar with bulk data requests. Senior agency staff can help confirm which staff have the ability to complete the data request and can help move the DUA process forward.
- Plan to provide more information and materials, as agencies might not be familiar with DUAs or information typically associated with research requests (for example, IRB clearance, research procedures, letters of support).

## Establishing DUAs with other DOL grantees



### Applicable agencies:

Other DOL grantees, which may include public and private organizations

**Purpose of data request:** To obtain PII of DOL participants to link data from the WIPS to other data sources (such as NDNH or criminal justice data providers) to obtain outcomes data. You might request other administrative variables not included in the WIPS.

**Is DOL grantee required to share data?** Yes, grantees are required to share data about program participants with the evaluator for purposes of evaluating the DOL program as part of their DOL grant agreement. Executing DUAs with grantee organizations is typically easier than with other providers because of this requirement.

### Challenge

**Confusion over why evaluators cannot obtain grantee data from DOL directly.** Especially in cases where the DOL grantee also submits data from the WIPS, there might be confusion around why an evaluator cannot obtain data from WIPS if they are working with DOL.

### Lesson learned

**Take time to explain how the requested data elements are not in WIPS.**

- Describe the nature of the partnership with DOL as an evaluator, including how DOL provides evaluators with data from the WIPS, but that the study requires variables that are not in WIPS.

## **Appendices**

## Appendix I. Data use agreement (DUA) template for data providers

The data use agreement (DUA) template provided below is for general informational purposes only and is not intended to provide legal advice to any individual or entity. Users of the template should consult with their own legal advisor regarding their rights and obligations vis-a-vis the data sharing and/or use that is anticipated to occur under an agreement based on the below template. Mathematica makes no claims, promises, or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of, and expressly disclaims liability for errors and omissions in the contents of this template. No warranty of any kind—implied, expressed, or statutory, including but not limited to the warranties of non-infringement of third-party rights, title, merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose—is given with respect to the contents of the below template.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The text below serves as an example DUA template. This DUA template includes optional clauses that may be useful to address common data provider concerns during negotiations. Please tailor this DUA template to meet the specific needs of your study, including the type of data requested from each data provider, before sending it to data providers.

**DATA USE AGREEMENT  
BY AND BETWEEN  
[EVALUATOR NAME]<sup>12</sup>  
AND  
[NAME OF DATA PROVIDER]**

**ARTICLE 1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Data Use Agreement (“Agreement”) is entered into on the date of execution by the last signing Party below (“Effective Date”) by and between [EVALUATOR NAME] (“[EVALUATOR NAME]”) and the [ENTER NAME OF DATA PROVIDER] (the [ENTER “State” OR “Institution”]) each a “Party,” and collectively, “Parties”) to facilitate an evaluation to be conducted by [CONTRACTOR NAME], a subcontractor to [ENTER NAME OF CONTRACTOR, IF APPLICABLE], an entity commissioned by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Chief Evaluation Office, known and referred to as the “[ENTER NAME OF STUDY]” (“[ENTER STUDY ACRONYM] Evaluation”), under and in accordance with DOL Contract No. [ENTER CONTRACT NUMBER / TASK ORDER NUMBER] (“DOL Contract”).
- 1.2 As a participant in the DOL-sponsored grant program, State will be providing to [EVALUATOR NAME] data as more particularly described herein and in Attachment A hereto, “[ENTER STUDY ACRONYM] Evaluation Data,” incorporated herein by reference.
- 1.3 The purpose of this Agreement is to describe the roles and responsibilities of each Party in the facilitation and completion of the Evaluation. This Agreement shall be administered in a manner consistent with the terms and conditions of the above-referenced DOL Contract.

<sup>12</sup> “Evaluator Name” refers to the organization conducting the evaluation, not an individual researcher.

## **ARTICLE 2. THE PROGRAMS AND EVALUATIONS**

- 2.1 The findings from the Evaluation will result in important information about the effectiveness of registered and unregistered apprenticeship programs for individuals seeking to improve their labor market outcomes.
- 2.2 The purpose of the proposed research is to **[ENTER A BRIEF PARAGRAPH THAT DESCRIBES THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND THE DATA SHARING/USE THAT IS ANTICIPATED TO OCCUR. INCLUDE NECESSARY BACKGROUND INFORMATION]**.
- 2.3 The goals of the Evaluation are to **[ENTER A BRIEF PARAGRAPH THAT DESCRIBES THE GOALS OF THE STUDY. INCLUDE KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS]**.

## **ARTICLE 3. EVALUATION DESIGN**

- 3.1 The Evaluation will use a quasi-experimental design to match apprentices to non-participants based on their pre-program characteristics. Program impacts will be estimated by comparing outcomes of **[ENTER NAME OF GRANTS]** participants (or those offered services) with those of non-participants (or those not offered grant program services). The design will rely on the following data sources in the identified ways:
  - 3.1.1 **From DOL: Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) data set based on the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL).** **[EVALUATOR NAME]** will use the national WIPS data set obtained from DOL to separately match **[ENTER STUDY ACRONYM]** participants to non-participants who are recently or currently employed who share similar background characteristics.
  - 3.1.2 **From States: Workforce data systems' participant identifying information.** The study requires personally identifiable information (PII), including **[ENTER PII REQUIRED FOR STUDY SUCH AS "Name" and "SSN."]** **[EVALUATOR NAME]** will request PII on a sample of non-participants in the WIPS data who received services from the workforce system in each state. **[EVALUATOR NAME]** will provide a list of State IDs that your state submitted to the WIPS for each requested participant.
  - 3.1.3 **From the Office of Child Support Enforcement: Employment data from the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH).** Using PII obtained from states for selected Evaluation sample members, **[EVALUATOR NAME]** will re-disclose data
    - (a) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in order to obtain employment outcomes from NDNH to use as study outcomes. HHS will use the PII to identify study outcomes for sample members and will then, (i) create a de-identified analysis file that can be used for the study, (ii) destroy the PII received from the study team, and (iii) securely provide the analysis file to DOL where it can be accessed for analysis through a controlled environment.

- 3.2 For the Evaluation, [EVALUATOR NAME] will select study participants—[ENTER STUDY ACRONYM] program participants and comparison individuals—from the WIPS national database. In the Evaluation, the difference between the average employment outcomes of the participant and comparison groups will represent the estimated average impact of the [ENTER STUDY ACRONYM] initiatives.
- 3.3 The Evaluation also will include a complementary implementation study to describe grantees' program models, implementation, and partnerships. These implementation study activities will not require participation by the State.

#### **ARTICLE 4. TERM AND TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT**

- 4.1 This Agreement shall commence on the Effective Date and continue through completion of the [ENTER STUDY ACRONYM] Evaluation, including all analyses and the issuance of all reports, presently anticipated to occur in or around [ENTER APPROXIMATE END DATE OF STUDY], whichever is later, unless otherwise terminated as provided under Section 4.2 or 4.3 below, or extended by way of amendment under Article 9.
- 4.2 Termination/Cancellation of Agreement. If issues arise that cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of both Parties, either Party may cancel this Agreement, provided advance written notice of at least thirty (30) days before the date of termination is given to the other Party. Termination/cancellation of the Agreement may lead to adjustment to the amount of compensation paid to the State for participation in the study under Article 7 below.
- 4.3 Either Party may terminate this Agreement immediately upon confirmation that the other Party has misused Evaluation Data or otherwise breached the terms of Article 6, Confidentiality and Use of Data.

#### **ARTICLE 5. DATA TO BE REQUESTED AND SHARED**

The data that [EVALUATOR NAME] will request and the State will share ("Evaluation Data") under this Agreement and the activities or cooperation required from the State are described in Attachment A hereto, which is incorporated herein by this reference.

#### **ARTICLE 6. CONFIDENTIALITY AND USE OF DATA**

- 6.1 [EVALUATOR NAME] will use and maintain the Evaluation Data provided by the State in strict confidence and shall only use, access, or disclose the Evaluation Data as described in this Agreement.
- 6.2 [ENTER EVALUATOR NAME] may disclose Evaluation Data to those employees, agents, consultants, subcontractors, and/or collaborators who need access to the information in order to perform the requirements of this Agreement and the Evaluations and who are bound by obligations of confidentiality consistent with those set forth in this Agreement.
- 6.3 [EVALUATOR NAME] agrees to use appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to protect the Evaluation Data from any unauthorized use or disclosure not provided for in this Agreement. These confidentiality and nondisclosure obligations shall not apply to information that is or becomes public through no breach of this Agreement, that is received from a third party, or that is required by law to be disclosed. In the event [EVALUATOR NAME] is required to disclose the Evaluation Data under applicable law or regulation, or pursuant to a subpoena or court order, [EVALUATOR NAME] will promptly notify the State.
- 6.4 [EVALUATOR NAME] will protect the confidentiality of the Evaluation Data in accordance with applicable provisions of federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations, including the DOL Confidentiality requirements imposed on [EVALUATOR NAME] under the DOL Contract described herein above. [EVALUATOR NAME] will:

- 6.4.1 Use the Evaluation Data only for the specific purpose requested in this Agreement, and not re-disclose the Evaluation Data for any other purpose, except those required by law.
  - 6.4.2 Store the Evaluation Data in a place physically secure from access by unauthorized persons.
  - 6.4.3 Store and process the Evaluation Data in an electronic format that is secure from access by unauthorized persons.
  - 6.4.4 Take precautions to ensure that only authorized personnel have access to the computer systems in which the Evaluation Data are stored.
  - 6.4.5 Make the Evaluation Data accessible only to those **[EVALUATOR NAME]** staff who require the data in the official performance of their job duties. All Evaluation Data will be kept in the strictest confidence and will be made available to project staff on a "need-to-know" basis.
  - 6.4.6 Instruct all project staff with access to the Evaluation Data on the confidentiality requirements of this Agreement, the applicable Federal and State confidentiality requirements, and the sanctions specified by applicable laws for unauthorized disclosure of Evaluation Data.
  - 6.4.7 Transmit the Evaluation Data by a secure method and encrypt all Evaluation Data during receipt, transmission, storage, maintenance, and use.
  - 6.4.8 Report as required by the DOL Contract any confirmed loss or unauthorized access of the Evaluation Data.
  - 6.4.9 Destroy the Evaluation Data in its original form, as required under the DOL Contract, upon completion of the Evaluation, including the completion of all analyses and the issuance of all reports. In the event that **[EVALUATOR NAME]** determines that returning or destroying all of the data received under this Agreement is not feasible, including for reasons related to ongoing research and/or obligations under its DOL Contract and/or obligations to the DOL, including but not limited to, the production of all deliverables, and the completion of all analyses, **[EVALUATOR NAME]** will notify the State of the conditions that make the return or destruction not feasible, and shall extend the protections of this Agreement to such data, and limit further uses and disclosures of such data to those purposes that make return or destruction not feasible, for so long as **[EVALUATOR NAME]** maintains such data.
  - 6.4.10 Share with **[ENTER ADDITIONAL CONTRACTOR or SUBCONTRACTOR NAME]** analytic and other files and data so long as such data is stripped of all PII as necessary and required under and in accordance with **[ENTER EVALUATOR NAME]** obligations to **[ENTER ADDITIONAL CONTRACTOR or SUBCONTRACTOR NAME]** and as otherwise necessary to fulfill the **[ENTER STUDY ACRONYM]** Evaluation and related obligations under the DOL Contract.
- 6.5 **Publications and Reports.** **[EVALUATOR NAME]** has the right, consistent with scientific standards, to publish, present, or use the Evaluation Data and results, but only if the publication, presentation or use does not permit personal identification of individuals. **[OPTIONAL CLAUSE IF REQUESTED BY DATA PROVIDER AND APPROVED BY EVALUATOR:** By the end of the study period, **[EVALUATOR NAME]** will share with the State results from the study that are specific to the State, rather than aggregated across many states. These results will not be published publicly and will be provided only to the State and not other states.]

- 6.6 The State agrees to encrypt all Evaluation Data during transmission to [EVALUATOR NAME]. If necessary, [EVALUATOR NAME] will offer encryption software and technical assistance on the use of such software.
- 6.7 [EVALUATOR NAME] will use the Evaluation Data from all sources for descriptive and inferential analysis. The collective data will be aggregated; it will not be possible to identify any individual. The findings from the analysis will be presented in reports submitted to DOL, journal publications, briefings and conferences, and other presentations.
- 6.8 [OPTIONAL CLAUSE IF REQUESTED BY DATA PROVIDER AND APPROVED BY EVALUATOR: The federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OSCE) is required by Federal law to implement safeguards to restrict access to National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) information to authorized entities and to restrict the use of the information to authorized purposes. Recipients of NDNH information must agree to comply with security safeguards, such as operational safeguards that ensure NDNH information is secure from unauthorized entities and unauthorized uses at all times and technical safeguards that ensure NDNH information is processed, stored, and transmitted in a secure manner and that information is processed using methods that protect the confidentiality and integrity of the information. The information disclosed pursuant to subsection 453(j)(5) of the Social Security Act must not contain personal identifiers. Accordingly, OSCE will remove the names, Social Security numbers, and any DOL assigned identifiers or other identifiers and will pseudo-identify each individual record prior to its disclosure to DOL.]

**ARTICLE 7. COMPENSATION [OPTIONAL CLAUSE IF COMPENSATION IS AVAILABLE FOR YOUR STUDY. EVALUATORS MAY DECIDE TO LEAVE THIS SECTION BLANK UNTIL COMPENSATION IS DISCUSSED WITH THE DATA PROVIDER.]**

No compensation will be paid by [EVALUATOR NAME] to State for the Evaluation Data.

[OR]

**7. COMPENSATION**

- 7.1 To help offset the staff time and resources spent completing data collection activities and for otherwise performing its obligations under this Agreement, [EVALUATOR NAME] will compensate State in an amount not to exceed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ("Total Compensation"), to be paid in installments for performing the agreed-upon tasks in accordance with Milestone Payment Schedule set forth in Section 7.3 below.
- 7.2 Payment of the Total Compensation is contingent on State's fulfillment of all the responsibilities specified herein, and in accordance with the Milestone Payment Schedule set forth in Section 7.3.1, and upon continuation and funding of [EVALUATOR NAME]'s DOL Contract.
- 7.3 **Compensation, Milestone Payment Schedule, and Payment Procedures**
- 7.3.1 **Milestone Payment Schedule.** [EVALUATOR NAME] will make payments to State upon receipt of an invoice submitted to [EVALUATOR NAME] in accordance with Section 7.3.3 below demonstrating completion of each Milestone in accordance with and described in the below Milestone Schedule:

Milestone	Description/Conditions Precedent for Payment	Completion Date - On or Before	Installment/Milestone Payment Amount
1	Full Execution of this Agreement by the Parties		
2			
3			
4			
5			

**7.3.2 Invoicing and Payment.**

- (a) Upon completion of each Milestone, State will submit to [EVALUATOR NAME] an invoice describing the work performed in the period just completed, the extent to which conditions for the Milestone payment were completed, and the amount claimed to be owed to State in accordance with the Milestone Payment Schedule described in Section 7.3.1.
- (b) Within thirty (30) days from [EVALUATOR NAME]'s receipt from State of a complete and proper invoice under Section 7.3.2(a), [EVALUATOR NAME] will pay State the amount indicated in the Milestone Payment Schedule described in Section 7.3.1.

**ARTICLE 8 POINTS OF CONTACT**

**8.1** Each Party hereby designates in writing one or more individuals within its organization as its point of contact responsible for managing performance of the Party's necessary functions and responsibilities under this Agreement:

**8.1.1 For [EVALUATOR NAME]**

**[ENTER STUDY ACRONYM] Evaluation Teams**

(a) For questions about the Data or this Agreement:

**[ENTER NAME, TITLE, ADDRESS, AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR DIRECTOR OF CONTRACTS]**

**[ENTER NAME, TITLE, AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ADDITIONAL CONTRACTOR TEAM MEMBERS WHO SHOULD BE COPIED]**

(b) For questions about the Evaluation:

**[ENTER NAME, TITLE, ADDRESS, AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR CONTRACTOR'S RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS]**

**8.1.2 For [ENTER STATE or INSTITUTION NAME]**

(a) For questions about Evaluation Data:

**[ENTER NAME, TITLE, ADDRESS, AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR AGENCY'S POINTS OF CONTACT]**

- 8.2 All notices required or permitted to be given hereunder shall be in writing and shall be deemed given when delivered by hand, sent by courier or other express mail service, postage prepaid, or transmitted by facsimile or email, read receipt requested or with proof of delivery, addressed to a Party at the address identified above in this Agreement.

**[OPTIONAL CLAUSE IF REQUESTED BY DATA PROVIDER AND APPROVED BY EVALUATOR: ARTICLE 9 RESPONSIBILITY]**

- 9.1 **[EVALUATOR NAME]** agrees to be fully responsible for all liability, damages, loss, fines, penalties, and/or expenses awarded or levied against the State (including reasonable fees of attorneys and other professionals incurred by the State in connection with such award or settlement) arising from any third-party claim, demand, action, or proceeding based on a breach of the obligations set forth in Article 6 of this Agreement, or a violation of any law or regulation by **[EVALUATOR NAME]** or any of its trustees, officers, agents, representatives, employees, and subcontractors with respect to the use/misuse, storage, security, and protection of the Evaluation Data except to the extent such liability is due to the willful misconduct or gross negligence of the State.
- 9.2 The State agrees to be fully responsible for all liability, damages, loss, fines, penalties, and/or expenses awarded or levied against **[EVALUATOR NAME]** (including reasonable fees of attorneys and other professionals incurred by **[EVALUATOR NAME]** in connection with such award or settlement) arising from any third-party claim, demand, action, or proceeding based on a breach of the obligations set forth in Article 6 of this Agreement, or a violation of any law or regulation by the State or any of its trustees, officers, agents, representatives, employees, and subcontractors with respect to the use/misuse, storage, security, and protection of the Evaluation Data, except to the extent such liability is due to the willful misconduct or gross negligence of **[EVALUATOR NAME]**.
- 9.3 In the event that loss or damage results from the conduct of more than one Party, each Party agrees to be responsible for its own proportionate share of the claimant's total damages under the laws of the State of **[ENTER STATE NAME]**.

**ARTICLE 10 ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS**

- 10.1 **Modification.** This Agreement may be modified at any time by mutual consent of the Parties. All modifications shall be in writing and signed by both Parties. The Agreement may not be altered, modified, rescinded, or extended orally. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Parties may modify programmatic (e.g., scheduling issues, minor revisions to incentives or data collection) issues by way of email unless one Party requests a formal written amendment.
- 10.2 **Counterparts.** This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be treated as an original.
- 10.3 **Merger Clause.** This Agreement, including "Attachment A," constitutes the entire understanding of the Parties and merges all prior discussions, agreements, or understandings into it. No prior agreement, oral or otherwise, regarding the subject matter of this Agreement shall be deemed to exist or to bind the Parties.
- 10.4 **Non-Assignment Clause.** Neither Party may assign, transfer, convey, or otherwise dispose of its obligations under this Agreement except by operation of law, without the prior written consent of the other Party.

**ARTICLE 11      AGREEMENT TO PROCEED**

**[EVALUATOR NAME]** and the State agree to proceed with sharing Evaluation Data as described herein, and affirm their intention to provide timely communications and reasonable accommodation of the interests of the other Party within the context of the Evaluation and any subsequent modifications. The Parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed by their duly authorized representatives as of the date last signed below. The below signatories verify that each is authorized to sign this Agreement on behalf of the below listed entity on the date last signed below.

---

<b>[EVALUTOR NAME]</b>	<b>[ENTER "THE STATE OF XXXX" or NAME OF INSTITUTION]</b>
<b>By:</b> _____ <b>[ENTER EVALUATOR'S SIGNATORY'S NAME AND TITLE]</b>	<b>By:</b> _____ <b>[ENTER DATA PROVIDER'S SIGNATORY'S NAME AND TITLE]</b>
<b>Date:</b> _____	<b>Date:</b> _____

---

**ATTACHMENT A to DATA USE AGREEMENT**  
between **[EVALUATOR NAME]** and **[DATA PROVIDER'S NAME]**

**[ENTER STUDY ACRONYM] Evaluation Data**

**This Attachment A is incorporated into and made a part of the Agreement to which it is attached. Terms defined in the Agreement shall apply to this Attachment A unless otherwise specifically indicated.**

The data that **[EVALUATOR NAME]** will request and the **[State OR Institution]** will share under this Agreement and the activities or cooperation required from the **[State OR Institution]** are set forth below.

1. On not more than **[ENTER THE NUMBER OF REQUESTS AND THE TIME PERIOD OF REQUESTS]**, beginning in or around **[ENTER ESTIMATED MONTH AND YEAR OF FIRST REQUEST]** as follows:
  - 1.1 **[CONTRACTOR NAME]** will submit to the State a list of State IDs that the State previously submitted to WIPS, and will request categories of data described in Section 3 herein below; and,
  - 1.2 Within thirty (30) days from its receipt of **[EVALUATOR NAME]** request, the **[State OR Institution]** will provide **[EVALUATOR NAME]** with the categories of data associated with the State IDs described in Section 3 herein below.
2. **Evaluation Data [State OR Institution] Will Share With [EVALUATOR NAME]**
  - 2.1 To, among other things, measure the labor market outcomes (employment and earnings) of comparison group members, **[EVALUATOR NAME]** will request PII for a select sample of workforce participants.
  - 2.2 The select sample consists of participants who entered a workforce program in PY 2019 through PY 2021. They can be identified as follows:
    - 2.2.1 PIRL 100: The study team will provide a list of IDs to match to the workforce system
    - 2.2.2 The IDs will correspond to participants who entered their respective programs between **[ENTER TIME FRAME]** using PIRL 100
  - 2.3 **[EVALUATOR NAME]** will request and the **[State OR Institution]** will provide the following data elements listed in Table 2.3.1 below, on not more than **[ENTER THE NUMBER OF REQUESTS, THE TIME PERIOD OF REQUESTS, AND THE ESTIMATED DATE OF FIRST REQUEST]**, in accordance with Table 2.3.2 below:

**2.3.1 Personally Identifiable Information (one record is expected per individual)**

Source	Description of data item
WIPS	PIRL 100: PIRL ID / WIPS ID
[STATE SOURCE]	[ENTER DESCRIPTION OF REQUESTED DATA SUCH AS "NAME"]
[STATE SOURCE]	[ENTER DESCRIPTION OF REQUESTED DATA SUCH AS "SSNs"]

**2.3.2 Time Frame(s) For Requests**

	TIME FRAME(S) FOR REQUEST(S)	DESCRIPTION OF DATA REQUEST(S)
1.	[ENTER ESTIMATED TIME FRAME FOR FIRST REQUEST]	[ENTER THE TIME FRAMES OF THE DATA YOU ARE REQUESTING SUCH AS "PIRL 100 dates from MONTH YEAR through MONTH YEAR"]
2.	[ENTER ESTIMATED TIME FRAME FOR SECOND REQUEST]	[ENTER THE TIME FRAMES OF THE DATA YOU ARE REQUESTING SUCH AS "PIRL 100 dates from MONTH YEAR through MONTH YEAR"]
3.	[ENTER ESTIMATED TIME FRAME FOR THIRD REQUEST]	[ENTER THE TIME FRAMES OF THE DATA YOU ARE REQUESTING SUCH AS "PIRL 100 dates from MONTH YEAR through MONTH YEAR"]
4.	[ENTER ESTIMATED TIME FRAME FOR FOURTH REQUEST]	[ENTER THE TIME FRAMES OF THE DATA YOU ARE REQUESTING SUCH AS "PIRL 100 dates from MONTH YEAR through MONTH YEAR"]

## Appendix II. Sample DOL letter of support for the study



CHIEF EVALUATION OFFICE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

200 CONSTITUTION AVENUE, NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20210

ChiefEvaluationOffice@dol.gov

[ENTER DATE]

Dear [State Workforce Administrator]:

In 2019, the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Chief Evaluation Office, in partnership with the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), launched an evaluation of the **Scaling Apprenticeship through Sector-Based Strategies** and **Apprenticeship: Closing the Skills Gap** initiatives. These grant investments of over \$280 million seek to expand apprenticeship models across traditional and new industry sectors and occupations.

Under a contract with DOL, the [NAME OF CONTRACTORS AND SUBCONTRACTORS] are conducting an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of apprenticeship models used in these initiatives, with a particular focus on unregistered apprenticeship as a workforce strategy to inform future practice, policy, and grantmaking.

**Your partnership is critical to the success of this evaluation.** In addition to the national data contained in the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS), the evaluation will require personally identifiable data of apprentices and individuals in a comparison group. Please be assured that our contractor has extensive experience in securely transmitting and handling these types of data, and are under contract to employ comprehensive data security procedures for this work. The contractor will work closely with your agency to meet your data security needs and provide compensation for your time.

If you have questions about the study, or if you would like more information, please feel free to reach out to the following contacts:

- [NAME, TITLE, and EMAIL ADDRESS OF DOL CONTACT]
- [NAME, TITLE, and EMAIL ADDRESS OF EVALUATION PROJECT DIRECTOR]

We greatly appreciate your partnership and assistance in this important study.

Thank you,

[SIGNATURE OF DOL's CHIEF EVALUATION OFFICER]

## Appendix III. Email template for outreach to state workforce agencies

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The text below serves as an example email for first contacting state workforce agencies about your study's data request. Please tailor this email template to meet the specific needs of your study. If applicable, it can be helpful to also include the name of other DOL grantees that are serving residents in each state.

---

SUBJECT: Data Request and Compensation for U.S. Department of Labor Study

TO: **[EACH STATE INCLUDED IN THE STUDY; ENTER MULTIPLE CONTACTS FOR EACH STATE]**

CC: **[ENTER CONTACTS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM AND DOL]**

ATTACHMENTS: **[DOL letter of study support; 1-page study summary]**

Dear **[NAME]** – please enter the name of a staff member]:

My name is **[NAME]**, and I am from **[ORGANIZATION]**, a research organization. On behalf of the **U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)**, we are conducting an **[ENTER TYPE OF STUDY SUCH AS "impact study"]** with our partner, **[OTHER ORGANIZATION]**, to learn about the **[ENTER A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT THE STUDY HOPES TO LEARN ABOUT]** (see attached study summary).

We are reaching out to you today because DOL awarded **[#]** grants to **[ENTER THE NAME OF THE DOL GRANTS AWARDED IN THE STATE]** grantees serving residents of your state, and those grantees will be included in our study (see end of this email for a list of those grantees).

Our study will require two key data sources:

1. DOL's Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS)
2. National Directory of New Hires (NDNH), which is a national database of wage data

The study needs to link these data sets to know whether **[NAME OF DOL PROGRAM]** programs have an impact on participants' employment outcomes. This requires **[ENTER PII REQUIRED FOR STUDY SUCH AS "Names" and "SSNs"]**, which are currently not included in data submitted to WIPS. We are writing to request your assistance in linking the state identifiers in the WIPS data to SSNs.

**The process is straightforward, and we will compensate your agency for your time:**

1. We provide you with a list of state IDs
2. You generate a list of SSNs and names associated with those state IDs, and then upload it to a secure file transfer system with a link that we provide to you
3. We compensate you for the time it takes you to link the data. We can also provide technical assistance to help you complete this request.

I would like to request a 30-minute phone call with you to provide more information about this request and answer any questions you may have. This effort will require a data use agreement (DUA), and our team at **[ORGANIZATION]** is available to assist with creating and finalizing this agreement, as necessary.

Please let us know your availability during any of the following blocks of time. **If you are not the correct person to handle this data request, please let us know who the correct person is at your agency, and we will follow up with them directly.**

**[PROPOSED TIME BLOCKS]** – enter state’s local time and note time zone].

Your participation is critical to DOL’s efforts to improve the evidence base for **[NAME OF PROGRAM TYPE SUCH AS “apprenticeships”]** and work-based learning strategies. Attached is a one-page summary of the study for your information. If you have any questions or concerns about this request, please feel free to contact **[ENTER DOL PROGRAM OFFICER NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION]** (also copied here).

We look forward to hearing from you,

**[NAME]**

**[INCLUDE CORPORATE SIGNATURE]**

DOL **[ENTER THE DOL PROGRAM NAME]** grantees serving residents in your state:

**[LIST GRANTEE NAMES]**

## Appendix IV. Script for introductory meeting with state workforce agencies, with FAQs

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The text below serves as an example script for an introductory call with state workforce agencies about your study's data request. Please tailor this script and the Frequently Asked Questions to meet the specific needs of your study, including information about the data request, study design, and your organization's data security requirements.

### Introduction to the call

My name is [NAME], and I am from [ORGANIZATION], a research organization based out of [ENTER LOCATION]. Thank you for making the time to talk to us today about our data request. Can everyone on the call please introduce themselves?

To get started, I would like to provide you with more background about our study, discuss possible next steps, and answer any questions you may have.

### Background

We are conducting an [ENTER TYPE OF STUDY SUCH AS "impact study"] study of [ENTER TYPE OF DOL PROGRAM] programs for the U.S. Department of Labor. Programs included in our study are serving residents in your state. [NAME OF PROGRAM] is a key workforce development strategy, but there is little evidence about how effective it is. The purpose of the study is to measure the impact of [NAME OF PROGRAM] on participants' employment and earnings outcomes.

### Our request

We plan to use data from the U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Integrated Performance System, or WIPS, to match [NAME OF PROGRAM] participants to a sample of similar non-participants who receive services from the workforce system in each state. We have the state identifiers for those non-participants in the WIPS data because states provide this information to DOL. However, we do not have the names or Social Security numbers, because the states appropriately do not provide them to DOL. For us to collect employment and earnings data on those non-participants from the National Directory of New Hires, we need names and Social Security numbers. This is where we are hoping you can assist us. Without these data, we would not have the information we need to understand earnings outcomes of participants had they not enrolled in [NAME OF PROGRAM].

Before we move on to some logistical items, do you have a sense of whether your agency can fulfill this request?

A few logistical items to note: We anticipate sending a list of IDs [ENTER ESTIMATED NUMBER OF TIMES YOU PLAN TO SEND THE DATA REQUEST AND THE TIME FRAME FOR THE REQUESTS, SUCH AS, "2 to 3 times a year for two years."].

[OPTIONAL, IF APPLICABLE: "We are able to compensate you for the time it takes you to link the data and are happy to answer any questions or provide insights on issues that may come up."]

## Next steps

We have worked with states in the past on similar data requests and developed data use agreements, or DUAs, to protect confidentiality of state data and address any privacy concerns states may have. Our legal department can provide a DUA for this purpose, or we are happy to review your DUA template, if you have one, and suggest ways to tailor it to the terms of this request. We are happy to answer any questions you have about our request and provide any additional supporting information.

**(Note to interviewer:** Confirm who else we may need to talk to about this request and how to best communicate moving forward. Before ending the call, ask to schedule a check-in meeting in two weeks to get updates on our request and let the agency know you will send them a copy of the DUA template that provides more information about the request and security requirements.)

**Possible follow-up questions** [**Note:** Please use your discretion as to which questions to ask during the introductory meeting. The data provider may not be able to commit to meeting the data request in the first meeting. Do your best to schedule a follow-up meeting before ending the call to answer additional questions.]

1. Do you have any questions about our study or about our request?
2. Do you have the data we are requesting?
3. Do you have any initial reactions as to whether [STATE AGENCY NAME] might be able to accommodate this request? (Do you have any data sharing concerns we can address?)
4. Can you tell us more about your data request process? Is there a data application?
5. What is the estimated timeline for approving this data request (including the number of reviews)?
6. Is there a day and time in about two weeks for us to schedule a 30-minute check-in on our request and answer any follow-up questions?
7. Does your agency have an existing DUA template you would like us to use, or would you like to use our template that includes more information about our data request?

## Possible data provider FAQs (*fill in answer accordingly*)

1. When do you need us to attach the SSNs and state IDs?
2. Who will the DUA be between?  
[**Example response:** The DUA will be between your agency and (EVALUATOR NAME)].
3. What will you do with the SSNs and names we provide?
4. We are concerned about providing personally identifiable information (PII)...
5. We are unsure if we have the time to fulfill this request...  
[**Example response:** We can provide reimbursement for staff time (if applicable)].
6. We are unsure if we have the ability to attach the information you are requesting...  
[**Example response:** We can provide technical assistance to whomever will be preparing files (if applicable)].
7. What format (e.g., Excel) will you provide the data to us in?  
[**Example response:** We are flexible and can provide the data in whatever format you prefer.]
8. How large will the data set be that you will send us with each request?
9. Do participants need to provide consent for their data to be shared?  
[**Example response:** Participants whose data are in WIPS give implicit consent through participation in DOL-funded services].

## Appendix V. Email template for outreach to community colleges

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The text below serves as an example email for first contacting community colleges, including community colleges that are other DOL grantees, about your study's data request. Please tailor this email template to meet the specific needs of your study.

---

SUBJECT: Data Request and Compensation for U.S. Department of Labor Study

TO: **[COMMUNITY COLLEGE CONTACTS]**

CC: **[ENTER CONTACTS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM AND DOL]**

ATTACHMENTS: **[DOL letter of study support; 1-page study summary]**

Dear **[NAME]** – enter the name of a staff member]:

My name is **[NAME]**, and I am from **[ORGANIZATION]**, a research organization. On behalf of the **U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)**, we are conducting an **[ENTER TYPE OF STUDY SUCH AS "impact study"]** with our partner, **[OTHER ORGANIZATION]**, to learn about **[ENTER A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT THE STUDY HOPES TO LEARN ABOUT]** (see attached study summary). Specifically, we are studying the impact of **[NAME OF PROGRAM]** supported by **[NAME OF DOL GRANT]**.

Our study will assess **[DESCRIPTION OF STUDY ASSESSMENT]** in addition to measuring the effectiveness of **[NAME OF DOL PROGRAM]** on **[TYPES OF OUTCOMES SUCH AS "employment" or "education"]** outcomes. This study will contribute to the evidence base on the effectiveness of **[NAME OF PROGRAM TYPE SUCH AS "apprenticeships"]**.

{CCs that are other DOL grantees: I am reaching out to you today because your community college received a grant through DOL's **[NAME OF PROGRAM]**, **[SPECIFIC GRANT PROGRAM NAME]** and will be included in our study. To conduct our study, we will use data on community college students to compare **[NAME OF DOL PROGRAM]** participants to other similar students. **We would like to speak with you about providing us with student-level data so we can conduct this important study for DOL.**}

{CCs that are not other DOL grantees: To conduct our evaluation, we will use data on community college students to compare **[NAME OF PROGRAM]** participants in the DOL grant programs to other similar students. **We would like to speak with you about providing us with student-level data so we can conduct this important study for DOL.**}

{CC systems or centralized data repositories: To conduct our evaluation, we will use data on community college students to compare **[NAME OF PROGRAM]** participants in the DOL grant programs to other similar students. **We would like to speak with you about providing us with student-level data so we can conduct this important study for DOL.** We understand there is a formal application process, but we are hoping to confirm with you that we can procure these data before we prepare application materials.}

A key feature of this study is that we need to collect **[TYPE OF DATA SUCH AS "earnings and employment"]** data from a federal database called the National Directory of New Hires. To collect those data, we need **[ENTER TYPES OF REQUIRED DATA SUCH AS "names and Social Security numbers"]**, among other data.

Thus, any data we request from you would need to include those elements. We are able to compensate you for the time it takes you to fulfill this request.

I would like to request a 30-minute phone call with you to provide more information about this request and answer any questions you may have. Please let us know your availability during any of the following blocks of time. If you are not the correct person to discuss this data request, please let us know who the correct person is in your department, and we will follow up with them directly.

**[PROPOSED TIME BLOCKS – please put in the CC’s local time and note time zone]**

Your participation is critical to DOL’s efforts to improve the evidence base for **[NAME OF PROGRAM TYPE SUCH AS “apprenticeships”]** and work-based learning strategies. Attached is a one-page summary of the study for your information. If you have any questions or concerns about this request, please feel free to contact **[ENTER DOL PROGRAM OFFICER NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION]** (also copied here).

We look forward to hearing from you,

**[NAME]**

**[INCLUDE CORPORATE SIGNATURE]**

## Appendix VI. Script for introductory meeting with community colleges, with FAQs

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The text below serves as an example script for an introductory call with community colleges about your study's data request. Please tailor this script and the Frequently Asked Questions to meet the specific needs of your study, including information about the data request, study design, and your organization's data security requirements.

---

### Introduction to the call

My name is [NAME], and I am from [ORGANIZATION], a research organization based out of [ENTER LOCATION]. Thank you for making the time to talk to us today about our data request. Can everyone on the call please introduce themselves?

To get started, I would like to provide you with more background about our study, discuss possible next steps, and answer any questions you may have.

### Background

We are conducting an [ENTER TYPE OF STUDY SUCH AS "impact study"] study of apprenticeship programs for the U.S. Department of Labor. The study will focus on [#] grant programs: [NAME OF PROGRAM(S)]. Grant programs included in our study are serving students in your community college or system. [NAME OF PROGRAM TYPE SUCH AS "apprenticeships"] are key workforce development strategies, but there is very little evidence about how effective they are. The purpose of the study is to measure the impact of [NAME OF PROGRAM TYPE SUCH AS "apprenticeships"] on participants' employment and earnings outcomes.

### Our request

The classroom instruction often occurs at community colleges, particularly for participants in these DOL grant programs. To compare the [NAME OF DOL PROGRAM] participants to other comparable students, we need student-level data that includes demographic information and course enrollment so that we can select students who are comparable to the [NAME OF DOL PROGRAM] participants. In addition, we need student names and Social Security numbers. This is so we can collect employment and earnings data from a national database called the National Directory of New Hires. Without these data, we would not be able to determine whether [NAME OF PROGRAM TYPE SUCH AS "apprenticeships"] leads to employment and earnings outcomes that are different from those of other educational programs.

Before we move on to some logistical items, do you have a sense of whether your agency can fulfill this request?

A few logistical items to note: We are hoping you could pull the requested data multiple times, [ENTER ESTIMATED NUMBER OF TIMES YOU PLAN TO SEND THE DATA REQUEST AND THE TIME FRAME FOR THE REQUESTS, SUCH AS, "2 to 3 times a year for two years."]. We are able to compensate you for the time it takes you to link the data and are happy to answer any questions or provide insights on issues that may come up.

## Next steps

We have worked with community colleges (or systems) in the past on similar data requests and developed data use agreements (DUAs) to protect confidentiality of the data and address any privacy concerns they may have. We also understand that you may have a formal data request or application process that includes your own data use agreement. Can you tell us a bit about that process, if applicable?

We are happy to answer any questions you have about our request and provide any additional supporting information.

**(Note to interviewer:** Confirm who else we may need to talk to about this request and how to best communicate moving forward. Before ending the call, ask to schedule a check-in meeting in two weeks to get updates on our request.)

*[If they have formal application process:* Before proceeding with gathering materials for the data application, we wanted to confirm whether this request is something you could accommodate, including the request for names and Social Security numbers].

**Possible follow-up questions** [Note: Please use your discretion as to which questions to ask during the introductory meeting. The data provider may not be able to commit to meeting the data request in the first meeting. Do your best to schedule a follow-up meeting before ending the call to answer additional questions.]

1. Do you have any questions about our study or about our request?
2. Do you have the data we are requesting?
3. Do you have any initial reactions as to whether **[INSTITUTION NAME]** might be able to accommodate this request? (Do you have any data sharing concerns we can address?)
4. Can you tell us more about your data request process? Is there a data application?
5. What is the estimated timeline for approving this data request (including the number of reviews)?
6. Is there a day and time in about two weeks for us to schedule a 30-minute check-in on our request?
7. Does your agency have an existing DUA template you would like us to use, or would you like to use our template that includes more information about our data request?

### **Possible data provider FAQs (fill in answers accordingly)**

1. What is the period or population of students you are requesting?
2. Why do you need demographic information and course data?
3. Who will the DUA be between?  
*[Example response: The DUA will be between your community college and (EVALUATOR NAME)].*
4. We have FERPA concerns in regards to sharing data for this study...
5. We are concerned about providing personally identifiable information (PII)...
6. We are unsure if we have the time to fulfill this request...  
*[Example response: We can provide reimbursement for staff time (if applicable)].*
7. We are unsure if we have the ability to attach the information you are requesting...  
*[Example response: We can provide technical assistance to whomever will be preparing files (if applicable)].*
8. What format (e.g., Excel) will you provide the data to us in?
9. We are not comfortable sharing with you all the data on our community college students. Can we send a smaller sample?
10. What variables do you need us to include?
11. Do participants need to provide consent for their data to be shared?
12. How will community colleges benefit from this study? Why should we share our data with you?

## Appendix VII. Email template for outreach to Other DOL grantees

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The text below serves as an example email for first contacting other DOL grantees about your study's data request. Please tailor this email template to meet the specific needs of your study.

---

SUBJECT: Data Request for Evaluation of DOL's [GRANT NAME] Grant

TO: [GRANTEE CONTACTS]

CC: [ENTER CONTACTS FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM AND DOL]

ATTACHMENTS: [DOL letter of study support; 1-page study summary]

Dear [NAME] – please enter the name of the grantee contact]:

My name is [NAME], and I am from [ORGANIZATION], a research organization. On behalf of the **U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)**, we are conducting an [ENTER TYPE OF STUDY SUCH AS "impact study"] with our partner, [OTHER ORGANIZATION], to learn about the [ENTER A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT STUDY HOPES TO LEARN ABOUT]. Specifically, DOL is interested in understanding the impact of [NAME OF PROGRAM TYPE SUCH AS "apprenticeships"] supported by [NAME OF DOL GRANT] grant initiative.

This evaluation will require data on participants who are enrolled in your DOL grant, including geographic data, so we can identify a comparison group who live in the same geographic areas as the apprentices. Although geographic data are currently not submitted in your grant reporting, DOL is requesting this information as part of the DOL evaluation.

Specifically, we are requesting [#] types of data on your participants:

1. [LIST REQUIRED TYPES OF DATA SUCH AS "1. First and last name 2. Date of birth 3. PIRL ID"]

Please be assured that we have extensive experience in securely transmitting and handling these types of data, and we will employ comprehensive data security procedures for this work. We will work closely with your organization to meet your data security needs.

I would like to request a 30-minute phone call with you to provide more information about this request and answer any questions you may have. Please let us know your availability during any of the following blocks of time. You may include anyone you deem appropriate in the meeting. If you are not the correct person to discuss this data request, please let us know who the correct person is, and we will follow up with them directly.

[PROPOSED TIME BLOCKS – please put in the DOL grantee's local time and note time zone]

Your participation is critical to DOL's efforts to improve the evidence base for **[NAME OF PROGRAM TYPE SUCH AS "apprenticeships"]**. If you have any questions or concerns about this request, please feel free to contact **[ENTER DOL PROGRAM OFFICER NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION]** (also copied here) or your Federal Project Officer.

We look forward to hearing from you,

**[NAME]**

**[INCLUDE CORPORATE SIGNATURE]**

## Appendix VIII. Script for introductory meeting with Other DOL grantees, with FAQs

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The text below serves as an example script for an introductory call with other DOL grantees about your study's data request. Please tailor this script and the Frequently Asked Questions to meet the specific needs of your study, including information about the data request, study design, and your organization's data security requirements.

---

### Introduction to the call

My name is [NAME], and I am from [ORGANIZATION], a research organization based out of [ENTER LOCATION]. Thank you for making the time to talk to us today about our data request. Can everyone on the call please introduce themselves?

To get started, I would like to provide you with more background about our study, discuss possible next steps, and answer any questions you may have.

### Background

We are conducting an [ENTER TYPE OF STUDY SUCH AS "impact study"] study of [ENTER TYPE OF DOL PROGRAM] programs for the U.S. Department of Labor, which you may already be familiar with. The study will focus on [#] grant programs: [NAME OF DOL PROGRAM(S)]. As you know, [ENTER TYPE OF DOL PROGRAM] are key workforce development strategies, but there is limited evidence about how effective they are. The purpose of the study is to measure the impact of [NAME OF PROGRAM] on participants' employment and earnings outcomes.

### Our request

Most of the key data on your participants are in the Workforce Integrated Performance System, or WIPS, sometimes referred to as PIRL, which we will have access to through our data agreement with DOL. However, there are [#] key data elements that you are not required to submit to the WIPS but that we need so we can match [NAME OF PROGRAM] participants to similar individuals.

One is data on the **geographic area** where the participants live. This could be the county and state or zip code. We would be happy to take whatever data elements you have on the location of [NAME OF PROGRAM] participants. This will allow us to compare [NAME OF PROGRAM] participants to other individuals who live in the same area as the participants.

The second data element is **first and last names**. We need these data to request employment and earnings data from a national database called the National Directory of New Hires. We already have the Social Security numbers of your apprentices in the WIPS, but the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) asks us to submit names along with Social Security numbers to get a more accurate match. Without the employment and earnings data from the NDNH, we would not be able to determine whether [NAME OF PROGRAM] leads to employment and earnings outcomes that are different from those of other programs.

The third element is the **PIRL ID**. To link these data elements to all the other data you supply about apprentices in the WIPS, we need the PIRL ID that gets assigned to these **[NAME OF PROGRAM]** participants.

Our data use agreement will outline the timeline and time frames of our requests. We are happy to provide technical assistance to help you fulfill the request.

## Next steps

We have worked with state agencies and grantees in the past on similar data requests and developed data use agreements (DUAs) to protect confidentiality of the data and address any privacy concerns they may have. We are happy to answer any questions you have about our request and provide any additional supporting information.

**(Note to interviewer:** Confirm who else we may need to talk to about this request and how to best communicate moving forward. Before ending the call, ask to schedule a check-in meeting in two weeks to get updates on our request.)

## Possible follow-up questions

1. Do you have any questions about our study or about our request?
2. Is there a day and time in about two weeks for us to schedule a 30-minute check-in on our request?
3. Does your agency have an existing DUA template you would like us to use, or would you like to use our template that includes more information about our data request?

## Possible data provider FAQs (fill in accordingly)

1. When do you need us to send the data?
2. What is the period or population of participants you are requesting?
3. Some of our participants do not provide SSNs, and we are not supposed to require that they do so. These participants will not have SSNs in the WIPS, so they cannot be included in the study. Is that a problem?
4. Who will the DUA be between?  
*[Example response: The DUA will be between your agency and (EVALUATOR NAME)].*
5. What will you do with the geographic data and names we provide?
6. We are concerned about providing personally identifiable information (PII)...
7. We are unsure if we have the ability to attach the information you are requesting..  
*[Example response: We can provide technical assistance to whomever will be preparing files (if applicable)].*
8. What format (e.g., Excel) will you provide the data to us in?  
*[Example response: We are flexible and can provide the data in whatever format you prefer.]*
9. Do participants need to provide consent for their data to be shared?

## Appendix IX. Questions for introductory meeting with criminal justice agencies

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The text below provides example questions for an introductory call with criminal justice agencies about your study's data request. Please tailor these questions to meet the specific needs of your study, including information about the data request, study design, and your organization's data security requirements.

---

Questions for criminal justice agency:

1. Is there an application process for researchers to obtain data? If so, can they share or direct us to the application materials?
2. Is there a cost involved for the data pull? If so, how much?
3. [For departments of corrections] Do you have arrest and conviction data in addition to incarceration data for incarcerated individuals?
4. What are the requirements for providing data on individuals if we are to provide them with identifiers for a specific group of individuals? Do they typically require a consent form? If so, would it help if we provide our IRB approval that says they do not require consent for this process?
5. Do you house juvenile justice system data (arrest, conviction, or incarceration, depending on what agency you are talking to and the type of data that agency houses)?
  - If so, how do the requirements for these data differ?
  - If not, who does? Can they provide contact information?
6. [For anyone unable to provide the data in question] Who should we contact about this request?
7. Is there anything else we should be aware of regarding the data request?
8. Do you have any questions for me about the data request or study?

## Appendix X. Letter template for requesting data from criminal justice agencies

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The text below serves as an example of a data request letter intended for criminal justice agencies that do not have a data application. Please tailor this data request letter to meet the specific needs of your study.

---

**[DATE]**

To whom it may concern,

My name is **[NAME]**, and I am from **[ORGANIZATION]**, a research organization. On behalf of the **U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)**, we are conducting an **[ENTER TYPE OF STUDY SUCH AS "impact study"]** with our partner, **[OTHER ORGANIZATION]**, to learn about the **[ENTER A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT STUDY HOPES TO LEARN ABOUT]**.

We are reaching out to you today to request data from your organization to help us conduct our study. Our request involves obtaining bulk records for approximately **[X]** people. As part of this process, we would plan to provide you with identifiers (e.g., names and dates of birth) for these individuals and then ask for a file or set of files containing their records.

### Research design

DOL has awarded nearly **[DOLLAR AMOUNT]** in **[NAME OF GRANT]** grants to improve the employment outcomes of young adults and adults who have been involved in the justice system. These programs offer an array of services, including **[LIST SERVICES OFFERED AND POPULATION SERVED]**. In **[YEAR]**, DOL's Chief Evaluation Office contracted with **[NAME OF EVALUATOR]** to conduct the **[NAME OF PROGRAM]** Evaluation, which aims to determine whether grant-funded **[NAME OF PROGRAM]** programs improve **[OUTCOMES]** outcomes for its participants.

The evaluation seeks to document the way **[NAME OF GRANT PROGRAM]** grants operate, the services they provide, the participants they serve, and their common implementation challenges, as well as the extent to which programs increase employment and reduce recidivism among participants. **The reason we are contacting you is to request criminal justice records on both [NAME OF PROGRAM] participants and a potential comparison group of similar, non-participants served by other DOL programs.** We will use the data obtained through this request to identify individuals' criminal justice backgrounds—which we will use to refine our comparison group—and then to help determine the program's impact on recidivism (that is, whether **[NAME OF PROGRAM]** participants had different levels of criminal justice involvement than the comparison group after they received services).

Our request involves the following steps:

1. The study team would send your agency a list of names and dates of birth (and any other identifiers).
2. Your agency would then match this list against individuals in your database. Due to the nature of these data, we anticipate that a large number of individuals in our sample file will not exist in your database.
3. Your agency would then send back criminal justice records, including **[TYPE OF DATA]** data, for the individuals on the list for specified years.

## Data needed for each study participant

The specific data items we are requesting include:

*[Modify for data being requested for the specific agency – e.g., include only arrest, conviction, or incarceration data, depending on the type of data the agency houses.]*

**[LIST REQUESTED DATA SUCH AS "Arrest Information-dates of arrest, charge"]**

We understand that your agency may organize its data somewhat differently from this list, so we will be in touch to finalize the list of variables to include.

## Documentation

We also request copies of record layouts and data dictionaries for the data provided. If possible, we would like to receive electronic copies of these documents (in ASCII, .DBF, .XLS, or Word format); however, we can also accept paper copies.

## Data-sharing process

**[ENTER INFORMATION OUTLINING WHAT FILES YOU WILL SHARE WITH THE DATA PROVIDER AND WHAT DATA THEY WILL PROVIDE].**

## File delivery schedule

*[Modify paragraph based on data collection plan]* We would like to receive the first file sometime in **[YEAR]**. We would then like to receive an updated set of records for this same sample in **[YEAR]**. We would prefer that the second file is cumulative, meaning that it includes data from the previous year.

## Maintaining confidentiality of data

We maintain a strong commitment to confidentiality of data in all our projects. For this evaluation, our team will adhere to a number of security protocols:

**[ENTER INFORMATION OUTLINING YOUR TEAM'S COMMITMENT TO DATA CONFIDENTIALITY]**

If you require any additional information, please feel free to contact me. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

**[NAME]**

**[INCLUDE CORPORATE SIGNATURE]**