

PARIS
Public Assistance Reporting
Information System



PARIS Newsletter

PARIS is operated under the auspices of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Official PARIS website:
www.acf.hhs.gov/paris

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I hope that everyone had an enjoyable Holiday Season and were fortunate to spend some time off with family and friends. For those who like the cold and snow, may your wishes come true for lots of snow. If you don't, may you be where it is sunny and warm.

The Federal government shutdown this past October resulted in a vast majority of ACF, VA and DMDC employees being furloughed for several weeks. The impact to PARIS was the delay approving the 12 month extension for the Veterans computer matching agreement; time lost resolving issues with the August Federal match and the cancellation of the PARIS newsletter fall edition. Thankfully, the Board of Directors stepped up to the challenge and addressed states' issues and concerns in my absence.

As we start off a new year, Congress has passed a budget eliminating the fears of another possible government shutdown. Once ACF determines how its budget will be distributed and provides the "green light" to convene the annual training conference, I and the Board of Directors are ready to get started on conference activities.

Now for some good news, PARIS recognized with an honorable mention at the "NIEM in November" awards event and this could not have happened without the tireless efforts of David Russell (Michigan), George Tipton (Oklahoma) and Tim Dahlin (Washington). In a very short amount of time, they were able to provide their expertise of PARIS business processes and data elements to develop a PARIS Information Exchange Package Documentation for National Information Exchange Model (NIEM). More details on this project are in this edition.

Finally, if you have a PARIS related story you would like to share in a future PARIS newsletter, please send them in.

*Tom Miller, PARIS Project Officer Administration for Children and Families U.S.
 Department of Health and Human Services*

The next PARIS Quarterly Match is Friday, February 14, 2014.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



By the time that this appears on your desktop, I hope that it finds that all of you had a very safe, healthy and "Happy Holiday Season"! My wish is for a happier and even better 2014 for PARIS!

On that note, as I write this, Congress has passed a budget (shocker) for the period through September 2014. As the various Federal agencies receive their funding, they will determine where and to whom the dollars will go. Hopefully, at that point, ACF (Administration of Children and Families) will have the budgeted dollars to fund PARIS and consequently, the 2014 Training Conference. The Board feels that it is imperative that a training conference be held in 2014. In addition to states that have hired new PARIS related staff, others have staff that desire refreshers or sessions that revolve around filtering and utilization of the VA and Federal Files. At any rate, the Board will keep you posted on the developments in this area as they occur.

There are a number of states that have still not submitted signed MOUs regarding the extension of the VA agreement. States will not be receiving a VA match until a signed MOU agreement is sent to Tom at ACF.

As Tom no doubt mentioned, The PARIS Quick Start project was recognized with an honorable mention at the recent "NIEM in November" event. The PARIS team that consisted of George Tipton from Oklahoma and my colleague in Washington State, Tim Dahlin, were the key staff in developing a NIEM-conformant IEPD. Congratulations are in order for their superior contribution as members of the "Quick Start Team".

Verify State Contact Information

It is very important to verify the state contact information prior to your data submissions to DMDC. There have been recent submissions where state contact information was omitted or outdated and this causes additional burdens to the receiving states.

As we start 2014, this is an excellent opportunity for states to verify their points of contact for the State Administrative Representatives and State Interstate Match Contact instructions found on the Paris website.

These state contacts on the PARIS website are separate and distinct from the contacts that should be used with your data submissions to DMDC.

While I'm at it, I am very proud to pass along the good news that the Washington State PARIS unit has saved \$2 million in their first full year dedicated to working the Interstate match alerts, generated from the quarterly return files. As they move forward, I'm certain that they will have continued success in their PARIS related program integrity initiatives.

If your state has a similar success that you would like to share, please pass them on. We are continually looking for states that have "success stories" or articles that should be shared and promulgated to our PARIS community partners.

As we face the New Year, I want to thank Tom Miller and my fellow Board members for continuing to step up and answer or problem solve issues that are often sent our way. We will continue to be available, by e-mail and phone calls, to any and all of you that may need answers or clarification of PARIS related issues.

"Happy New Year" and I look forward to seeing and meeting most of you in 2014!

Bill Allman

President, PARIS Board of Directors

Veteran/PARIS Program Manager, WA State Health Care Authority

PARIS QuickStart Takes Honorable Mention

On 11-6-13, the IJIS Institute announced their 2013 NIEM (National Information Exchange Model) award winners. Thanks to the efforts of PARIS Board of Director members Dave Russell, Michigan; George Tipton, Oklahoma, and Washington State's Tim Dahlin, the ACF PARIS QuickStart project was recognized with an honorable mention. The IJIS Institute unites the private and public sectors to improve mission-critical information sharing and safeguarding for those who protect and serve our communities. The IJIS Institute provides training, technical assistance, national scope issue management, and program management services to help government fully realize the power of information sharing.

Founded in 2001 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation with national headquarters on The George Washington University Virginia Science and Technology Campus in Ashburn, Virginia, the IJIS Institute has grown to nearly 320 member companies and individual associates from government, non-profit, and educational institutions from across the United States.

Getting into Gear for 2014: Shifting New Medicaid Eligibility and Enrollment Policies into Drive

November 21, 2013, Martha Heberlein, Tricia Brooks, Samantha Artiga and Jessical Stephens

Excerpt from larger article ... "Connecting People to Coverage through Streamlined Processes"

States are relying on a variety of data sources to verify eligibility criteria. States have latitude to determine if a particular income data source is "useful" but neither the age nor cost of obtaining the data can be used as a reason to continue requiring paper documentation. SSNs and citizenship will be verified via an electronic match with the SSA, while immigration status will be verified through the DHS Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) database. Frequently-used data sources for other non-financial eligibility criteria include the SSA, the Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS), and state databases, such as the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), vital statistics, and public assistance records for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and SNAP.

The most common data sources that states will use to verify income at application, renewal and post-enrollment include the IRS, SSA, state wage data, state unemployment data and commercial databases that provide payroll information for some employers, such as TALX (also known as the Work Number).

November 2013, **The Branch**, National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health, Page 3 excerpt...

Over the next three years, the Alaska State Office of Rural Health (AK SORH) plans to work to identify veterans who are enrolled in public assistance programs in the state, to help them access VA and other benefits. "It has been challenging to identify veterans in need of services," said Pat Carr, AK SORH director. "Many providers don't ask people if they are veterans." The AK SORH plans to use the PARIS (Public Assistance Reporting Information System) system in this effort. Carr said that other states that have worked with their public assistance agencies to implement this model "have saved significant funding."

Meet Your PARIS Board Members

In each newsletter, we are interviewing a PARIS Board member to give you a better understanding of who we are and where we come from. This article highlights Rachael Stewart, Education and Training Program Manager, Utah Department of Workforce Services

Background:

I was born and raised in the great state of Utah. I know people think Utah is kind of a quirky place (and it is!), but I love living here. I don't consider myself "athletic" but I am "outdoorsy." I enjoy traveling, hiking, biking, 4-wheeling, boating and scuba-diving. Being from Utah, people always ask if I snow-ski, but if I'm being honest here, I don't really love playing in the snow. I like to look at it, but I prefer warm weather activities. I am married and we have a very spoiled yellow Lab name Duke. I have worked for the Utah Department of Workforce Services for 14 years, which is not quite half-way to retirement!

How did you get involved with PARIS?

Several years ago PARIS put out some mentoring grants to help states who were not yet members of PARIS with start-up costs. The PARIS Project Director (Mark) contacted me to see if Utah would be willing to mentor Oklahoma and Colorado, since we were the closest member state. I had just inherited PARIS and knew next to nothing, but agreed to apply for the grant. Coincidentally, I was attending a UCOWF conference around the same time, where I was able to meet Mark and the President of the Board, Elliot. During a PARIS session at the conference I made a comment about applying for the grant and a gentleman sitting in front of me turned around and introduced himself as George Tipton from Oklahoma and said it sounded like we would be working together. Toward the end of the conference Mark and Elliot approached me about joining the board. I accepted their offer and soon found myself in a conference room in DC sitting next to none other than Bill Allman as we planned one of the early training conferences. The following year the mentoring grants were offered again and Utah mentored Montana and Arizona. The rest, as they say, is history.

What do you think makes PARIS successful?

By far it's the people. I have met so many people over the years that get what PARIS is about and want to make a difference. I know state employees can get a bad rap, but in my experience many are passionate and care about what they do. I have seen so many examples over the years of one person in a state getting the vision, someone like Kristi Scheve who keeps "poking the bear" and the next thing you know they are reporting cost-savings in the millions. It makes me very proud to be a very small part of something so big. PARIS would not be where it is today without all of the exceptional people who make it what it is.

If you could try any occupation other than the one you are in, what would it be?

Oh for sure I would want to be a rock star!!

Were you named after anyone?

Yes. My parents assumed I was a boy because boys are quite common in my family and planned to name me after my father's best friend Jon. I would have been Jon Stewart! How cool would that be?! When I turned out to be a girl, my parents decided to name me after Jon's wife Rachael. She was a wonderful woman and I'm glad I had the chance to get to know her.

Mountain cabin or beach house?

Beach house for sure!

What book you reading now?

Wild by Cheryl Strayed



November 21, 2013

Computer system saves state \$2 million

OLYMPIA – The ability to electronically access and share information between Washington State, federal government agencies and other states about applicants for, and recipients of, certain Department of Social and Health Services benefits has helped the state identify and stop abuse and misuse of more than \$2 million.

Washington began using the Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) interface on May 1 of this year. Through November 19, the Department either terminated or reduced benefits by \$1,961,695. It found another \$158,878 in overpayments, allowing DSHS to begin collection actions against ineligible recipients.

"The vast majority of people are honest when they apply for our services, but there will always be a few who misrepresent their circumstances and take advantage of our safety net," said David Stillman, assistant secretary for the DSHS Economic Services Administration.

"We must do our best to ensure people who get assistance are legally qualified to receive it."

Public assistance agencies that enroll in PARIS sign one or more data matching agreements, permitting them to participate in quarterly matches of client eligibility and enrollment data files. Under those agreements, the assistance agencies' applicant and recipient data files are transmitted to the U.S. Department of Defense Manpower Data Center. It processes the data and transmits the results to participating agencies so they can look for clients collecting benefits in other states.

The PARIS interface looks for Social Security number matches in participating states, Washington clients' receiving income or medical assistance payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs, or other income through the U.S. Defense Department. The interface also can determine if Washington recipients qualify for federal health care coverage.

After PARIS verifies with the other states that duplicate benefits were received and abuse or misuse has occurred, DSHS takes action to terminate food, cash, and/or medical benefits and establishes, forwards overpayments to the DSHS Office of Financial Recovery and refers cases to the DSHS Office of Fraud and Accountability for investigation.

During a performance review of PARIS, the Department's internal auditors determined using the interstate match created the potential for saving money. A dedicated unit was developed to use the information to determine eligibility and calculate benefits.

