2014 EARN Maryland Implementation Grant FAQs

(Updated September 2, 2014)

Many of these answers refer to the EARN Maryland Implementation Grant Grantee Guide, issued July 16, 2014 ("Grantee Guide"), available at:
http://www.dllr.maryland.gov/earn/earnimplementgranteeguide.pdf

Disbursements

- **Can our quarterly payments be made through direct deposit?**

  Yes. To expedite the payment process, avoid any confusion with paper checks, and to make it easier for DLLR to track the status of payments, all Grantees are welcome to enroll in Direct Deposit for receiving EARN Maryland disbursements.

  To enroll, please complete the X10 form, available at:
  http://comptroller.marylandtaxes.com/Government_Services/State_Accounting_Information/Static_Files/APM/gadx-10.pdf.

  Enrolling in Direct Deposit is optional, and for Grantees' convenience.

General Fiscal

- **Can EARN Funds cover FICA?**

  Yes.

- **What happens if the 15 percent advance that DLLR disbursed in Quarter 1 does not cover Grantee's first quarter expenditures?**

  If total first quarter expenditures are more than the 15% EARN fund advance that Grantee received, Grantee will have the opportunity to include the balance of Quarter 1 expenditures in Quarter 2's Request for Payment.

  Similarly, if the amount of the 15% Quarter 1 EARN Advance totals more than the Grantee's Quarter 1 actual expenditures, then the Grantee will have a positive balance of EARN Funds that can be used towards projected expenditures for Quarter 2. The Request for Payment form

provides a place to input the EARN Cash Balance, and will be factored into Quarter 2's Request for Payment

- **What supporting documentation does DLLR require with the Grantee's submittal of the Request for Payment?**

  All actual expenses and leveraged resource contributions reported on the Quarterly Expenditure Report must be supported with documentation. This documentation must be maintained by Grantees and must be available for review by DLLR or its designees. In addition, DLLR may periodically request copies of specific documentation. All expenses and leveraged resource contributions must be incurred during the Grantee's "Grant Period" as defined in the Grantee's Grant Agreement (Grantee Guide, Section 6).

  A chart of the "Required Documentation for Expenses and Leveraged Resources" listing the types of documentation acceptable for each category of expense and leveraged resources, is available at: http://www.dllr.maryland.gov/earn/earngranteeguiderepforms.shtml (Grantee Guide, Appendix D). In some instances, substitute invoice or leveraged resource documentation may be negotiated with Grantee's Grant Advisor.

  A form for tracking Quarterly Leveraged Resources Tracking form will be issued by the end of September 2014.

- **What is the "Grant Period?"**

  The Grant Period is specified at the top of the first page of the Grant Agreement ("Notice of Grant Award").

  The Grant Period is important because "[a]ll expenses and leveraged resource contributions must be incurred during the Grantee's 'Grant Period' as detailed in Grantee's Grant Agreement." In other words, EARN Maryland funds <u>may not</u> be used to cover expenses incurred outside of a Grantee's particular Grant Period.

- **I understand that DLLR requires each Grantee to submit a new financial audit annually and that a reminder will be sent in March of each year to do so. Is an official audit required or will DLLR allow a Financial Review or Compilation?**

  DLLR requires that the highest level review that the Grantee has obtained be submitted annually. DLLR will review the most recent independent audit, review or compilation report for each Grantee annually. A Grantee cannot submit a review or compilation if an audit exists. Likewise, DLLR will not accept a compilation if a review exists. (Grantee Guide, Section 14.)

EARN MD CONNECT

- **We are already asking employers to commit a lot of time and other resources to the EARN Partnership. What can Grantees provide as an incentive for Employers to get on EARN MD CONNECT?**

We appreciate this input. The EARN Team is always striving to streamline the EARN MD CONNECT system, and to make it as useful to Employer Partners, and the goals of each Partnership.

Additional functionality has been added to the EARN MD CONNECT platform, accessible at https://www.dllr.state.md.us/earn/earnconnect.shtml. Thanks to input from many EARN Partners:

1. Multiple users can now join one Organizational Profile with their own unique log-in credentials, allowing multiple people within your organization to use the system without creating a new Organizational account;
2. You can now add and remove Administrators of Partnership Profiles, allowing Partnerships to ensure that the appropriate entity(ies) have Admin privileges, including the ability to invite and approve membership in the Partnership Profile;
3. You can now send and receive messages to one or more Organizational Profiles within the EARN MD CONNECT system.

These new updates, combined with previously-existing functions, should make the EARN MD CONNECT platform valuable to Partnerships as a whole, including Employer Partners. Within EARN MD CONNECT:

1. Partnerships can contact other Partnerships to share information, best-practices, common challenges/solutions, and anything else that will support the success of your Partnership's EARN project;
2. Partnerships can also maintain documents within their Partnership Profile, keeping them organized and easily-accessible to all Partners (but not to non-Partners).

Moving forward, the EARN Team will communicate with Grantees via EARN MD CONNECT, and the performance measures completed by our data analysts at BEACON will be available to each Partnership only via CONNECT.

The EARN Team is always happy to work with Grantees to further explain the usefulness of the platform to all Partners, and is always open to suggestions for improvements.