Key Takeaways
Overcoming Challenges and Adapting New Strategies

Employer Engagement: *Employers are facing new challenges that workforce organizations must take into account to understand hiring, training, and retention needs.*

What's Happening Now	Questions to Consider for Recovery
• Facing their own economic struggles and regulatory restrictions with regards to social distancing, employers are not offering as many internships as before.	• Recruiting in a recession is inherently different - which employers are more likely to engage with the workforce system?
• Employers may be laying off staff, or have no way to anticipate future need for workers at this time.	• How can the workforce field project future workforce needs, and prepare jobseekers?
• There may be potential opportunities to prepare and connect jobseekers to new sectors.	• What sectors will be needed? • How will sectors change? • Which sectors/occupations will bounce back first?
• Safety and health standards for workers like home health aides have not been effectively implemented.	• What new safety and health standards will need to be implemented in the field for home health aides? How can workforce providers talk to employers about these standards?
• Onboarding new staff to remote work, if available, may present new challenges.	• How can workforce providers understand the remote work environments of employers and support jobseekers to work in a new environment?

Securing and Retaining Funding: *Given the challenges of COVID-19, some providers are struggling to meet service provision standards set by funder contracts.*

What's Happening Now	Questions to Consider for Recovery
• Providers are uncertain how to report program outcomes to their funders and are currently strategizing about what the future will look like for service provision.	• What resources can be provided to help providers negotiate their existing contracts? • What support will providers need to navigate their funder relationships?
• Providers are uncertain how to communicate the challenges encountered in service provision and operations to funders.	• What resources will be required to meet workforce needs of jobseekers and employers post-COVID?

Technology & Infrastructure: *Factors that will enable organizations to continue providing services in an increasingly digital workspace. This includes software and hardware, as well as the capacity of participants and program staff to engage with these technologies.*

What's Happening Now	Questions to Consider for Recovery
• Privacy and confidentiality is a rising concern for providers that have remote staff who must access private information on unsecured networks.	• What standards should be set regarding accessing project and client data in remote work environments?
• Building participant comfort to engage with technology can be difficult as digital literacy is a challenge for underresourced communities.	• How can providers get additional funding for IT tools/support for participants? • How can addressing digital literacy challenges be integrated into existing and future programs?
• Providers are upskilling staff - including maintenance staff or others whose daily tasks are limited while working remotely - and offering trainings to participants on how to use virtual engagement software.	• What support do staff need to provide remote services in innovative ways?
• Participant retention is a challenge due to a lack of participant access to laptops, tablets, and internet.	• How can providers shorten the technology resource gaps experienced by participants? • What funding is available to provide individuals required hardware and access to broadband and internet connectivity? How can this be achieved at a policy level? • Can devices and internet access be considered work supports?

Participant/Client Engagement: *Approaches that organizations must take to continue supporting program participants.*

What's Happening Now	Questions to Consider for Recovery
• Recruiting young adults is becoming difficult as typical recruitment sources, like afterschool programs and community centers, are temporarily not in operation.	• What new strategies can be implemented to recruit youth? • Will program timelines be effected by the need for a new approach in participant recruitment?
• Senior adult engagement will need to change due to health and safety risks.	• How can the eldery be engaged post-COVID-19?
• Case management support is challenging virtually. Workforce providers struggle to do activities like intake and counseling sessions remotely.	• What are best practices for delivering case management remotely? What resources are needed?
• Vulnerable populations will need additional wraparound support like rental assistance and case management.	• What financial support and resources are available for vulnerable populations?

Staff Management: *Considerations that organizations must take to ensure employee retention, engagement, and productivity in the changing context.*

What's Happening Now	Questions to Consider for Recovery
• Burn-out and personal challenges faced by staff are becoming evident (edginess, cabin fever) as working remotely becomes the norm.	• What staff support services will be needed to support staff who are working remotely? • What new standards need to be set at the workplace to ensure the health and safety of staff as individuals return to the physical workspace?
• Workloads for staff have shifted as service provision has decreased or paused for some providers. Some staff find themselves with heavier workloads, while others are in need of additional work assignments. • Keeping staff members engaged and holding them accountable has been a challenge for some providers who now have the majority of their staff working remotely.	• Will providers shift to a hybrid in-person and remote work in the future? • How can organizations retain culture and staff accountability in a remote environment? • How can organizations to keep people motivated?