Community Listening Session

Impact of coronavirus on VITA sites, Clients and Communities

March 17, 2020
1:00 – 2:00 PM EST
Welcome

Tupa Hoveka
Program Associate, Field Engagement
Prosperity Now
Housekeeping

• This webinar will not be recorded and will not be made available to registrants

• All webinar attendees are muted to ensure sound quality

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Today's Hosts

Fran Rosebush Baylor
Director of Field Engagement
Prosperity Now

Rebecca Thompson
Project Director, Taxpayer Opportunity Network
Prosperity Now

Justin Chu
Senior Program Associate, Field Engagement
Prosperity Now
Our field’s work is critically important

Fran Rosebush Baylor
Director of Field Engagement
Prosperity Now
Responding to impacts of COVID-19

- **Federal Government Response**
  - *Legislation currently in the Senate*— COVID-19 testing, food assistance, unemployment assistance, paid sick leave (with large gaps)

- **States and municipalities**
  - Banning evictions (Baltimore, California and lots of others)
  - Guaranteeing paid sick leave (Oakland)

- **Local non-profits and community leaders**
  - Coordinating food assistance and medical help
  - Setting up ‘workers’ fund’ for hourly workers
  - Local coalitions banning together to ask municipalities for protections for low- to moderate-income families (DC)
  - VITA sites looking for alternative models (drop off, virtual assistance, assisted self-prep)

- **More**
  - Bloomberg article on fundraising during tough times
  - Philanthropy strategizing on how they can support
  - Prosperity Now and TON Listening Sessions and advocacy – today
Objectives for Today

- Expected impact on your VITA sites—closures, #s served, etc.

- TON and Advocacy Efforts—how can we rally together to support you?

- Guidance from SPEC and Others—what major questions do you need help with?

- Hearing from You
Let’s Talk

Rebecca Thompson
Project Director, Taxpayer Opportunity Network
Prosperity Now
What we’re hearing:

- IRS may extend the filing deadline
  - VITA’s concern: extension of time to file 2016 returns with refunds
  - Will know more later this week

- Sites are closing
  - Seeking alternative options to meet demand
What we’re doing:

- Elevating your voice:
  - IRS SPEC
  - IRS HQ:
  - Members of Congress

- Building your capacity:
  - Listening Session
  - Resources on our website
Focus for Today

1. Programmatic and economic impacts of COVID-19

2. Program & policy solutions that can help families and communities weather this disruption.

3. Learn about the best and model practices that will help the VITA program adapt to our current circumstances

4. Gain insight on how TON can best support the VITA field and clients over the next few months
How This Works

Justin Chu
Senior Program Associate, Field Engagement
Prosperity Now
Discussion Guidelines

4 Sections; 10 Minutes Each

- Series of poll questions

- What alternative service delivery methods are you employing to continue to meet the needs of your clients?

- What are the implications of an extended filing season to your clients, program and volunteers?

- What can TON do to support you during this time and beyond?
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Group Discussion Technology

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Poll Question 1

What are your biggest concerns for this outbreak in terms of your program? (select all that apply)

- Meeting VITA grant MREs
- Unserved clients unable to file
- Long term partnerships affected by closures
- Volunteer safety and retention
- Other (let us know in the comments)
Poll Question 2

Are your in-person sites open or closed?

- They’re all closed
- They’re mostly closed
- They’re mostly open
- They’re all open
Poll Question 3

How many clients will not be served due to this outbreak?

- 0 Clients/No Change
- 1 – 500 clients
- 501 – 1000 clients
- 1,000+ clients
- Other (let us know in the comments)
Poll Question 4

Are you offering alternative service delivery methods for your clients?

- Yes
- No
- Other (let us know in the comments)
What alternative service delivery methods are you employing to continue to meet the needs of your clients?
What are the implications of an extended filing season to your clients, programs and volunteers?
What can TON do to support you during this time and beyond?
Next Steps and Close
Additional Resources

- CDC COVID-19 Materials
  - How to Stay Safe
  - Managing Stress and Anxiety
  - FAQs
  - Latest News Updates

- TON Alternative Tax Prep Resource Page
  - https://prosperitynow.org/alternative-tax-prep-options-page

- IRS Partner Webcast:
  - March 18, 2020 @ 1:00 p.m. ET
  - https://www.webcaster4.com/Webcast/Page/1104/33522
Next Steps

▪ VITA Awareness Day Update

▪ Visit our **Advocacy Center** to stay up to date with advocacy efforts.

▪ Please **complete the survey**!

▪ Join the TaxRoundtable listserv [https://taxroundtable.groups.io/](https://taxroundtable.groups.io/)
Thank You!

Please complete our survey!