

COVID19 Impact on Partnerships and Collaborations

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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Presentation Overview

- Managing Fed-State statistical programs partnership
- Challenges the partnership faced during the pandemic
- Solutions and actions taken to address challenges
- Lessons learned

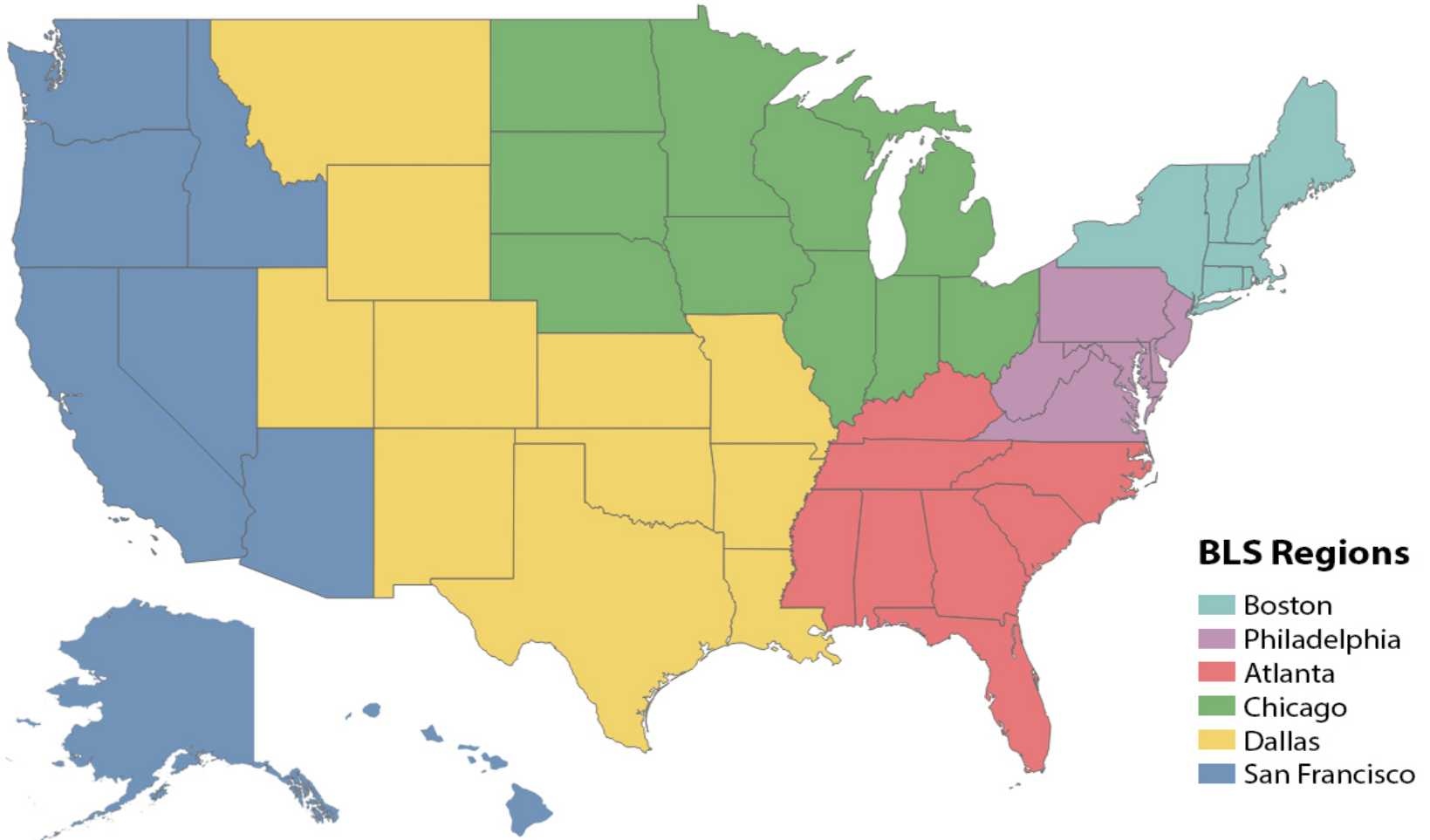


BLS Federal-State Cooperative Statistical Programs

- BLS and the states enter into annual cooperative agreements to:
 - Ensure data consistency
 - Ensure timely availability of key economic statistics
 - Ensure respondent confidentiality
- BLS and the states work together to publish comparable data in two areas:
 - Labor Market Information (LMI)
 - Occupational Safety and Health Statistics (OSHS) Programs
- Partnership goes back to early 1900s for labor market data and 1970s for safety and health data



BLS Regional Offices and States by Region



Management of Fed-State Cooperative Programs

The Role of BLS Office of Field Operations (OFO)

- Ensure adherence to the Cooperative Agreement (CA)
- Review state operations and data collection activities
- Conduct quality assurance
- Provide systems development and technical support
- Provide training and technical assistance to the states
- Disseminate state and regional level data



Collaboration Challenges in the COVID-19 Environment

- Pandemic strain on the Fed-State cooperative process
 - ▶ States took variety of approaches to handling work of state staff
 - ▶ State staff were not all telework ready
 - ▶ Travel restrictions on BLS Field Operations regional staff
 - ▶ On-Site collection suspended at data collection centers (DCCs) and the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Center



Major Actions and Initiatives to Address the COVID19 Challenges

- Implemented a number of procedural changes
- Streamlined BLS security and confidentiality protocols
- Deployed variety of systems and applications
- Assisted states with equipment and data access issues
- Converted most training courses to distance learning
- Communicated with state partners via video instead of personal visit

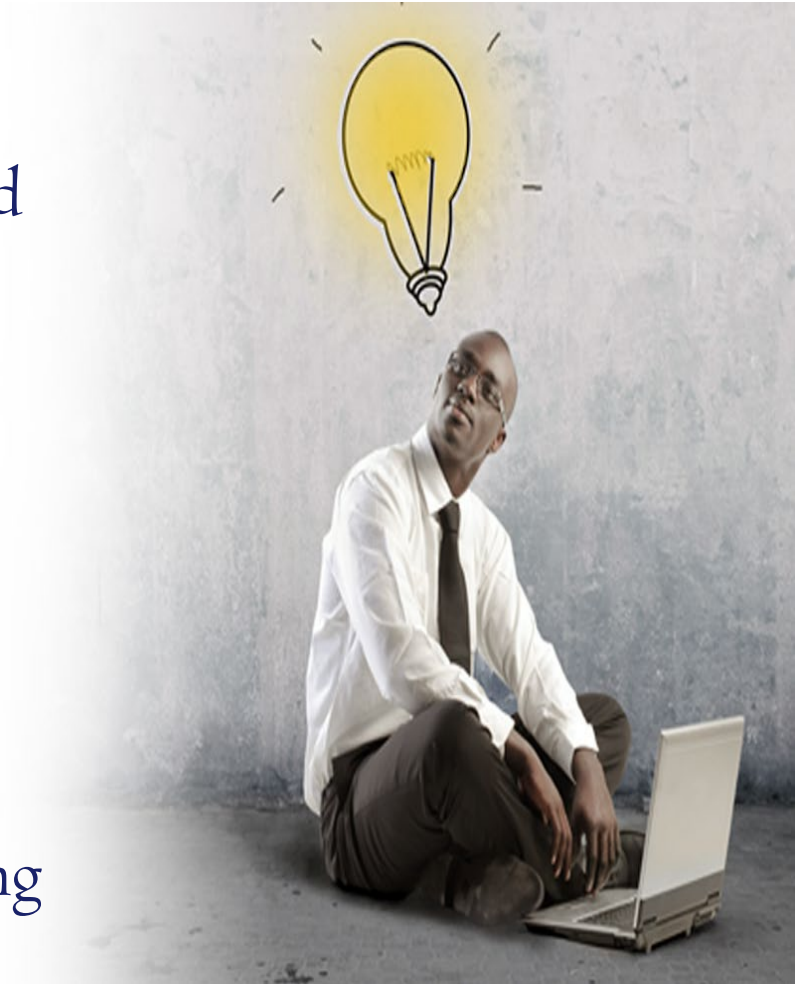


Data Collection Centers (DCC) and Electronic Data Interchange Center (EDI) Changes

- DCC and EDI contract activities shifted dramatically
 - ▶ Shifted the DCCs to telework/remote collection
 - ▶ Changed collection procedures
 - ▶ Offered and encouraged respondents to provide data via internet

Lessons Learned

- Importance of planning ahead
- Importance of being flexible and acting quickly
- Importance of leveraging technology
- Importance of having telework-ready workforce
- Importance of remote training, quality assurance, and monitoring activities



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