

Dental Hygienist Liaison Project: Orientation for new state DHLs



National Center on
Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety

Revised: January 2024





Role of State DHLs

Serve as a communication link between the Office of Head Start and Head Start stakeholders on topics related to improving oral health.

Local

Local Head Start and Early Head Start programs

State

- Head Start Association
- Head Start Collaboration Office
- State Oral Health Program
- State Oral Health Coalition



Minimum Requirements for DHLs



Maintain ADHA membership



Complete quarterly reports



Respond to requests in a timely manner



Send monthly e-mail to Head Start programs and stakeholders



Attend quarterly DHL calls/webinars



Submit annual expense allowance request, when eligible



Submit presentation proposal for state level meeting

More ideas...

DHL At-A-Glance Activity Guide

<https://www.astdd.org/docs/dhl-at-a-glance-2023.pdf>

Insert link to updated AAG once finalized.



DHL At-A-Glance Activity Guide

Required Activities

Activities are identified by the following categories:

AC = Access to Care AD = Administration AS = Assessment
CO = Collaboration ED = Education PR = Prevention

Monthly

- ED: Send e-mail to state partners (e.g., Head Start association, Head Start collaboration office, oral health program, oral health coalition) and Head Start staff with relevant oral health information and resources.
- ED: Respond to information requests in a timely manner.

Quarterly

- ED: Participate in a call with your regional DHL coordinator.
- ED: Participate in a DHL webinar or listen to an archived webinar posted to the DHL webpage.
- AD: Complete a [progress report](#).

Progress report due dates:

- 1st quarter report—due January 7 (Oct–Dec)
- 2nd quarter report—due April 7 (Jan–Mar)
- 3rd quarter report—due July 7 (Apr–Jun)
- 4th quarter report—due September 15 (Jul–Sep)

Annually

- ED: Submit a proposal to present at a state meeting using NCHBHS-approved presentation slides. Presentations can be in-person or virtual.
- AD: Request an annual expense allowance once activities in three categories are completed.
- CO: Maintain American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) membership. (DHL expense allowance can be used to pay for this.)

Other Activities: Examples by Category

AC: Facilitate access to oral health care.

- Collaborate with state groups (e.g., dental association, oral health coalition, primary care association) to recruit health professionals to provide oral health care to Head Start participants.

AS: Promote awareness of Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) oral health data.

- Review [PIR](#) oral health data to identify state trends and potential issues related to meeting the [Head Start Program Performance Standards](#), and share key findings with state partners.

CO: Foster communication with DHL project leadership, DHLs, and Head Start staff.

- Participate in the DHL discussion list, read messages, and share information and resources.
- Participate in state [health managers networks](#) and share information and resources.
- Attend DHL events at national conferences (e.g., ADHA, National Oral Health Conference), as personal funding permits.

ED: Share oral health information and NCHBHS resources with Head Start staff and state partners.

- Submit a proposal to present at a state meeting using Office of Head Start (OHS)-approved presentation slides. Presentations can be in-person or virtual.
- With guidance and approval from the NCHBHS oral health management team, present at a regional meeting using OHS-approved slides.
- Prepare a newsletter article using content from NCHBHS oral health resources and share it with state partners.

PR: Encourage preventive oral health.

- Promote toothbrushing in Head Start and Early Head Start programs—ideally group toothbrushing at the table—and in Early Head Start programs.
- Promote use of fluoride in Head Start programs (e.g., brushing with fluoride toothpaste, drinking community fluoridated water).
- Promote receipt of fluorides (e.g., fluoride varnish, silver diamine fluoride) in dental, medical, and other settings.

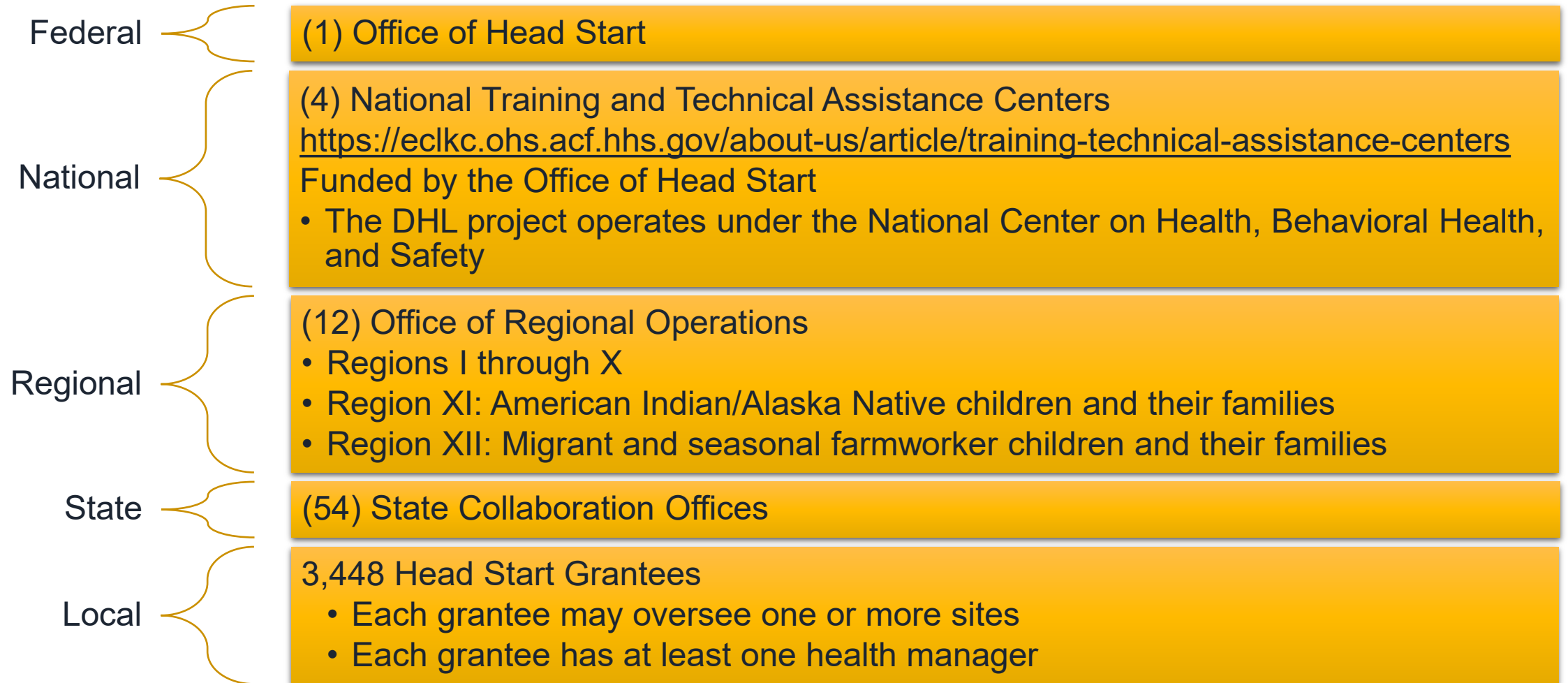


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Head Start Organization





DHL Project

Office of Head Start

National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety

DHL Project:

Oral Health Management Team

Regional DHL Coordinators

State DHLs





NCHBHS Oral Health Management Team



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Specialist



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DPH Consultant &
Writer/Editor



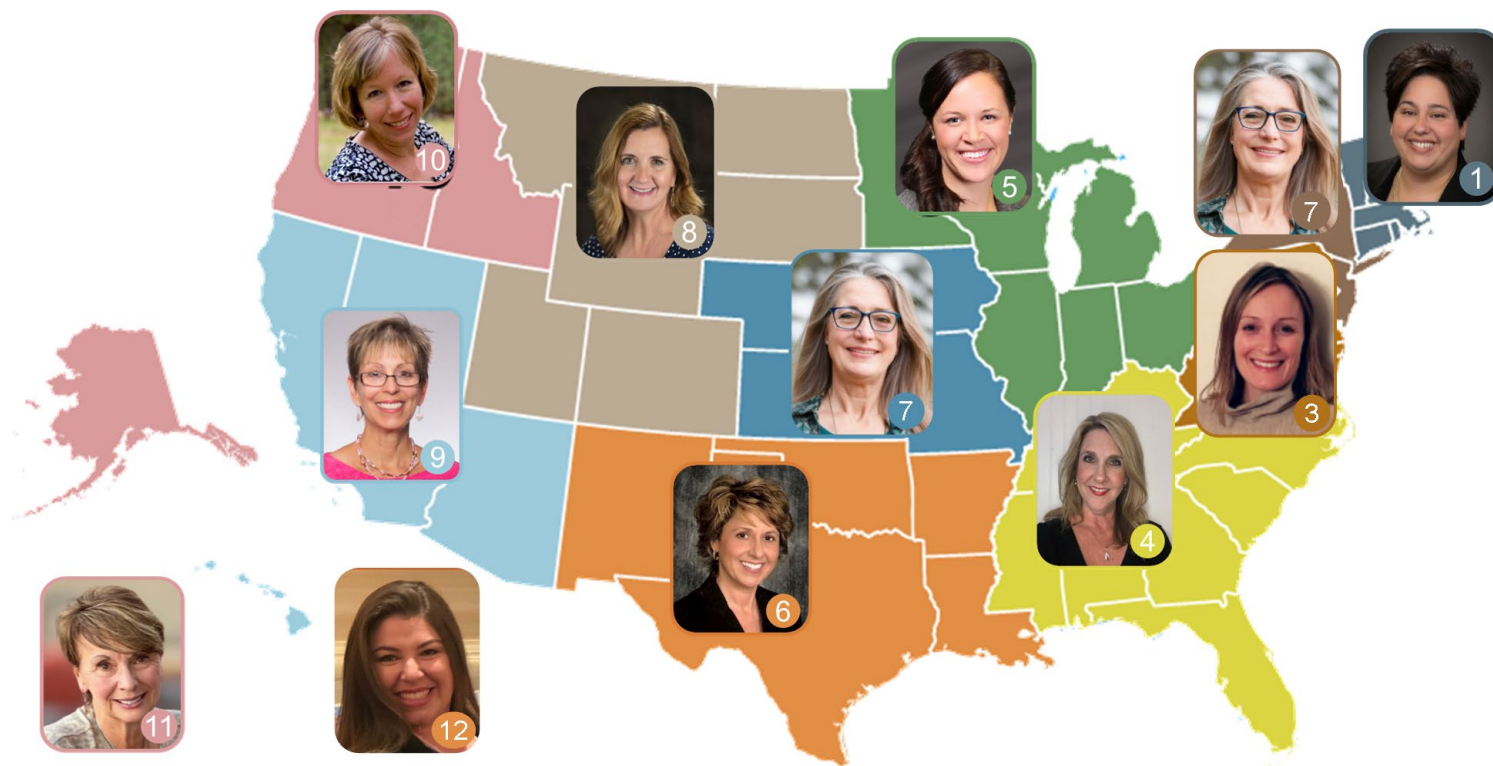
Kathy Hunt
ASTDD
DHL Lead



Gina Sharps
ASTDD
DHL Co-Lead



Regional DHL Coordinators



Primary responsibility:
Providing support to state
DHLs



Your First Steps as a Dental Hygienist Liaison

1. Orientation with regional DHL coordinator
2. Create a key stakeholder distribution list
 - Contacts on DHL webpage
 - Your RDHLC can provide assistance, if needed
3. Send introduction email to key contacts
 - Templates available from your RDHLC
4. Subscribe to the ***Resources to Make you Smile!*** newsletter
 - <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/subscribe>
5. Use the DHL Discussion list as another resource for asking questions and getting ideas.
 - Headstart@groups.astd.org





ASTDD DHL Webpage

astdd
Where oral health lives

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Dental Hygienist Liaison Projects

Helpful Hint:
Save address on
favorites bar for
ready access

<https://www.astdd.org/head-start-state-dental-hygienist-liaisons-information>





DHL Webpage- Overview

National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety

Dental Hygienist Liaison Projects

Because of the importance of oral health during pregnancy and early childhood, in 2011 the National Center on Health, working in partnership with the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA), created the Dental Hygienist Liaison (DHL) project. Under the DHL project, one dental hygienist from each state volunteers to help promote oral health for pregnant women and children enrolled in Head Start. The DHL project continues as part of the Office of Head Start- currently funded through the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety (NCHBHS). The National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center is the project lead for NCHBHS oral health activities and works in partnership with ASTDD, which coordinates the Dental Hygienist Liaison Project.

Role of the Dental Hygienist Liaison

DHLs promote oral health in Head Start by:

- ▶ Providing a communication link between NCHBHS and Head Start agencies in their states
- ▶ Collaborating with state organizations such as oral health programs, Head Start collaboration offices, and Head Start Associations
- ▶ Providing oral health presentations at state conferences and meetings
- ▶ Offering strategies to improve access to oral health care for pregnant women and children enrolled in Head Start
- ▶ Working with oral health professionals to establish partnerships with local Head Start programs
- ▶ Sharing information about the importance of oral health and regular oral health visits, good nutrition and oral hygiene practices, and oral-injury-prevention strategies with Head Start program staff
- ▶ Serving on Head Start committees (e.g., Head Start health manager networks, Head Start health services advisory committees) and oral health advisory boards and coalitions to promote the oral health of Head Start participants



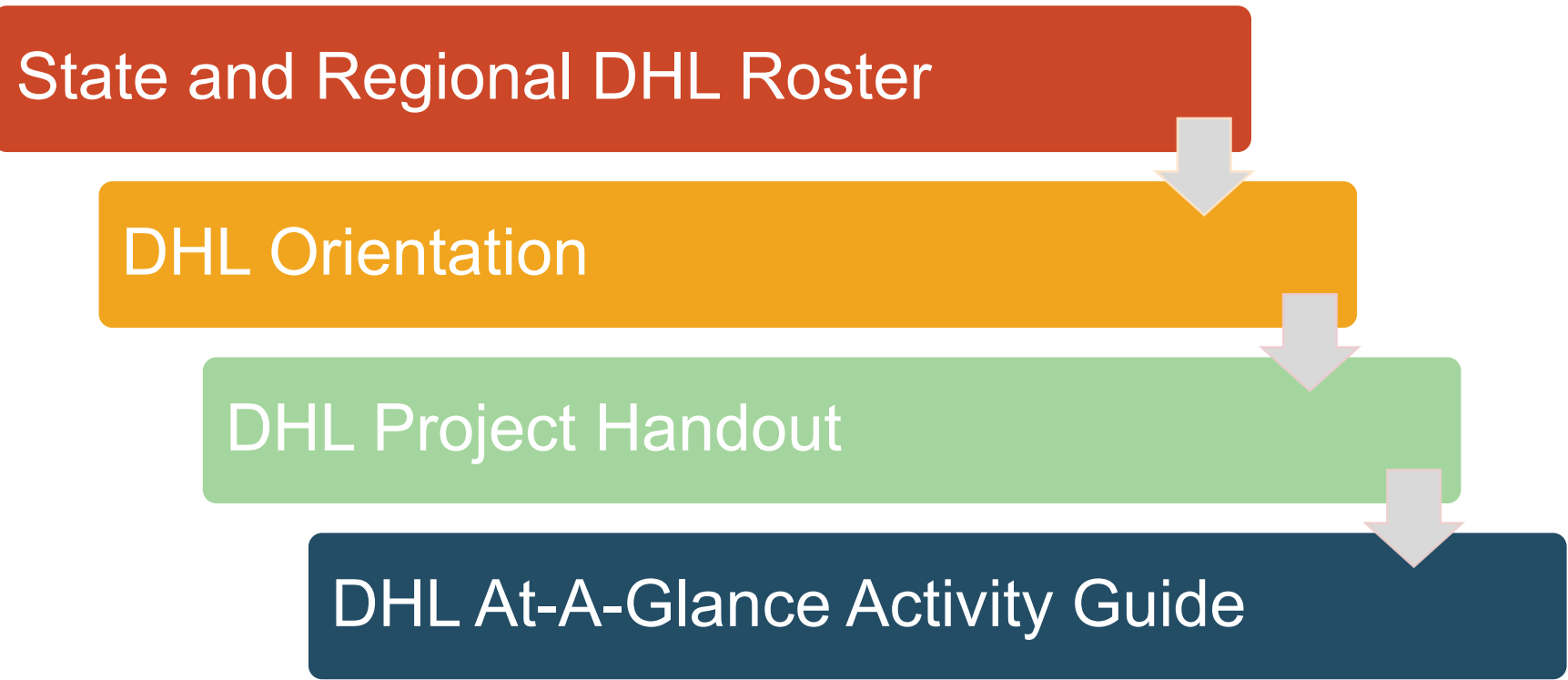
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DHL Resources

Information about DHL project





DHL Resources

Information about Head Start

- [Early Head Start/ Head Start Program Locator](#)
- [Head Start Performance Standards Related to Oral Health](#)
- [Program Information Reports \(PIR\)](#)
- [Understanding PIR](#)
- [EPSDT Dental Periodicity Schedules by State](#)
- [Understanding the Dental Periodicity Schedule and Oral Exam: A Guide for Head Start Staff](#)





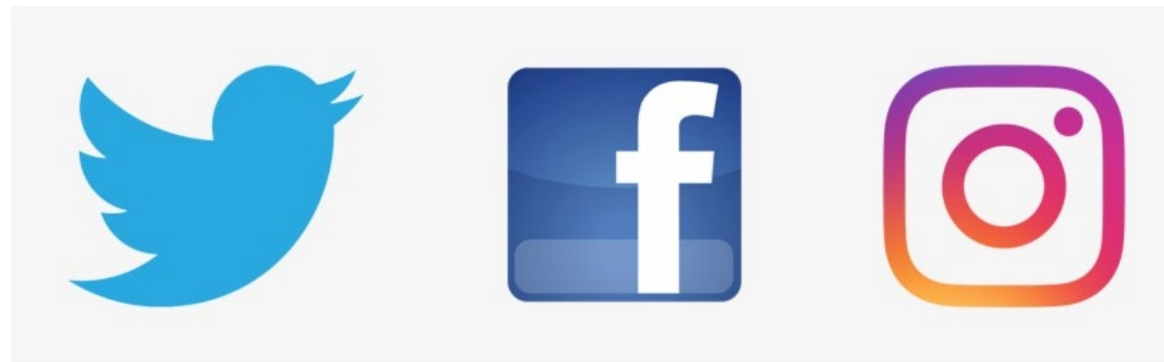
DHL Resources

Oral Health Social Media Campaign

2021 Social Media Campaign for Head Start Parents and Caregivers

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

<http://bit.ly/HeadStartASTDD>





Key Contacts

National Head Start Association (NHSA)

State Head Start Collaboration office

State Head Start Associations

State Oral Health Programs

State Oral Health Coalitions

Head Start Regional Health Specialists

National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety (NCHBHS)





Approved Educational Materials

Important: For consistent messaging, the Office of Head Start asks that DHLs only share approved resources and use only approved presentations

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/oral-health>



[NCHBHS Presentations | Powered by Box](#)



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Helpful Hints:

- Save addresses on favorites bar for ready access
- Presentations are frequently updated, so always go to Box to download the most current version.



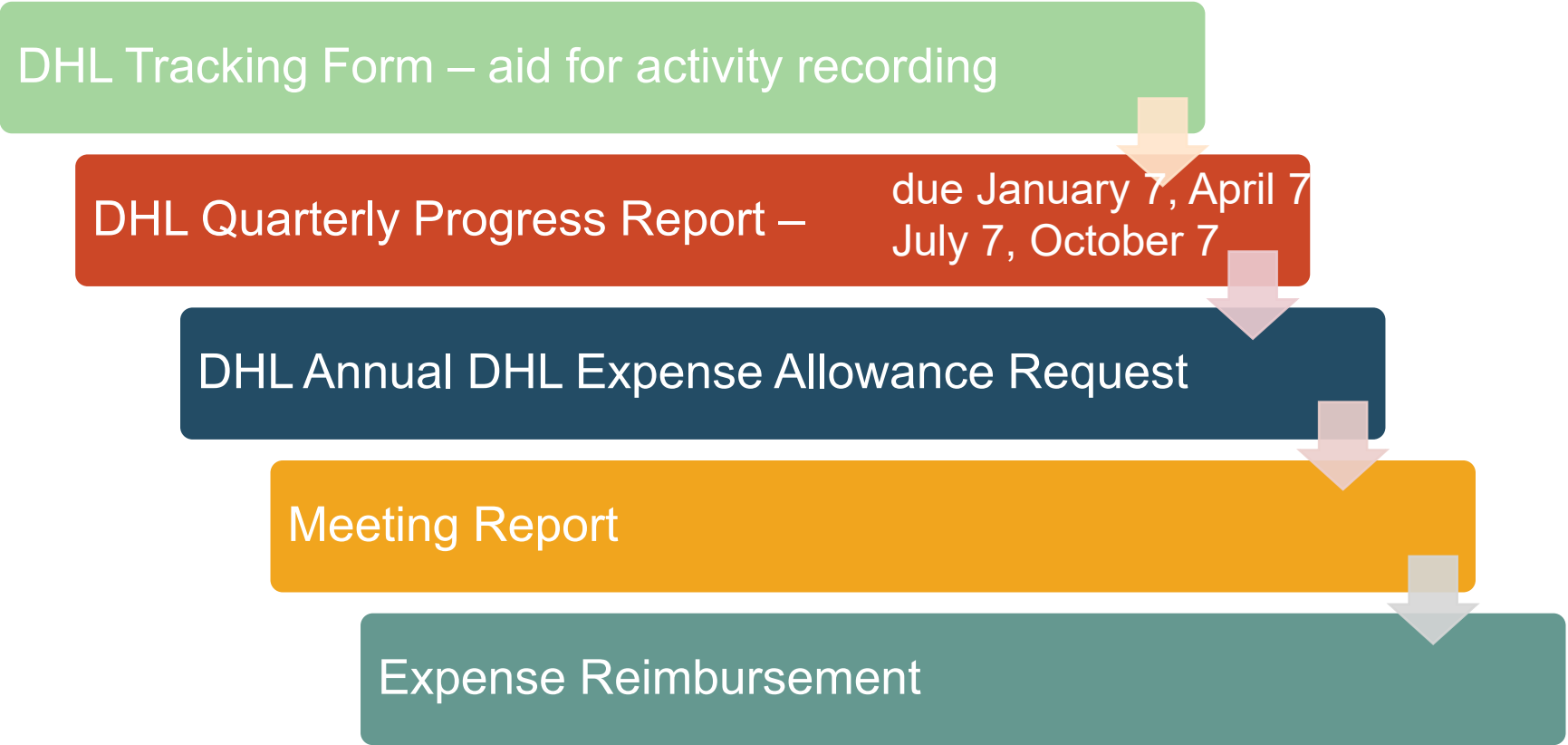
DHL Webinars



Next Webinar:



Forms & Reports





Contact Information

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