

## **Day 11 of the 12 Days of TRIO**

### **The Gift that Pulls it All Together: Compliance Assessments**

If the last ten days felt intentional, that's because they were. Every checklist, template, training resource, and organizational tool we've shared has been quietly working toward these final two days. Days 11 and 12 focus on pulling everything together and showing you how all those moving parts function in practice.

Today's gift focuses on **Virtual Compliance Assessments**.

A **Virtual Compliance Assessment** is not an evaluation of whether your project is "good" or "bad." It is a structured, documentation-based review designed to answer one question clearly and honestly: Are you doing what you said you would do, and can you prove it? That means administrative files, participant files, fiscal records, policies and procedures, reporting systems, and internal controls, reviewed the same way ED looks at them, whether your records are paper, digital, or a hybrid of both.

Listed below, you'll find program-specific document lists for each TRIO program. These are not theoretical wish lists. These are the actual materials reviewed during a compliance assessment. Many projects use these lists to organize their records and conduct internal spot checks, which is precisely how compliance should be approached: steadily and proactively, not in a panic after the fact.

- [Upward Bound/Upward Bound Math & Science](#)
- [Veterans Upward Bound](#)
- [Talent Search](#)
- [Educational Opportunity Centers](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)
- [McNair](#)

It's also important to be clear about what a **Virtual Compliance Assessment is not**.

A compliance assessment is different from an **External Project Evaluation**, which we'll cover tomorrow on Day 12. **Compliance** focuses on regulatory adherence, documentation, and operational alignment. **Evaluation** focuses on effectiveness, outcomes, implementation quality, and continuous improvement. Different tools, different purposes, different timing, all equally important, but not interchangeable. Tomorrow, we will conclude by discussing external evaluations and why compliance and evaluation work best when they are aligned, not treated as the same.

You absolutely can use today's resources to organize your files and prepare this on your own. In fact, strong projects often do. But when you need an experienced second set of eyes, structured feedback, and a clear roadmap for corrective action and sustainability, this is exactly where our Virtual Compliance Assessment services come in.

You can learn more about this service here:

<https://www.nosotrodedu.org/compliance-assessments>