1. **What is SOAR?**
   SOAR (SSI/SSDI, Outreach, Access and Recovery) is a program designed to increase access to SSI/SSDI for eligible participants who are experiencing, or at risk of homelessness, and have a mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder. SOAR is a national best practice that teaches caseworkers how to prepare high-quality SSI and SSDI applications to expidite processing and increase approvals. A key component of SOAR is collaboration. Partners such as COHHIO, the Social Security Administration and Disability Determinations Services are vital to ensuring that SOAR applications are submitted in a manner that they can be expedited.

2. **What is the SOAR Ohio Project?**
   COHHIO serves as the state lead for Ohio's SOAR program. Eligible individuals have been diagnosed with severe and persistent mental illness and/or a physical impairment and is homeless or at risk of homelessness. Once an applicant receives a determination of their potential benefits, they can move torward accessing safe, decent, and affordable housing.

3. **How would it benefit my agency?**
   SOAR is a resource for local and community-based organizations working with populations that are not stably housed. The program provides a pathway to help increase the incomes of the clients you serve while linking them to Medicaid coverage. The goals of the SOAR program overlap with COHHIO's mission of end homelessness and increasing access to safe, stable housing.

4. **What if the person recently got diagnosed? Will they be eligible for the SOAR Ohio Project?**
   Yes, if the person has a diagnosis that is expected to last more than 12 months, they may be eligible for SOAR.

5. **How long will it take to recieve a decision on the SSI/SSDI application?**
   Ohio is averaging 82 days (from submission) to recieve a decision

6. **What if the person started out homeless but was housed prior to the referral?**
   A formally homeless individual has up to 90 days (to complete an application) after signing of the lease or if they are living in a temporary housing situation and have no income. Please note this is why it is so important to make referrals to SOAR Ohio at first contact with any client who is potentially eligible.

7. **Can a person be referred to SOAR if they have income?**
   Yes, as long as their income does not exceed Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) = $1,170.

8. **What if a person is staying in a permanent supportive housing unit? Are they eligible?**
   Yes, the person is eligible if they are at imminent risk of homelessness, For example, their rent may be covered, but the tenant may be responsible for paying utilities and without income could get evicted. Also, their diagnosis is a factor; SOAR has been vague regarding this type of scenario, so it depends on the client's circumstances.

9. **How do I find a SOAR specialist in my area?**
   You can find this out by visiting
   https://cohhio.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/11/SOARSpecialists11.30.17.pdf

10. **How do I, or someone from my organization, become a SOAR certified specialist?**
    You can sign up and complete a free training through soarworks.prainc.com or by using this link https://soarworks.prainc.com/course/ssissdi-outreach-access-and-recovery-soar-online-training.
    This source also qualifies for 20 hours of Social Work CEU's. You will then need to complete a one-day SOAR Ohio training to learn the Ohio specific practices upon successful completion of the online SOAR course work.

11. **If I become SOAR trained and accept cases, is there an amount of cases I need to take on?**
    There is no limit to the number of cases each SOAR certified specialist can sccept. However, SOAR recommends 3 to 4 applications per month to keep the specialist familiar and in practice. If the person is a case manager working another full-time job they may only be able to do 1 or 2 per month, which is also okay.

12. **Will I be eligible for Technical Assistance if I complete training?**
    Yes, COHHIO provides Technical Assistance for individuals who have passed the online course and completed the one-day Ohio training through COHHIO. You will also be eligible for ongoing training and SOAR related updates.