NEW JERSEY

Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 2016

2016

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Introduction

Today, more New Jersey residents are working than ever before, and the state's unemployment rate is at its lowest level since 2007. New Jersey's economy grew by 83,600 private sector jobs in 2015 alone, and the state has added more than 250,000 private sector jobs over the past six years. During this period of growth and recovery, New Jersey has built a talent development system that is ensuring more people have the skills, abilities and connections to pursue economic opportunities and ensuring that the state has the skilled workforce needed to support and sustain economic growth.

This talent development system includes:

1. New partnerships with employers across the state's seven key industries,
2. Strong collaborations between workforce programs, education and higher education,
3. The use of technology to better connect jobseekers and employers,
4. Better labor market intelligence to inform workforce investments, and
5. Innovative partnerships between the state, local governments, community and faith-based organizations and educational institutions.

In an era of global competition and rapid technological change, New Jersey must continue to build on this strong foundation. This Combined State Plan sets a strategic direction for the future and outlines the steps the state will take to increase the number of residents with an industry-valued credential or degree through high-quality partnerships and integrated investments.

The Plan is focused on five primary themes:

Theme 1: Building Career Pathways with a focus on Industry-Valued Credentials

Through a common definition of career pathways, a newly created list of industry-valued credentials, literacy standards and a renewed commitment to Employment First for all persons with disabilities, New Jersey will ensure that all workforce investments are enabling individuals to access greater economic opportunity and to build on their skills throughout their careers. These efforts will expand the number of career pathways, at all levels of education and workforce services, which will help more individuals obtain industry-valued credentials and degrees.

Theme 2: Expanding High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships

Across departments, New Jersey is focusing investments and programs on building employer-driven, high-quality partnerships that follow a common definition and framework. These partnerships are critical to building new career pathways for jobseekers and students and help increase the number of individuals with an industry-valued post-secondary degree or credential. To further support these efforts, the state's seven industry-focused Talent Networks will facilitate the development of new high-quality,

employer-driven partnerships across the state; investments in new Targeted Industry Partnerships and Talent Development Centers will build a foundation for all of the state's workforce development investments.

Theme 3: Strengthening Career Navigation Assistance through One Stop Career Centers and Broad Partnerships

New Jersey is committed to supporting One-Stop Career Centers that meet local needs and assist individuals in obtaining new skills and employment. New Jersey will expand the number of jobseekers and students who have access to high-quality career guidance and job search assistance through a new network of One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, libraries, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations, organized labor and educational institutions.

Theme 4: Strengthening Governance through Effective Workforce Development Boards and Regional Collaborations

Effective Workforce Development Boards are critical to the success of New Jersey's Talent Development system. Led by the private sector but inclusive of key partners, local WDBs engaged in an active governance role ensure that investments are made in effective programs and that local residents can access the services they need for career success.

New Jersey has committed to supporting regional planning, service coordination and resource sharing for all workforce education and training programs, recognizing that labor markets are not constrained by governmental or political boundaries. New Jersey is a densely-populated state and our labor markets are not constrained by state and county boundaries. These efforts will be organized around three regions of the state: North, Central and South.

Theme 5: Ensuring System Integrity through Metrics and Greater Transparency

To reflect the strategic priorities of the state, New Jersey is adopting an additional set of performance measures and applying these measures, and those required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to broader number of programs. New Jersey will make performance data on workforce development programs accessible to workforce decision-makers and the public. The Eligible Training Provider List and Consumer Report Card are critical tools assisting jobseekers and students making decisions about short-term occupational training programs.

New Jersey looks forward to implementing this Combined State Plan and continuing to build upon its strong foundation of talent development to support economic opportunities for our citizens and economic growth for our state.

I. WIOA State Plan Type

New Jersey has chosen to submit a Combined State Plan as a result of a joint planning process among several state agencies covering the required programs and optional programs, as outlined in the table below.

Required Partners	Additional Partners
Department of Labor and Workforce Development	Department of Labor and Workforce Development
• Adult (Title I) • Dislocated Worker (Title I) • Youth (Title I) • Adult Basic Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II) • Wagner-Peyser (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III) • Vocational Rehabilitation (including the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired) (Title I Rehabilitation, as amended by Title IV)	• Jobs for Veterans State Grants (Title 38, Chapter 41) • Senior Community Service Employment Program (Title V Older Americans Act) • Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007) • Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974)

Figure 1

This combined planning process will position New Jersey's workforce system to allow for further collaboration with programs that are not officially a part of this plan, and provide opportunities for additional efficiencies and leveraging of program strengths.

II. Strategic Planning Elements

(a) Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

(1) Economic and Workforce Analysis

(A) Economic Analysis. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-state regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This includes:

(i) Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

Existing Industry and Occupational Demand[i, ii, iii]

New Jersey's economy continues to improve. More New Jerseyans are employed than ever before and the state's unemployment rate of 4.5 percent is at its lowest level since 2007. New Jersey's unemployment rate remained stable or declined each month since May 2012, and is down by 5.3 percentage points from a recessionary high of 9.8 percent in January 2010. The state's unemployment rate has been at or better than the national rate since October 2015. And the state's labor force participation rate remains well above the national rate, 64.1 percent to 62.7 percent.

The state added 83,600 private sector jobs in 2015, for a sixth consecutive year of private sector job growth and the strongest year since 1999. New Jersey private sector employers have now added more than 250,000 jobs since February 2010, the recessionary low point for private sector employment in the state. New Jersey had more than four million non-farm jobs in 2015. The four most prevalent industries accounted for nearly 60% of the employment in the state. The top two industries of Education and Health Services and Professional and Business Services produce nearly one out of every three jobs for the State.

Industry (2-digit NAICS)	2015 Annual Average Employment	Percent of Total employment
Education and Health Services	659,300	16.4%
Professional and Business Services	651,400	16.2%
Government	614,800	15.3%
Retail Trade	462,300	11.5%
Leisure and Hospitality	359,600	8.9%
Financial Activities	250,800	6.2%
Manufacturing	238,200	5.9%
Wholesale Trade	216,800	5.4%
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	176,600	4.4%
Other Services	168,900	4.2%
Construction	148,000	3.7%
Information	74,400	1.8%
Mining and Logging	1,400	0.0%

Figure 2

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

There were nearly 3.9 million employees across all occupations within New Jersey in 2014. Of the top 10 occupations only Registered Nurses ($78,330) had a higher than average annual salary ($53,770) for the State. The top 10 occupations accounted for a little over 20% of all employment in the State in 2014. Retail Salespersons, the largest occupation, accounts for 3.5% of all employment and has an average wage ($26,860) that half of the average wage for the State.

Occupation (6-digit SOC)	2014 Annual Average Employment	Annual Average Salary
Total, All Occupations	3,868,950	$53,770
Retail Salespersons	138,020	$26,860
Cashiers	95,910	$20,820
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	83,650	$26,690
Registered Nurses	76,790	$78,330
Office Clerks, General	76,080	$33,160
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	68,470	$28,240
Customer Service Representatives	64,110	$37,740
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	63,590	$26,030
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical,	61,520	$39,850
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	57,890	$20,550

Figure 3

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics

Diving more deeply into New Jersey's high demand industries, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has highlighted seven key industry clusters for the state. The seven key industry clusters are: Advanced Manufacturing; Health Care; Financial Services; Technology; Transportation, Logistics and Distribution; Biopharmaceutical and Life Science; and Leisure, Hospitality and Retail Trade. Together, all of these clusters account for 67% of employment and 68% of wages for all private sector industries in New Jersey.[iv] They represent 138,522 establishments, more than half of all establishments in the state.

The seven target industry clusters were developed several years ago in support of New Jersey's State Plan. The State Plan focused on targeted economic growth by promoting opportunities that attract and grow industries important to the state and the region. Job retention and creation efforts can be strengthened by focusing on regional planning and the cultivation of industry cluster based development strategies. A review of New Jersey's strengths and assets reflected the critical role these industries played in New Jersey. However, this is not to say other industry sectors are not important. The success of these core industries will create secondary benefits that will contribute to the growth of other industries. The seven key industry clusters account for two-thirds of the employment and wages in the state. In the Garden State, these key clusters have found an ideal location – within a day's drive of 40.0 percent of the U.S. population; a talented, productive and highly educated workforce with a high density of residents with advanced degrees and 52 colleges and universities.

Leisure, Hospitality and Retail (LHR)

This is the largest of the seven industry clusters in terms of employment with nearly twenty-five percent of statewide employment in 2014. The state's tourism industry is a significant part of the state's economy and is primarily captured by the Leisure and Hospitality super sector. Retail trade is the state's second largest industry as far as employment at the two-digit level signifying its importance to the overall economy. These three industries were grouped together primarily based on similar occupational requirements.

Financial Services

This industry is relevant to NJ given the state's location, adjacent to one of the largest financial hubs in the world, New York City.

Health Care

This industry cluster focuses on the part of the industry involved with patient care. New Jersey is home to several large and well known healthcare systems. The Health Care industry was the only industry to gain employment throughout the recent recession.

Advanced Manufacturing

Advanced manufacturing employment is primarily comprised of four industry groups: chemical manufacturing (36%), computer and electronic product manu facturing (18%), fabricated metal manufacturing (16%) and machinery manufacturing (11%). The remaining 19% are made up of selected detailed industries.

Transportation, Logistics and Distribution (TLD)

This cluster focuses on transportation and warehousing, and wholesale trade. These two components are equally important in the supply chain. New Jersey's location and infrastructure are the strengths of this industry.

Life Sciences

New Jersey's Life Sciences cluster encompasses a wide range of industry related activities that are focused on life-processes. The three components used to focus on this cluster are pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical devices.

Technology

The NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) defines the technology cluster based on occupational industry staffing patterns. The technology cluster is made of industry groups primarily found in the professional, scientific and technical service, wholesale trade, manufacturing, and information industry sectors.

Advanced Manufacturing		Health Care
2014 Establishments: 5,143 Employment: 161,328 Average Wages: $90,040		2014 Establishments: 21,559 Employment: 448,863 Average Wage: $53,718

Percent of Total Employment: 4.9% Percent of Total Wages: 7.4%	Percent of Total Employment: 13.8% Percent of Total Wages: 12.3%

Financial Services	Technology
2014 Establishments: 11,547 Employment: 174,636 Average Wages: $116,107 Percent of Total Employment: 5.3% Percent of Total Wages: 10.3%	2014 Establishments: 26,624 Employment: 359,704 Average Wages: $114,530 Percent of Total Employment: 11.0% Percent of Total Wages: 21.0%

Transportation, Logistics, and Distribution	Biopharmaceutical and Life Science
2014 Establishments: 24,258 Employment: 360,619 Average Wages: $71,544 Percent of Total Employment: 11.0% Percent of Total Wages: 13.1%	2014 Establishments: 3,105 Employment: 115,178 Average Wages: $137,294 Percent of Total Employment: 3.5% Percent of Total Wages: 8.1%

Leisure, Hospitality, and Retail Trade
2014 Establishments: 53,854 Employment: 806,046 Average Wages: $28,146 Percent of Total Employment: 24.7% Percent of Total Wages: 11.6%

New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages, 2014 Annual Averages

(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

Emerging Industries and Occupations[v]

In New Jersey, both goods-producing and service-providing industries are expected to grow. When looking at the individual industries, the largest growth is in the Educational and Health Services Industry which is expected to add over 110,000 jobs over the next 10 years. Along with Educational and Health Services 1.7% increase, Professional and Business Services are expected to gain 1.3% or 84,500 jobs. The largest percentage growth is in the Construction Industry at 2.5%. It is the only goods producing industry to add jobs, with both Manufacturing and Mining and Logging expecting to lose around 1% of their jobs. Government and Manufacturing are the only industries that are expected to lose over 15,000 jobs, with Government losing the most at nearly 20,000 jobs.

Industry (2-digit NAICS)	2012 Jobs	2022 Jobs (Projected)	Change in Jobs	Percent Change

Goods Producing	**377,000**	**397,050**	**20,050**	**0.5%**
Mining and Logging	1,300	1,150	(150)	(1.4%)
Construction	130,400	166,550	36,150	2.5%
Manufacturing	245,300	229,350	(15,950)	(0.7%)
Service-Providing	**3,513,800**	**3,800,200**	**286,400**	**0.8%**
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	821,700	885,100	63,400	0.7%
Information	77,300	70,850	(6,450)	(0.9%)
Financial Activities	250,100	264,100	14,000	0.5%
Professional and Business Services	618,200	702,700	84,500	1.3%
Educational and Health Services	620,300	733,050	112,750	1.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	346,000	371,650	25,650	0.7%
Other Services	164,200	176,350	12,150	0.7%
Government	616,000	596,350	(19,650)	(0.3%)

Figure 4

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections

Employment is expected to grow by 7.5% from 2012 to 2022, and add over 310,000 jobs to New Jersey. The top 10 occupations are all projected to grow by over 5% by 2022. Home Health Aides and Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, including Fast Food are both expected to gain over 10,000 jobs. Home Health Aides are the largest growing occupation at over 15,000 and they also have the largest percentage growth at nearly 49%. The top 10 occupations are projected to gain at least 5,000 jobs. Five of the top ten growing occupations were also in the top ten largest occupations in 2014.

Occupation (6-digit SOC)	2012 Employment	2022 Employment (Projected)	Change in Employment	Percent Change
Home Health Aides	31,150	46,300	15,150	48.6%
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	60,000	70,200	10,200	17.0%
Retail Salespersons	125,700	134,850	9,150	7.3%
Registered Nurses	79,850	88,900	9,050	11.3%
Nursing Assistants	51,800	60,050	8,250	16.0%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	75,750	83,350	7,600	10.1%
Receptionists and Information Clerks	51,150	57,850	6,700	13.0%
Software Developers, Applications	29,100	35,750	6,650	23.0%
Customer Service Representatives	63,450	69,550	6,100	9.6%

Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	41,550	47,000	5,450	13.1%
Total, All Occupations	**4,149,400**	**4,462,550**	**313,150**	**7.5%**

Figure 5

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections

(iii) Employers' Employment Needs. With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

Employers' Employment Needs[vi,vii]

When looking at the 10 fastest growing occupations there are a wide range of education requirements. Software Developers, Applications is the only occupation of the top 10 that needs a Bachelor's Degree. Registered Nurses requires an Associate's Degree and Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers and Nursing Assistants require a Postsecondary Non-degree Award. Of the other six occupations, two require a High School Diploma or equivalent, and the other four require less than high school education. None of the occupations require any work experience and three occupations also do not require any job training. The seven occupations that do require job training require short-term on-the-job training. While Retail Salespersons has the highest number of annual job openings it has the lowest percentage of openings for growth at around 18%. Home Health Aides has the highest percentage of annual openings for growth at nearly 72%. Software Developers, Applications (64.4%) is the only other occupation with an opening for growth percentage above 50%.

Occupation (6-digit SOC)	Average Annual Job Openings	Education	Work Experience	Job Training
Home Health Aides	2,110	Less than HS	None	Short-term OJT
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	3,310	Less than HS	None	Short-term OJT
Retail Salespersons	5,220	Less than HS	None	Short-term OJT
Registered Nurses	2,450	Associate's degree	None	None
Nursing Assistants	1,810	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	None
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	3,110	Less than HS	None	Short-term OJT
Receptionists and Information Clerks	2,040	High school diploma or equiv.	None	Short-term OJT

Software Developers, Applications	1,040	Bachelor's degree	None	None
Customer Service Representatives	2,340	High school diploma or equiv.	None	Short-term OJT
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,210	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Short-term OJT

Figure 6

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections

Labor Insight data from Burning Glass[viii] also give a picture of the certifications and the key knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that are most desired by employers within New Jersey's seven key industry clusters. The top desired characteristics in each category is shown below for each industry. While certifications and some competencies vary by industry, there are also multiple KSAs, including Communication Skills and Organizational Skills, which are included in the top competencies for most industries.

Advanced Manufacturing		Health Care
Key Certifications:		**Key Certifications:**
Six Sigma		Registered Nurse
Project Management Certification		Home Health Aide
Certified Production Technician		Certified Nursing Assistant
Key KSAs:		**Key KSAs:**
Communication Skills		Communication Skills
Organizational Skills		Patient Care
Problem Solving		Organizational Skills
Collaboration		Writing
Planning		Treatment Planning

Financial Services		Technology
Key Certifications:		**Key Certifications:**
Series 7		Project Management Certification
Certified Public Accountant		Certified Information Systems Auditor
Certified Financial Planner (CFP)		Certified Network Professional
Key KSAs:		**Key KSAs:**
Communication Skills		Communication Skills
Organizational Skills		Organizational Skills
Cash Handling		Oracle
Customer Service		SQL
Microsoft Excel		Java

Transportation, Logistics, and Distribution		Biopharmaceutical and Life Science
Key Certifications:		**Key Certifications:**
Commercial Driver's License		Project Management Certification
Forklift Operator Certification		Six Sigma
Air Brake Certification		American Society for Quality Certification
Key KSAs:		**Key KSAs:**
Communication Skills		Chemistry
Organizational Skills		Clinical Research
Scheduling		Product Development
Customer Service		Regulatory Affairs
Repair		Problem Solving

Leisure, Hospitality, and Retail Trade
Key Certifications:
ServSafe Certification
Forklift Operator Certification
Key KSAs:
Communication Skills
Customer Service
Store Management
Merchandising and Sales
Mathematics

Burning Glass Technologies Inc., Labor Insight

LWD is currently undergoing a process to define an Industry-Valued Credentials list that helps to identify and address some of the state's employers' skilled workforce needs. Labor market analysts at LWD initially identified credentials in demand by the seven key industry clusters discussed above. Credential information will also be included for the Utility and Construction industries. This research included the review of New Jersey specific labor data from 2010 through 2014 and occupational employment projections through 2022. LWD identified occupational employment trends by industry and wages, major employers, demand occupations, and demand degrees/certifications.

Research conducted by established industry associations was also incorporated to inform the process. Talent Network Directors associated with New Jersey's major industries reviewed and updated the draft credential list prior to meetings with all Talent Network partners. Subsequently, ten industry-specific meetings were held with those partners to solicit additional employer feedback and create a preliminary list of industry-valued credentials. Among the topics discussed in the meetings were current credentials in demand, relevance of current labor market information, and the importance of credentials in the hiring process. Expanded input from educators, workforce professionals, employers and others will be solicited through an on-line survey distributed by the Office of Research and Information (ORI) through the Talent Networks.

(B) Workforce Analysis. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes: —

(i) Employment and Unemployment. Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data and trends in the State.

Employment and Unemployment[ix,x]

As of January 2016, New Jersey's labor force numbered more than 4.6 million workers. Of this number, nearly 4.4 million were employed, leaving more than 207,000 individuals unemployed and looking for work, an unemployment rate of 4.5 percent. This rate is lower than the United States' rate of 4.9 percent for the same period.

New Jersey's Employment and Unemployment			
Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
4,562,425	4,355,041	207,204	4.5%

Figure 7

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The labor force participation rate within the state averaged 65.1% over the period from 2010-2015; higher than the national average of 63.6%. The labor force participation rate refers to the total number of individuals over the age of 16 who are either employed or unemployed and looking for6 work.

Characteristics of Unemployment Insurance Claimants[xi]

As of December 2015, there were 83,327 individuals claiming unemployment benefits in New Jersey. Of these individuals, nearly 59.2% were male and 40.3% female, and the greatest portion, 30.7%, were between the ages of 30 and 44. Nearly 49.1% of claimants were White/Not of Hispanic Origin, while those who are Black/Not of Hispanic Origin and Hispanic represented 18.0% and 22.4% of claimants, respectively.

The breakdown of unemployment claimants by their identified industries is displayed in the table below. The largest portion of claimants identified their primary industry as Administrative and Waste Services (15.6%), followed by Retail Trade (11.1%) and Construction (10.7%).

Industry	% of total receiving unemployment benefits
Administrative and Waste Services	15.6%
Retail Trade	11.3%
Construction	10.7%
Heath Care and Social Assistance	8.6%

Accommodation and Food Services	8.2%
Professional and Technical Services	5.7%
Manufacturing	5.7%
Wholesale Trade	5.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	4.0%
Educational Services	3.6%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3.1%
Finance and Insurance	2.6%
Other Services except Public Administration	2.5%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1.6%
Public Administration	1.5%
Information	1.4%
Management of Companies	1.2%
Agriculture	1.0%
Utilities	0.2%
Mining	0.1%
Did not identify a specific industry	*5.9%*

Figure 8

NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Office of Research and Information, Economic and Demographic Research

Looking at unemployment claimants by occupation, 17.7% of claimants identified as Services occupations, followed by 14.1% in Office and Administrative Support, and 11.9% in Professional and Related positions.

Occupation	% of total receiving unemployment benefits
Services	17.1%
Office and Administrative Support	14.1%
Professional and Related	11.9%
Transportation and Material Moving	11.5%
Construction and Extraction	9.6%
Management	8.6%
Production	8.4%
Sales and Related	7.2%
Installation, Maintenance and Repair	4.2%
Business and Financial	3.3%
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	0.8%
Military	0.2%
Did not identify a specific occupation	*2.5%*

Figure 9

NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Office of Research and Information, Economic and Demographic Research

Youth Workers[xii]

On average between 2010 and 2014, there were approximately 1,027,560 youth aged 16 to 24 in New Jersey, with approximately 54.6% participating in the labor force. This is more than 10 percentage points lower than the labor force participation rate for the population 16 years old and above, likely due to many in this age group pursuing education, either secondary or post-secondary. Those youth who are participating in the labor force experience a much higher unemployment rate than the general labor force, with 19.1% of participants aged 16 to 24 being unemployed and looking for work, compared to the most recent statewide unemployment rate of 5.0%.

Older Workers[xiii]

Between 2010 and 2014 there was an annual average of 2,355,490 individuals aged 55 or older in New Jersey, with approximately 43.6% participating in the workforce. This rate is lower than that over the overall population, reflecting the gradual retirements that begin to occur once a worker enters this age group. The table below shows the decline in labor force participation as individuals move into different age brackets among the older worker group.

Age Group	Labor Force Participation	Unemployment Rate
55 to 59	77.6%	7.6%
60 and 61	69.4%	8.3%
62 to 64	56.9%	8.0%
65 to 69	38.0%	8.8%
70 to 74	21.5%	8.4%
75 and older	6.9%	7.6%
Total ages 55 and older	**43.6%**	**8.0%**

Figure 10

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014

The unemployment rate for older workers is greater than that of the general labor force at 8.0%, compared to the current statewide average of 5.0%. The labor force participation rate declines below the statewide average beginning with the 62 to 64 age group, and sharply declines beginning with the 65 to 69 age group, reflecting the most common retirement age range.

Veteran Workers[xiv]

Of the over 5.5 million individuals from 18 to 64 years old in New Jersey, 3.3% or more than 181,000 are veterans. Almost a quarter (22.6%) of veterans in this age group are not participating in the labor force. Of the 77.4% who are participating, the unemployment rate is 7.8%, slightly higher than the statewide average. On average from 2010 to 2014 there were more than 14,000 unemployed veterans annually. The unemployment rate of veterans varies by age group, with

those aged 18 to 34 experiencing the highest rate at 12.6%, followed by 7.6% for veterans ages 35 to 54, and 6.6% for those 55 to 64.

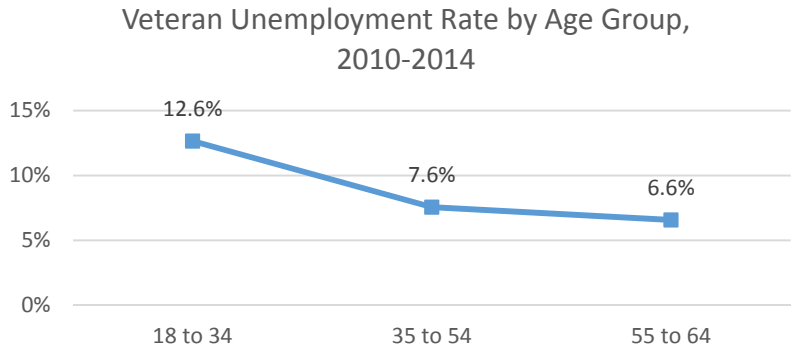


Figure 11

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014

Individuals with Disabilities[xv,xvi]

According to the American Community Survey, there was an annual average of more than 421,000 individuals with disabilities between 2010 and 2014. This amounts to nearly 8% of the population between the ages of 18 and 64. Among this population, 45% are participating in the workforce, and more than 81% of these individuals are employed. This leads to an unemployment rate among individuals between 18 and 64 with a disability of 19%.

For the population of individuals with disabilities ages 16 and over who are employed, the greatest portion is employed in the educational services, healthcare and social assistance industry, with 25.4%. The top five industries of employment are listed below.

Industry	% Employment Ind. With Disabilities Ages 16 and Over
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	25.4%
Retail trade	13.0%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	10.6%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	8.7%
Manufacturing	8.3%

Figure 12

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014

Low-income Individuals[xvii]

Between 2010 and 2014, the average poverty rate in New Jersey was 9.5%, with just more than 650,000 individuals with income below the poverty level in the previous 12 months. Among individuals living below the poverty line, 43% were participating in the labor force, and 65% (more than 185,000 individuals) were employed.

English language learners[xviii,xix]

In New Jersey, 12% of the population over the age of five years old has a primary language other than English and speaks English less than "very well". Among those individuals aged 25 or older, 32% of the labor force has a first language other than English. Among those in this age group who are not participating in the labor force, a slightly smaller percentage, 28%, speak a first language that is not English.

(ii) Labor Market Trends. Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

Labor Market Trends[xx]

The unemployment rate was higher in 2015 at 5.6% than ten years prior at 4.5% in 2005; however it has been steadily lowering during recovery from the recession that began in 2009. The rate dropped nearly four percentage points between 2012 and 2015, and is 0.3 percentage point below the 2008 rate of 5.3 percent reached before the start of the recession.

Employment and labor force levels have stayed within just 200,000, or roughly less than 5%, over the same time period. Fluctuations within both correspond with the effects of the recession. Labor force levels were growing from 2008 until 2012. In many areas of the country, labor force levels declined as unemployed workers grew discouraged and stopped looking for work. The growth in New Jersey could have been due to additional workers needing to look for work and join the labor force due to the economic downturn. In turn, the decline in the labor force in 2012 could correspond with workers needing to work less due to the economic recovery.

Employment numbers decreased as the recession hit in 2009 and hit the low point of the last 10 years in 2010 at an employment level of 4,121,455. Due to the growing labor force at the time, this corresponds with the peak unemployment rate of 9.5% in the same year. Employment has been generally growing since the low point in 2010 and reached 4,288,825 in 2015, just over 24,000 higher than the employment level in 2008 right before the impact of the recession.

New Jersey has a richly diverse population, proximity to major metropolitan areas and a history of invention and innovation from electronics and pharmaceuticals to biotechnology research that impressively continues to grow. New Jersey's commitment to investment, collaboration and talent development supports growth in key industry clusters that drive economic expansion. In the Garden State, these key clusters have found an ideal location – within a day's drive of 40 percent of the U.S. population; a talented, productive and highly educated workforce with a high density of residents who possess advanced degrees and 52 colleges and universities. Here is a brief look at some of the trends in key industry clusters that drive the state's economy.

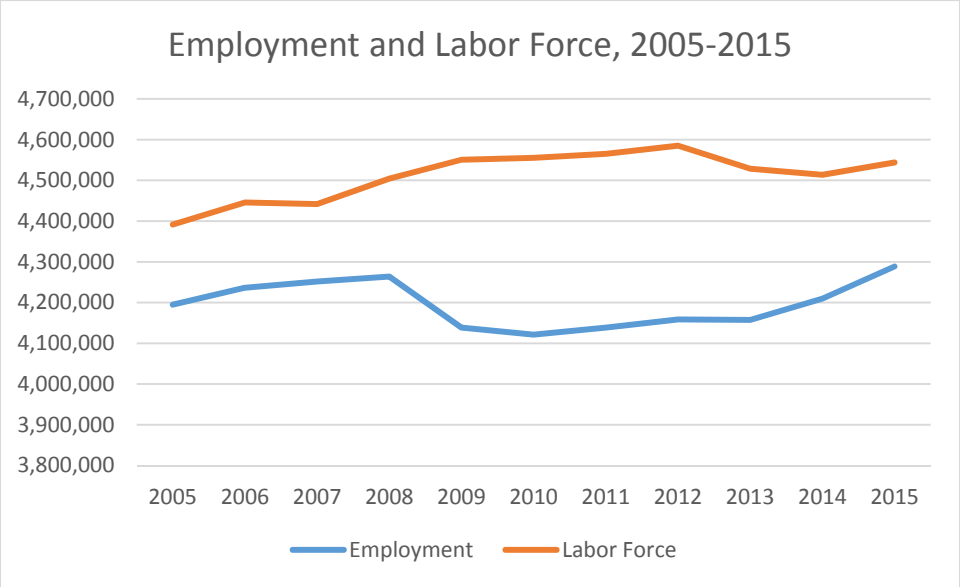


Figure 13

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Biopharmaceutical Life Sciences Industry Cluster

- New Jersey's biopharmaceutical life sciences cluster employment totaled over 115,000 in 2014, or 3.5 percent of the state's private sector workers. Nationally, the proportion was just 1.9 percent.
- New Jersey's biopharmaceutical and life sciences cluster employment is comprised of three primary components: pharmaceutical sector (45.0%), biotechnology (34.5%) and medical device manufacturing (20.5%). In 2014, the state's pharmaceuticals employment accounted for 8.9 percent of pharmaceuticals jobholding in the U.S.
- Establishments totaled over 3,100 in 2014. Despite recent reorganizations by pharmaceutical firms, the drug and pharmaceutical component's establishment count increased between 2009 and 2014 by 8.8 percent, slightly slower than the nation (+10.5%) over the same period.
- New Jersey biopharmaceutical life science employers paid over $15 billion in wages during 2014, or 8.1 percent of the state's total wages.
- The state's highly educated workforce is seen in this cluster as more than three-fifths (63%) of its workers statewide hold a Bachelor's degree or higher: Bachelor's (29%), Master's/Professional (25%), Doctoral (8%) degree.

Transportation, Logistics, Distribution Industry Cluster

- In 2014, transportation, logistics and distribution (TLD) employed 360,618 workers in New Jersey. The cluster employed 11.0 percent of the state's private sector workers, a higher percentage than for the nation (8.8%).
- TLD contributed more than $55.5 billion to the state's Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP - chained 2009 dollars) in 2014.

- In 2014, employers in the state's TLD industry cluster paid more than $25.8 billion in total wages.
- Located between New York City and Philadelphia, New Jersey is within a day's drive of 40 percent of the U.S. population.
- New Jersey offers access to the nation's freight rail network and is also home to several key transportation facilities necessary for a strong TLD industry cluster including three major seaports and a large international airport.
- According to 2013 figures (latest available) from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center, New Jersey's shipping activity accounts for 6.5 percent of the nation's tonnage of total cargo volume.

Financial Services Industry Cluster

- Despite a relatively small employment base (5.3% of New Jersey's total private sector employment in 2014) finance and insurance contributed almost $35 billion or roughly eight percent to the state's Real Gross Domestic Product in 2014.
- According to the NJ Business & Industry Association, 15 of the state's top 84 employers are finance and insurance firms whose combined employment represents almost 41 percent of jobholding in the finance and insurance industry sector.
- The financial services sector relies heavily on information and technology. New Jersey has remained in the forefront of technological advancement by becoming a national leader in developing data centers to support the industry. Of almost 50 data centers located in the state, roughly half are located in Hudson County. (Source: datacentermap.com)
- In 2014, almost $20.3 billion in total wages were paid by New Jersey's employers in financial services industries.
- The greatest concentration of jobs within the financial services industry cluster is found in Hudson County (17.1%).

Advanced Manufacturing Industry Cluster

- The advanced manufacturing cluster contributed over $31.8 billion to New Jersey's Real Gross Domestic Product in 2013, or about 6.3 percent of all state output (latest available from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis).
- Advanced manufacturing employment is primarily comprised of five industry groups: chemical manufacturing (30%), food manufacturing (19%), computer and electronic product manufacturing (14%), fabricated metal manufacturing (12%) and machinery manufacturing (9%). The remaining 15 percent is made up of selected detailed industries.
- In 2014, there were 159,900 people employed in industries classified as advanced manufacturing in New Jersey, or about 67 percent of manufacturing employment statewide.
- Chemical manufacturing industries, the cluster's largest segment, employed roughly 48,700 in 2014, or 20.3 percent of all manufacturing workers in the state. The state's jobholding in chemical manufacturing represents 6.1 percent of U.S. chemical manufacturing employment.
- The state's advanced manufacturing industry establishments paid a total of more than $14.5 billion in wages in 2014, or roughly 7.4 percent of New Jersey's total wages.

Note: The definition of the advanced manufacturing cluster was expanded in 2014 to reflect new methodology used by LWD.

Health Care Industry Cluster

- The health care cluster contributed over $35 billion to New Jersey's Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2013, or roughly 7 percent of all state output (latest available from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis).
- Health care cluster employment is comprised of three industry groups: ambulatory health care services (46%), hospitals (33%) and nursing and residential care facilities (21%).
- From 1990 through 2014, the health care sector in New Jersey has added 191,600 new jobs, while all other industries combined had a net gain of only 135,500.
- Health care is the only industry that has added jobs in the state every year from 1990 through 2014 while increasing its share of jobholding from 7.5 percent in 1990 to 11.7 percent in 2014.
- The outlook for New Jersey's health care employment is bright. From 2012 through 2022, it is projected that more than 88,600 jobs will be added, an annual increase of 2.0 percent.
- Health care establishment employers paid more than $24.1 billion in total wages in 2014, or about 12.3 percent of all wages paid statewide.

Technology Industry Cluster

- In 2014, New Jersey's technology cluster accounted for 359,704 jobs or 11.0 percent of private sector employment statewide. Nationally the cluster was responsible for 9.6 percent of all private sector employment.
- The annual average wage for the technology cluster was $103,797 in 2014 or 173 percent of the statewide average ($60,146) for all industries. Employers in the industry paid over $41 billion in wages, or about 21 percent of the total wages paid in all industries.
- Employment within the technology cluster can primarily be found within the following sectors: professional, scientific and technical services (48.6%), manufacturing (19.2%), wholesale trade (15.9%), and information (14.2%).
- The technology cluster is supported by the strength of New Jersey's highly educated workforce as over 93 percent of New Jerseyans within the cluster have achieved some level of college education or higher. Almost 77 percent hold a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Leisure, Hospitality and Retail Industry Cluster

- Leisure, hospitality and retail (LHR) is comprised of four components: retail trade (56.0% of employment); food services/drinking places (30.1%); arts/entertainment/recreation (7.3%) and accommodation (6.6%).
- Many of the businesses within LHR are intertwined with the state's tourism industry, which directly supported 315,952 jobs in 2014. According to the NJ Division of Travel and Tourism, the state generated a record-breaking $42.1 billion in tourism demand in 2014.
- LHR contributed $46.1 billion (or 9.1%) to the state's Real Gross Domestic Product in 2014.
- LHR jobholding totaled 806,044 in 2014, or 24.7 percent of the state's private sector workers.

- New Jersey LHR employers paid over $22 billion in wages during 2014, or 11.6 percent of the state total. The average annual wage for the LHR cluster in 2014 was $28,146.
- Over one-quarter (28.5%) of all employment in the LHR cluster is concentrated in three counties: Bergen, Monmouth and Middlesex. Atlantic County ranks fourth for LHR employment due mainly to the presence of its casino hotel industry.
- Due primarily to their tourism-based economies, over half of private sector employment in Cape May (54.6%) and Atlantic (54.2%) counties is concentrated in the LHR cluster.

(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

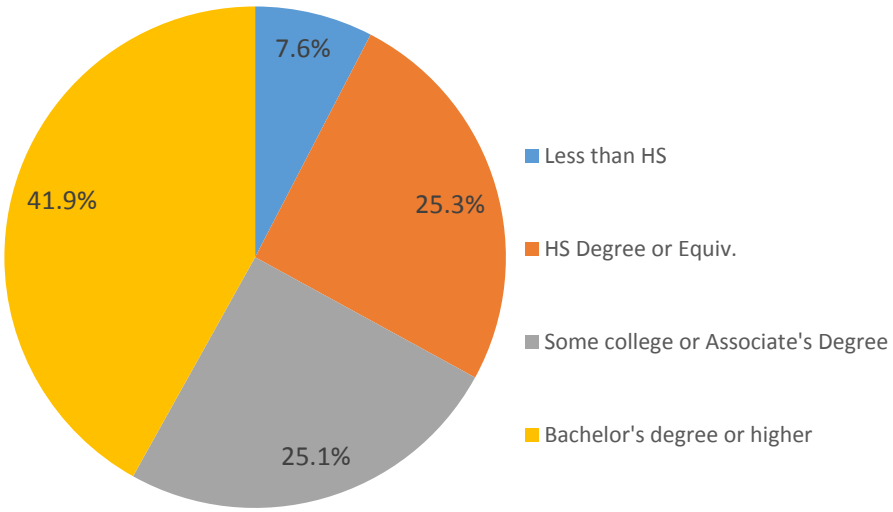
Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce[xxi]

According to the five-year estimates of the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, the civilian labor force in New Jersey has included an average of nearly four million participants annually. Over 65% of these labor force participants have received some level of postsecondary education, with 25% attending some college or receiving an Associate's degree and 42% holding a Bachelor's degree or higher. This is a much greater percentage of individuals who hold Bachelor's degrees or higher than the national average, which shows that 34% of adult labor force participants nationally have achieved this level of higher education.

When analyzed among the populations of those who are employed and unemployed individually, the levels of educational attainment are shifted slightly. Among employed workers, the largest portion, 43.5% hold a Bachelor's degree or higher. Those groups holding a high school degree and those with some level of postsecondary education or Associate's degree each represent about 25% of employed workers.

Among those who are unemployed, the distribution shifts slightly more. The largest portion of unemployed workers are found in the category of those whose highest level of education is a high school diploma or equivalency, with 34%.

Education Levels of the Civilian Labor Force, Ages 25-64



U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014

Figure 14

Education Levels of the Civilian Labor Force, Ages 25-64, Employed vs. Unemployed

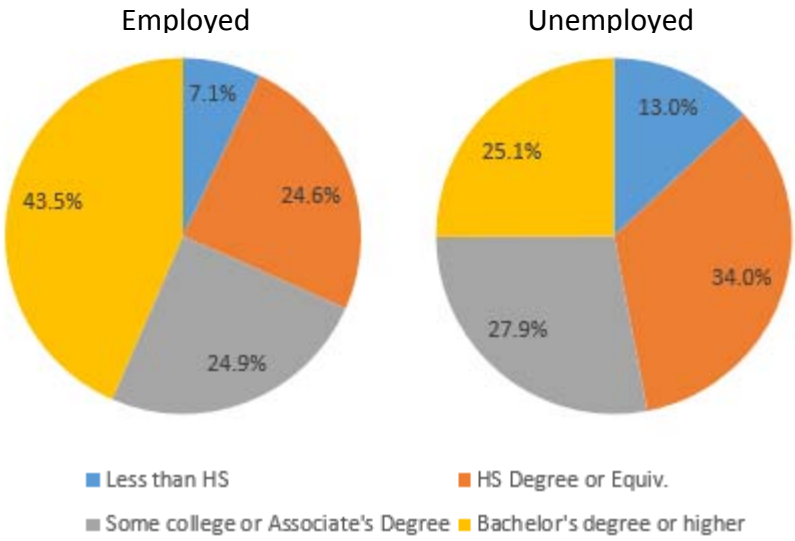


Figure 15

(iv) Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

Skill Gaps[xxii]

According to data analyzed with EMSI Analyst, there are projected to be more than 136,000 openings annually over the next ten years. The occupational groups projected to have the highest numbers of annual openings are Office and Administrative Support, Sales and Related, and Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations, representing nearly 50,000 job openings each year.

Occupation Group	Annual Openings 2015-2025	Most Required Education Level[xxiii]
Office and Administrative Support	18,991	HS or equiv (89.8%)
Sales and Related	16,666	Less than HS (68.5%)
Food Preparation and Serving Related	14,317	Less than HS (93.2%)
Transportation and Material Moving	10,360	Less than HS (61.6%)
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	7,906	Associate's degree (41.3%)
Education, Training, and Library	7,308	Bachelor's degree (55.1%)
Business and Financial Operations	6,811	Bachelor's degree (79.1%)
Management	6,192	Bachelor's degree (77.7%)
Personal Care and Service	5,753	HS or Equiv (45.9%)
Healthcare Support	5,487	Post-secondary non degree award (53.9%)

Figure 16

EMSI Analyst, 2015

Nearly 37% of all annual openings between 2015 and 2025 will require less than a High School degree, while an additional 32% will require just a High School diploma or equivalency.

Though New Jersey boasts higher-than average educational attainment levels, many of the job openings that are projected over the next ten years will require less than a Bachelor's degree. While much of this imbalance is likely due to the normal turnover in lower-skilled positions, some could point to a skills gap among low- and middle-skill positions.

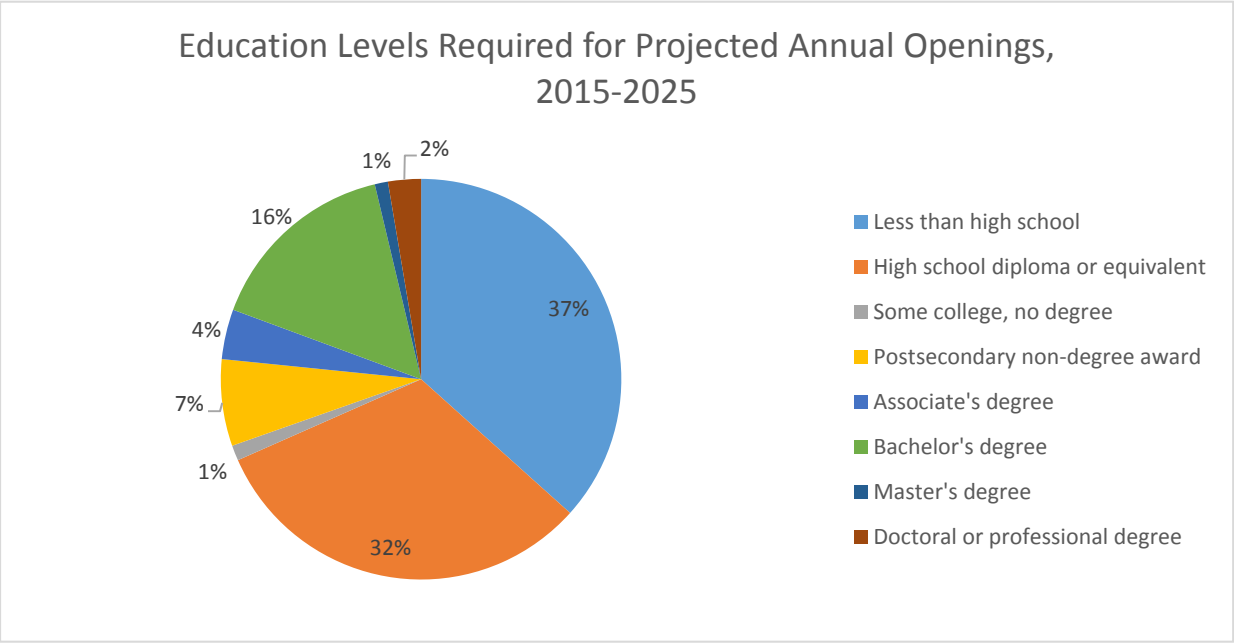


Figure 17

EMSI Analyst, 2015

SETC and NJBIA Employability Skills Task Force and Stakeholder Groups

Skills gaps can simply be defined as the separation between what employers need and the skills that jobseekers possess. The New Jersey Business and Industry Association (NJBIA) conducted a survey of 2,000 employers representing all sectors. The recurring theme; employers want workers that possess "employability skills." Employability skills, often called soft or career-readiness skills, refer to a cluster of personal behaviors, habits and attitudes that are demonstrated by a successful employee. While New Jersey already boasts a highly-educated workforce, the state's incumbent workers, jobseekers and students must possess and build on these skills for lasting and meaningful employment.

The SETC established the Employability Skills Task Force in November 2013 to launch a statewide campaign to raise awareness by engaging stakeholders in dialogues and creating an action-oriented solution through a Call to Action. Stakeholder groups from across New Jersey's key industries, business groups, faith and community-based organizations, government entities, organized labor, and workforce professionals held meetings and discussions on this issue. The stakeholder groups self-identified their current and ongoing initiatives of incorporating what has been defined as employability skills in their curricula as appropriate.

While the effort remains ongoing, the stakeholder groups have committed to the Employability Skills Task Force to raise awareness of the crisis, share solutions and focus efforts, leverage resources, and inform intelligence as national thought leaders on addressing employability skills gaps. The NJBIA in collaboration with key partners are planning a spring 2016 event focused on the Employability Skills Call to Action. NJBIA is also incorporating tools and guides for employers

and partners that focus on return on investment (ROI) and best practices models. The effort to minimize the skills gap around employability skills remains a priority for New Jersey.

(2) Workforce Development Education and Training Activities Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in (a)(1)(B)(iii) above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in (a)(1)(A)(iii) above. This must include an analysis of –

(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop delivery system partners.

Who We Serve: A Profile of Workforce Customers in New Jersey

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) dollars (now moving to WIOA funds) support employment and training services for a full range of New Jersey residents. The following is a profile of the nearly 200,000 customers served by the New Jersey Employment Service's statewide network of One-Stop Career Centers, funded through WIA Title III and the Wagner-Peyser Act each year. A breakdown of special populations is also provided, highlighting services offered under WIA Title I (for youth, dislocated workers, and adult jobseekers); Title II (adult education and literacy); and Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation).

OVERVIEW - EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

WIA Title III amended the Wagner-Peyser Act in 1998 to offer Employment Service/Job Service activities through the One-Stop system. In the most recent program year, New Jersey's Employment Services reached 196,000 customers – serving nearly equal numbers of men and women (See Figure 18 below).

Notable characteristics of these workforce system participants include:

- **Close to half of all Employment Service customers are age 45 years or older**.
  Policy Challenge: Helping significant numbers of older jobseekers change career paths, change industries, and obtain new skills.
- **60% have no postsecondary education beyond high school.**
  Policy Challenge**:** Connecting jobseekers to credentials that will give them the higher-level skills required to access many occupations.
- **The racial/ethnic profile of Employment Service customers is 43% white, 28% African-American, and 15% Hispanic compared to the overall New Jersey civilian workforce in 2015 which was 75% white, 14% African-American, and 18% Hispanic**.
  Policy Challenge: Employment and training programs must address language and cultural barriers that limit job opportunities for many jobseekers. A simplistic "one-size-fits-all" job search strategy cannot serve the needs of a customer base this diverse.

New Jersey Workforce System Participants Profile

Participant Description	Count	% of Total
Total	**196,696**	**100.0**
Veterans & Eligibles	10,152	5.2
Person w/Disability	3,540	1.8
Employment Status @ Registration		
Employed	24,833	12.6
Unemployed	171,863	87.4
UI Claimant	107,204	54.5
Sex		
Male	94,259	47.9
Female	98,429	50.0
Undisclosed	4,008	2.0
Age		
Under 18	1,646	0.8
18-44	103,048	52.4
45-54	49,431	25.1
55+	41,636	21.1
Race/Ethnic		
African American	55,746	28.3
American/Alaskan Native	1,142	0.6
Asian	7,802	4.0
Hispanic	29,431	15.0
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	647	0.3
White	83,900	42.7
Education Level		
In School	12,183	6.2
Less than HS	17,440	8.9
HS Grad/GED	100,922	51.3
Post-Secondary	75,300	38.3
Source: June 2015 ETA 9002A		

Figure 18

WIA TITLE I: Youth/Adults/Dislocated Workers

Title I sets performance standards and eligibility criteria for a broad array of training services for youth, adults, and dislocated workers. It encompasses numerous programs including the Job Corps; Veterans' Workforce Investment programs; Youth Opportunity grants for high-poverty

areas; technical assistance efforts to States and local areas; program evaluations; and National Emergency grants.
Wagner-Peyser funds cover the majority of costs for providing employment and training services to jobseekers in New Jersey (Figure 19 below). WIA Title I programs covered 16,438 (14%) of 116,000 participating adults, youth and dislocated workers in the past year.

Policy Challenge: With the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act extending Youth services to age 24 and shifting the emphasis from In-School to Out-of-School young adults, the number of individuals covered by Title I funds is likely to increase in the future.

WIA Title I Participants Served and Exited by Program Area

Program	Participants Served	Participants Exited	% Exited to Served
Adult	5,505	2,586	47.0%
Dislocated Workers	6,177	3,963	64.2%
Youth	4,756	2,100	44.2%
Total	16,438	8,649	52.6%

Figure 19

New Jersey Participation Levels
(Adults Served with Title I + Wagner Peyser Funds)

	Total Participants Served	Total Exiters
Total Adults	116,330	102,612
WIA Adult	5,505	2,586
WIA Dislocated Workers	6,177	3,963
Total Youth (14-21)	4,756	2,100
Younger Youth (14-18)	3,579	1,556
Older Youth (19-21)	1,177	544
Out-of-School Youth	2,032	982
In-School Youth	2,724	1,118

WIA TITLE II: ADULT EDUCATION & LITERACY

Title II programs help adults age 16 or older to reach higher levels of literacy in order to obtain employment, retain employment, enter postsecondary education or occupational training, or attain a high school diploma (or its equivalent). Adult education is provided to help adults increase their educational functioning levels while preparing them for successfully entering the workforce. As Figure 20 below indicates, 71% of New Jersey's participants are between the ages of 25 and 59. The majority of the students served in the Title II program do not have a high school diploma or

its equivalent. New Jersey allows its Title II programs to serve 2% of their students who have a high school diploma.

WIA Title II programs in Fiscal Year 2015 served more than 21,000 customers, more than half of whom are participants in **English Language Acquisition** (ELA) programs. The new Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) defines ELAs as programs to help English language learners to improve reading, writing, and speaking skills in order to 1) obtain a high school diploma (or equivalent) and 2) transition to postsecondary education and training – or employment. Women outnumber men 2-to-1 in New Jersey's ELA programs.

The state's second-largest literacy enrollment is in **Adult Basic Education** (ABE), a refresher program in reading and writing for students whose test scores are too low to gain entrance to postsecondary training or education courses. ABE services account for nearly 40% of Title II participants.

The smallest Title II enrollment (5%) is in **Adult Secondary Education** (ASE) programs – such as the National External Diploma and the Adult High School Credit Diploma – which are designed for students age 16 years and older who do not complete high school.

Total number of people served by Title II programs in the most recent year

- FY 2015 Total served – 21,692
- Total number served male – 9,954
- Total number served female – 11,740

Number of people served in key program activities

- Literacy Adult Basic Education (ABE) – 8,507 (Male 5,479; Female 3,028)
- Literacy Adult Secondary Education (ASE) – 1,126 (Male 803; Female 323)
- Literacy English Language Acquisition (ELA) – 12,061 (Male 3,672; Female 8,389)

Title II Breakdown of people served by Age

- Age 16-24 male – 2,817
- Age 16-24 female – 2,117
- Age 25-59 male – 6,700
- Age 25-59 female – 8,886
- Age 60 + male – 437
- Age 60 + female - 737

Figure 20

WIA TITLE IV: VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

WIA Title IV helps people with disabilities to access state and local workforce development systems, and return to the workforce. In any given year, an average of 31,000 individuals with disabilities are served by New Jersey's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) under Title IV. Since individual cases may go on for several years at a time, cases open and close constantly. New cases added in the past year totaled 13,813.

Information regarding age, sex and education levels are available on 3,818 of the 31,000 Title IV customers (see Figure 21 below). Notable features of the Title IV participants include:

- Close to 20% have no postsecondary degree, certificate, or high school diploma
- Nearly 50% have no training beyond high school

Policy Challenge: Improve training opportunities across all age groups to meet the rising skill requirements of even basic "entry-level" occupations.

1) **Number of people with disabilities served by Title IV programs:** 31,632

2) **Number of new cases opened in past year**: 13,813

Four largest program activities:

Assessments:	6,721
Miscellaneous Training:	1,592
Transportation:	923
Rehabilitation Technology:	1,019

3) **Breakdown of people served by Age/Sex/Education level**: profile of 3818 cases

High school or Equivalent Certification

Age	0-22	23-45	46-65	66-100	Total %
Male	398	411	248	25	28%
Female	214	271	234	39	19%

Associate Degree and Higher

Age	0-22	23-45	46-65	66-100	Total %
Male	38	194	120	15	10%
Female	31	194	170	15	11%

Vocational/Technical Certificate or Special Education

Age	0-22	23-45	46-65	66-100	Total%
Male	184	113	19	317	8%
Female	82	66	36	184	5%

Other (no degree-certificate or diploma) 19%

Figure 21

(B) The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.

New Jersey is in a fortunate position due to the existing statewide coordination and collaboration among the system partners as outlined in great detail in Section III on Operational Planning Elements, within section (C) Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals. In particular, staff are working to more deeply integrate WIOA Title I, Title II and Wagner Peyser within the One Stop system, providing extensive cross-training, capacity building and coordination activities under the guidance of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Specifically, the strengths of workforce development activities in New Jersey include:

- New Jersey's Talent Networks are building cross-program, cross-agency and regional approaches to provide industry-driven services to New Jersey businesses and job seekers. Across departments, New Jersey is focusing investments and programs on building employer-driven, high-quality partnerships that follow a common definition and framework. These partnerships are critical to building new career pathways for jobseekers and students and help increase the number of individuals with an industry-valued post-secondary degree or credential. To further support these efforts, the state's seven industry-focused Talent Networks will facilitate the development of new high-quality, employer-driven partnerships across the state; investments in new Targeted Industry Partnerships and Talent Development Centers will build a foundation for all of the state's workforce development investments
- New Jersey's commitment to delivering industry-valued credentials for workers and the related policies creating an Industry-Valued Credential List to guide workforce training and improvements to the already strong Eligible Training Provider List that include a higher Individual Training Account (ITA) amount based on the expected earnings and industry-relevance of training.
- New Jersey's Career Connections service delivery model, network of partners and digital platform is re-visioning how we deliver services to job-seekers. Career Connections is a new digital platform under development by LWD that will provide the primarily tool for Public Labor Exchange as well as career guidance information and job search strategies. It will be a uniform platform for all partners to use with their clients for standardizing assessment, career guidance, career planning, selection of training, and job-search assistance, and to easily connect with the programs and services available through the talent development networks. All core partners and other program partners will be able to add content to the site through a content approval process. This multi-functional platform will be supported by more than 900 staff statewide who will participate in a unified career navigator training curriculum as described elsewhere in this Plan.

(C) State Workforce Development Capacity. Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A), above.

As outlined in Section IV and other sections of this submission, New Jersey has built a strong staff capacity to deliver workforce development activities. Some highlights of our capacity and the work done to improve and maintain a strong collaborative system include the following.

- New Jersey's frontline service delivery staff funded by WIOA programs across the state are one of our greatest strengths (item above) and a key to our capacity to deliver high quality programs. The work of our strong staff across all WIOA Titles is supported by ongoing professional development and staff training activities. WIOA Title I, Employment Service, Adult Education and other staff will participate in professional development that is provided directly by, or coordinated by, the WIOA Office of Technical Assistance and Capacity Building. Professional development will utilize multiple delivery modes to reach part-time and other hard to reach staff. This includes a mix of in-person meetings, synchronous online events and resources made available online. Key to all of this professional development system will be the requirement that Workforce Development Boards conduct joint planning and training for One-Stop, adult literacy and WDB staff directed toward establishing partnerships, resource sharing and appropriate and necessary student referrals. Additionally, professional development resources will be made available to all One-Stop Career Center staff through the WIOA Technical Assistance webpage. LWD also will incorporate training opportunities for One-Stop staff relating the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, in coordination with DVRS and CBVI.
- SETC and LWD maintain a comprehensive listing of statewide policies and guidance issued to local areas and partners for the use of State funds from workforce investment activities. State policies can be accessed online at the SETC and LWD websites. With the implementation of WIOA, SETC and LWD have been working to and will continue to update existing policies and/or establish new policies to be in compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as needed.

(b) State Strategic Vision and Goals

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategic vision and goals for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include—

(1) Vision. Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

(2) Goals. Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment and other populations.

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

STRATEGIC APPROACH TO TALENT DEVELOPMENT

I. TWO CRITICAL GOALS

New Jersey's strategic talent development strategy is focused on two foundational goals.

1. Building an Innovative, Skilled Workforce to Power Economic Growth

Innovation has driven New Jersey's growth and prosperity for many years. Maintaining that competitive edge in the 21st Century requires a knowledge-based economy, supported by a highly-skilled workforce and a state-of-the art talent development strategy to guide its training and education system.

For more than 200 years, New Jersey's skilled workforce has helped its employers convert technological breakthroughs into world-class industries such as life sciences, health care and medical devices, communications, advanced manufacturing and financial services. The state today ranks among "Top 10" states for workforce education, patents, investment in research and development, and employment of scientists and engineers.

Past performance, however, is no guarantee of future economic success. As the economy continues to grow, New Jersey must keep pace with global trends that are boosting demand for workers with post-secondary degrees and other credentials valued by employers. Fast-changing technology and rising international competition are challenges to educators, employers, government and community groups alike; together all stakeholders must find ways to meet the essential skills needs of employers AND ensure that members of the workforce are not left behind.

Businesses in New Jersey and around the country have identified a growing gap between the skills they require on the job and the skills currently available from their traditional pools of talent. The National Governors Association found a serious mismatch in the state between future job requirements and the level of credentials and knowledge held by the workforce. Forty percent of today's workers over age 25 have an Associate's degree or higher. Within 15 years, 55% of all jobs in New Jersey are expected to require a post-secondary degree. A greater percentage will require a post-secondary, industry-valued credential. Employers in nearly all industries report difficulty finding qualified workers for currently open positions. A New Jersey Business & Industry Association survey of manufacturers found that: more than 70% reported difficulty filling key positions with workers who had the necessary skills; 74% said those skills gaps made it difficult to maintain production levels consistent with customer demand; and 51% reported the mismatch led to slower delivery of their product to market.

Clearly, the ability to recruit talent with particular areas of expertise is becoming a critical factor for businesses when deciding where to invest future resources. A well-defined Talent Development Strategy is therefore essential to sustaining New Jersey's traditional advantages in attracting and retaining competitive, high-wage employment. Recent passage of the new federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA) is an important catalyst for change that could encourage a wide range of stakeholders to collaborate on the important effort of building a skilled workforce to drive our economy.

2. Building Economic Opportunity for all New Jersey Residents

In a rapidly changing, global economy, every New Jersey resident will need to develop skills, abilities and connections in order to obtain a job and to have a successful career. Given the increasing skill needs of employers in all industries, New Jersey residents must have basic skills, employability skills and basic computer abilities. While a high school diploma is critical for labor market success, a post-secondary industry-valued credential or degree is necessary for the vast majority of jobs that pay a family-supporting wage. In an ever-changing labor market, all New Jerseyans will need to be able to plan and manage their careers. They will need to be able to upgrade their skills throughout their career, and to follow career pathways to new opportunities.

Efforts to build new career pathways, and to help individuals obtain basic skills and industry-valued post-secondary credentials and degrees, are critical to the economic future of out-of-school youth, people with disabilities, those with low literacy skills, individuals receiving public assistance and other social services, homeless individuals, veterans and dislocated workers. These efforts must also ensure that women have equitable access to education and training opportunities, so that they may pursue careers in any and all occupations, including non-traditional ones.

A well-defined Talent Development Strategy is therefore essential to sustaining New Jersey's efforts to help all residents get on a path to a job and a career. Recent passage of the new federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA) is an important catalyst for change that could encourage a wide range of stakeholders to collaborate on the important effort of building economic opportunities for more individuals.

II. NEW JERSEY'S TALENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Mission

In the end, the most important way to strengthen New Jersey's workforce is to build **High Quality Partnerships** with a wide range of employers, state departments, local governments, educational institutions and community-based organizations that play critical roles in the labor market. Employers, libraries, community groups, county colleges, vocational/technical institutions, K-12 education systems, training providers, industry associations, organized labor, four-year universities and other important players statewide all have an enormous stake in creating a successful education and training system that responds to the rapidly changing needs of the state's key industries. The time for action has come.

***The Mission of New Jersey's Talent Development Strategy*:**

New Jersey will increase the number of residents with an industry-valued credential or degree through high quality partnerships and integrated investments.

Workforce Programs Can Make Critical Investments in Talent Development

New Jersey workforce development system, spanning more than 35 different programs, is a critical foundation for an expanded talent development system. These programs are strategic investments that can yield significant returns. When they become focused on broader goals and a common mission, they can be a powerful catalyst – developing and strengthening lasting partnerships with:

- employers, groups of employers and industry associations;
- organized labor;
- community colleges and higher education;
- career and technical education high schools and comprehensive high schools;
- libraries; and
- community and faith based organizations

Working together will strengthen all of these important organizations and institutions -- helping them to increase their capacity to provide key services, helping them to connect to individual employers, and helping them to ensure that their programs are aligned with the needs of the labor market. These partnerships will also help these institutions play a more productive role in the labor market.

The Opportunity of WIOA

In the summer of 2014, the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law – setting a new direction for workforce development programs across the nation. New Jersey launched an unprecedented effort to develop and implement a shared vision for talent development and to prepare for the implementation of this new legislation. This effort involved the launch of a WIOA website, development of six workgroups of stakeholders and state staff, webinars to solicit additional input and a two-day "Pathways and Partnerships" conference with more than 300 stakeholder participants.

The resulting *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development* was adopted by the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) on June 16, 2015 to guide the implementation of WIOA and to serve as a foundation for this State Plan. In the fall of 2015, the SETC and LWD worked closely with stakeholders, partners and SETC Committees to further refine the Plan and to develop policies to fully implement WIOA and to further build a talent development system.

While this effort was focused on WIOA, five additional programs are included in this plan. In addition, three other programs that are not part of the plan were included in this effort.

Title I: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Formula Programs
Title II: Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)
Title III: Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services Program
Title IV: Title I of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act
Programs included in the Plan: Senior Community Service Employment Program, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program, and Ex-Offender Programs

Critical partner programs (not in the plan, but connected to this effort): Carl T. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, Unemployment Insurance, WorkFirst New Jersey (TANF) Employment and Training Program, SNAP Employment and Training Programs, New Jersey Workforce Development Partnership Program, New Jersey Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills

Key State Government partners in this effort include:

- State Employment and Training Commission
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development,
  - Workforce Operations and Business Services
  - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
  - Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity
  - Office of Research and Information, Center for Occupational Employment Information
  - Office of Research and Information, Workforce Research and Analytics
- Department of Education
- Department of Human Services
  - Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
  - Division of Family Development
- Office of the Secretary of Higher Education

(3) Performance Goals. Using the table provided in Appendix 1, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

The Performance Goals for Core Programs table can be found in Appendix 1 to this plan.

(4) Assessment. Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

In order to assess the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs, New Jersey will utilize the performance measurement system outlined in section 116 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as well as additional metrics that have been adopted by the SETC for federal and state workforce programs. The State will work to align performance metrics for all workforce programs with those being adopted here for the specific titles; for example, the State will explore applying these metrics to the WorkFirst NJ and SNAP E&T programs. Additional performance metrics include:

Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I, WIOA Title II and WorkFirst New Jersey

1. Number of program participants served by the program
2. Number of program participants exited from the program
3. Percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment as follows:

a. Disability
b. Ex-offender
c. No high school diploma
d. Previously or currently in foster care
e. Homeless
f. Limited English Proficiency or Low Level Literacy
g. Long-Term Unemployed (continuously unemployed for at least 12 consecutive months)
h. Public Assistance customer

4. Percentage of program participants responding to survey who are satisfied with their training/counseling after exiting from the program

Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I ONLY[xxiv]

1. Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification
2. Number of High Quality Partnerships
3. Regional Coordination
   Three workforce planning regions are designated in New Jersey: North, Central, and South. The State will evaluate if each region has effectively administered their activities under WIOA.

The State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) (www.njsetc.net) and its committees utilize performance dashboards to monitor the effectiveness of the New Jersey workforce development system and will utilize this same dashboard model to gage progress toward the strategic vision and goals that have been laid out in *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development*. In addition to the performance accountability measures required for core programs, these dashboards include supplemental data to measure not just outcomes, but progress indicators and non-required outcome measures.

The SETC's Performance Committee advises the SETC on performance standards for the workforce system. Local WDBs are required to have a One-Stop Committee to monitor performance of the workforce system in the local area and achievement of negotiated performance goals. In the performance review process, the SETC and local WDBs will use dashboards to monitor performance and make strategic mid-course corrections for the system.

(c) State Strategy

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. These strategies must take into account the State's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a) above. Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided Section (a).

(1) Describe the strategies the State will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupation and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D). "Career pathways" is defined at WIOA section 3(7). "In-demand industry sector or occupation" is defined at WIOA section 3(23).

(2) Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to weaknesses identified in section II(a)(2)..

FIVE KEY STRATEGIC THEMES

New Jersey's Talent Development Strategy is focused on five critical themes.

Theme 1: Building Career Pathways with a focus on Industry-Valued Credentials

Theme 2: Expanding High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships

Theme 3: Providing Career Navigation Assistance through One Stop Career Centers and Broad Partnerships

Theme 4: Strengthening Governance through Effective Workforce Development Boards and Regional Collaborations

Theme 5: Ensuring System Integrity through Metrics and Greater Transparency

THEME 1: BUILDING CAREER PATHWAYS WITH A FOCUS ON INDUSTRY-VALUED CREDENTIALS

New Jersey's workforce policies and investments are focused on expanding career pathways that enable individuals to access greater economic opportunity and to build on their skills throughout their careers. Specifically, these career pathways will help more individuals obtain industry-valued credentials and degrees.

Key Policies

- **Career Pathways Definition**

New Jersey has adopted a common definition of career pathways in *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development*. New Jersey will work to ensure that all workforce programs incorporate this career pathways definition into their efforts.

Career pathways are:

A series of education and training experiences resulting in industry-valued credentials leading to employment, promotion and / or advanced education. Career Pathways are industry-

focused, have diverse entry and exit points, and include integration of adult basic skills, digital literacy, employability skills and work-based learning, including registered apprenticeships.

- **Identification of Industry-Valued Credentials**

New Jersey is currently developing a list of industry-valued credentials and degrees that will be the focus of the occupational training investments of the state's workforce programs. This list is being developed based on an analysis of a variety of labor market information sources, along with extensive input from employers and the state's seven industry-focused Talent Networks. This list will be adopted by the State's Credential Review Board in May of this year and will go into effect on July 1, 2016. The list will be updated annually.

New Jersey has adopted a policy that in fiscal year 2017 a minimum of 50% of occupational training investments in WIOA Title I will be focused on programs that result in an industry-valued credential. In subsequent years, this percentage will increase until fiscal year 2021 when 80% of occupational training investments in WIOA Title I will be focused on programs that result in an industry-valued credential.

These required levels are as follows:
State Fiscal Year 2017 *(July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017)* – 50%
State Fiscal Year 2018 *(July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018)* – 60%
State Fiscal Year 2019 *(July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019)* – 70%
State Fiscal Year 2020 *(July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020)* – 75%
State Fiscal Year 2021 *(July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021)* – 80%

- **Literacy Priorities & Standards**

To ensure that all literacy programs result in high-quality outcomes, New Jersey has adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education, developed by USDOL-OCTAE (Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education) in 2013. The College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education are aligned to the needs of employers and the post-secondary community. The College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Literacy not only meet the requirements of WIOA, the standards measure proficiencies up to a 12th grade level and beyond.

WIOA promotes the better coordination between local area Title II providers, One-Stop Career Center programs and services, and the various workforce development partners. Better collaboration of One-stop partners, implementation of proven Equipped For the Future concepts, the alignment of resources and the implementation of the College and Career Readiness Standards present New Jersey with the opportunity to improve its adult literacy system, by strengthening service delivery, leveraging of available resources, and professional and curriculum development.

- **Employment First Framework and Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities**

In April 2012, Governor Chris Christie declared that New Jersey would become the 14th *Employment First* state in the United States. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires states and their Local WDBs to invest prescribed resources to promote the creation and implementation of workforce development and training programs and services designed specifically for individuals with significant disabilities. A unified *Employment First* Definition for New Jersey ensures that the workforce system has a singular focus and vision that ensures all workforce development and training resources dedicated for individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, have the potential for yielding the highest return on investment.

Employment First is a framework for systems change that is centered on the premise that all citizens with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life. Individuals with disabilities are a multi-skilled workforce resource for employers. An inclusive workplace promotes diversity, expands the tax base and creates an expanded pool of qualified candidates for available jobs. 'Employment First' is about creating an environment for individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, that empowers them with choices for their future, reduces poverty, eases demand on state and community based social service agencies and provides workers with a sense of achievement.

Competitive integrated employment will be seen as the first and primary option for all individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD), who apply through informed choice for workforce services.

As part of this effort, New Jersey will work to expand career pathways for individuals with disabilities and to ensure that an increasing number of individuals with disabilities obtain a post-secondary industry-valued credential or degree.

THEME 2: EXPANDING HIGH-QUALITY EMPLOYER-DRIVEN PARTNERSHIPS

New Jersey has committed to increasing the number of high-quality employer-driven partnerships statewide. The workforce and education efforts of these collaborations follow a clearly defined mission and vision statement, with defined roles, responsibilities and impact measures for all partners – including employers, educators, organized labor and registered apprenticeship programs, training providers and local workforce professionals.

KEY PARTNERSHIP POLICIES

***High Quality Partnerships* Defined**

New Jersey has adopted a common definition of high-quality employer-driven partnerships and has committed to focusing future investments on efforts that align with this definition.

A truly "high-quality" partnership is one that features:

Private sector employers, actively working with their public and non-profit colleagues to focus upon the specific jobs and skills in demand by the region's leading sectors.

A clear mission and well-defined roles for all of the partner organizations.

Distinct career pathways, defined by a series of degrees, certificates, and other credentials that employers value and look for in hiring.

Widespread use of timely industry and workforce data, ensuring that partners' employment and training investments target authentic job opportunities – not declining occupations and obsolete skills.

Practical, collaborative learning experiences where trainees apply lessons from the classroom in real-world settings through internships, mentorships or apprenticeships.

Clear measures of program effectiveness so partners can see meaningful outcomes in terms of trainee job placement and credentials earned.

Reliable, sustainable funding streams

New Performance Metric: Number of High Quality Partnerships Established

Workforce Development Boards in the state play an important role in New Jersey's efforts to expand high-quality employer-driven partnerships. As a result, New Jersey is adding a metric for WIOA Title I relating to the development of high-quality partnerships. Each local Workforce Development Board will be expected to be actively engaged in the development of high-quality employer-driven partnerships. The State will develop a tool to enable local WDBs to quantify the number of high-quality employer-driven partnerships that they have played a significant role in creating in their local area. The definition of high-quality employer-driven partnerships will serve as the basis for this metric.

KEY INVESTMENTS

Across departments, New Jersey is focusing investments and programs on building employer-driven, high-quality partnerships that provide career pathways to jobseekers and students and help increase the number of individuals with an industry-valued credential. Three investments form the foundation for these efforts.

Talent Networks

The state's seven industry-focused Talent Networks have been connecting jobseekers, employers, educational institutions and workforce programs and providing key intelligence on the workforce needs of the state's key industries. Now the Talent Networks are focused on building new employer-driven partnerships in 20 areas of the state. These Targeted Industry Partnerships will have developed plans for meeting the skill needs of employers and building new pathways to economic opportunity.

The Talent Networks are focused on three key tasks:

1. Development and Dissemination of Industry Intelligence to Inform Workforce Investments: Each Talent Network works closely with LWD's Labor Market Analysts to inform the understanding of key industry workforce trends and of the workforce needs of employers. The Talent Networks engage employers and industry associations to provide input into the development of the list of industry-valued credentials and degrees. Each year, the Talent Networks will host an Industry Summit to inform key workforce stakeholders of employer needs. The Talent Networks will also partner with LWD Labor Market Analysts to produce an Annual Workforce Report for their industry that combines quantitative data and feedback from employers.

2. Development of High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships: Each Talent Network will work intensively with employers, local Workforce Development Boards, educational institutions and other stakeholders to develop Targeted Industry Partnerships in three geographic areas of the state. Collectively, the Talent Networks will develop 20 such partnerships. For each partnership, the Talent Network will engage employers and identify industry workforce needs, assemble workforce and education stakeholders to assess capacity and facilitate the development of a workforce plan for the industry for the specific area. LWD will work with each Talent Network to identify possible funding sources for implementation of promising programs.

3. Assist in Rapid Response Efforts: Each Talent Network will contribute to rapid response efforts in their specific industry, using their knowledge of industry need to help inform services and assistance to impacted workers.

Talent Development Centers

New Jersey is investing in the development of three Talent Development Centers at community colleges and universities focused on the Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care and Transportation, Logistics and Distribution industries. Each TDC will serve as a "center for excellence" in the state and will provide training to incumbent workers and dislocated workers with state funds from the Workforce Development Partnership Program. These Centers will also serve as anchors for expanded high-quality employer-driven partnerships in their industry and will further build the capacity of the state's higher education institutions to provide education and training aligned with the needs of the state's key industries.

Talent Development Partnership Academy

To build the capacity to facilitate and develop high-quality employer-driven partnerships, New Jersey is investing in a broad professional development effort. NJLWD will launch a Talent Development Partnership Academy focused on Workforce Development Boards, Talent Networks, state business service staff, community colleges, and high schools engaged in career and technical education and other key partners.

THEME 3: PROVIDING CAREER NAVIGATION ASSISTANCE THROUGH ONE-STOP CAREER CENTERS AND BROAD PARTNERSHIPS

New Jersey is committed to supporting One-Stop Career Centers that meet local needs and assist individuals in obtaining new skills and employment. These One-Stop Career Centers consist of four key partners:

- One-Stop Operator, competitively selected by the local Workforce Development Board, that will serve as the convener, coordinator and manager of the Center, funded through WIOA Title I funds allocated to each local Workforce Development Board,
- Counseling staff funded through WIOA Title I funds allocated to each local Workforce Development Board,
- Employment services staff, employed by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and funded through WIOA Title III, and
- Counseling and employment services staff of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, employed by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and funded through WIOA Title IV and co-located in many, but not all, One-Stop Career Centers.

In order to expand the number of jobseekers and students who have access to high-quality career guidance and job search assistance, New Jersey is building a new network of One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, libraries, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations, organized labor and educational institutions.

KEY POLICIES

One-Stop Operator Competitive Selection

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires local workforce areas to competitively select the One-Stop Operator based on eligibility requirements and criteria outlined in Section 121(d)(2). WIOA requires each State to provide their local workforce areas with policy guidance and technical assistance that will assist in the competitive selection of the one stop operator.

WIOA defines the minimum role of the One-Stop Operator as a convener, coordinator and manager of the one-stop delivery system in a local workforce area. Local boards can develop a more expanded definition of the role of the One-Stop Operator as long as that role is consistent with state law.

Eligible entities to serve as a One-Stop Operator include:

- an institution of higher education;
- an employment service State agency established under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), on behalf of the local office of the agency;
- a community-based organization, nonprofit organization, or intermediary;
- a private for-profit entity;
- a government agency; and

- Another interested organization or entity, which may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization, or a labor organization.

State law N.J.S.A 34:15D-4. 7 and 21. also requires that all counseling services in One-Stop Career Centers must be either provided by a job counselor hired and employed by the State pursuant to N.J.S.A 11A or hired and employed by a political subdivision of the State with the exception of those One-Stop Centers grandfathered under P.L. 2004, c. 39. State law further requires that all staff who are hired and supported by moneys from the Workforce Development Partnership Fund or the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills, including any of those staff located at any One Stop Career Center will be hired and employed by the State pursuant to N.J.S.A 11A or hired and employed by a political subdivision of the State, with the exception of those One Stop Centers grandfathered under P.L. 2004, c. 39. Local Boards are required to comply with both the federal and State law.

Each local board will select the One-Stop Operator through a competitive process. Any Request for Proposal should clearly delineate the role of the prospective one-stop operator to deliver services "at a minimum" level described within proposed 20 CFR 678.620 or near it, so as to ensure continued compliance with state law.

The local Area process for competitive selection of the One-Stop Operator must be open, transparent and made available to all eligible entities. Local areas must follow state procurement laws at a minimum. Competitive selection must be made prior to June 1, 2017 with implementation of the role of the One-Stop Operator beginning no later than July 1, 2017. Competitive selection must be made no less than every two years.

Locally-Driven, High Quality One-Stop Career Centers

New Jersey is committed to supporting One-Stop Career Centers that meet local needs and assist individuals in obtaining new skills and employment.

In order to effectively and efficiently implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 and to ensure locally-driven One-Stop Career Centers, New Jersey has defined clear and comprehensive roles and responsibilities of One-Stop partners. Additionally, One-Stop partners must be cross-trained in each role so that funding streams and service providers are not barriers to effective service delivery to our customers. The positive result of all workforce development staff working collaboratively in the delivery of services available under multiple programs and funding streams, is functional alignment in our One-Stop Career Centers. Functional alignment will better allow for all partners to deliver services in accordance with regulations and requirements of their multiple programs. Communication between One-Stop partners is essential to the success of this functional alignment strategy. Further, all One-Stop partners' staff must adhere to and take direction from the One-Stop Operator for the efficient and effective delivery of all services in the One-Stop Career Centers.

State Employment Services staff, funded by WIOA Title III / Wagner-Peyser program, will focus on providing group-based activities such as Reemployment Eligibility Assessment, PROs, Jersey Job

Clubs and the General Assistance 28-Day Job Search Program. Employment Services staff will also be responsible for staffing and creating resource rooms for jobseekers.

The Local Workforce Development Board oversees the One-Stop Operator and counseling staff to manage triage, intake, and counseling for the systematic referrals of customers to the most appropriate programs offered by One-Stop partners to achieve more positive and prompt employment outcomes.

Work First New Jersey (WFNJ) employment and training services will be integrated into One-Stop Career Center services. Counseling staff funded through WorkFirst NJ allocations to local Workforce Development Boards will provide most services to individuals. Employment Services staff will provide job search group sessions. WFNJ case management will be the responsibility of the local areas.

The triage function in all One-Stop Career Centers will be Operator-led with assistance from staff of all key partners. The triage function should be staffed at all times with designated customer service staff of the Operator and / or by counseling staff funded through WIOA Title I.

Customers will be directed to general One-Stop and/or Training orientations where brief assessments will determine immediate Operator referrals to (1) WIOA Title III Employment Services, (2) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (WIOA Title IV) or (3) WIOA Title I Counselors.

WIOA Title I Counselors will perform the in-depth intake and eligibility functions, literacy and occupational skills assessment and prepare the universal individual employment plans/employment development plans. Based on the outcomes of intake, eligibility, assessments and employment plan development, WIOA Counselors will refer customers to the appropriate One-Stop partner program including but not limited to:

- Basic adult education (Title II)
- Literacy labs
- Work based training
- Individual training assistance grants
- On the job training grants
- Registered Apprenticeships
- Tuition waivers
- Additional benefits during training (ABT)
- Opportunity Partnership training
- Employment Services programs (i.e. Jersey Job Clubs and Career Connections assistance)
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Youth programs
- Other special populations programs (Parolee Employment Placement Program, Trade Act, SCSEP/Workforce 55+, Helmets 2 Hard Hats, NJ Build, and bonding)

One-Stop Career Center Certification

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires States and local workforce areas to certify their One-Stop Career Centers based on requirements and criteria outlined in Section 121(g). The following are the general requirements that will assist in the development and implementation of New Jersey's One-Stop Center Certification Process.

- "Continuous improvement" provision
- Requires the state board to establish objective criteria for one-stop center certification every three years, including access to services and integrated service delivery.
- Requirements will be established in consultation with chief elected officials and local boards
- Required in order to be considered for infrastructure funding.

The eligibility for receiving infrastructure funding is contingent upon the establishment of an objective criteria and process that will be administered by the local WDB areas. The One-Stop Center Certification criteria and process must be developed with standards related to service coordination on the overall system. The One-Stop Center Certification criteria must include factors relating to the effectiveness, accessibility, and improvement of the one-stop delivery system. The criteria must focus on the negotiated local levels of performance, the integration of available services and the needs of the local area employers. The local board areas have the autonomy to develop additional criteria that will respond to labor market, economic and demographic conditions and trends found in the local area. The One-Stop Center Certification Process must be reviewed and or modified by state or local plans on a biennial basis.

KEY INVESTMENTS

Broad Partnership to Expand Services

New Jersey has launched the Career Connections initiative to further expand career navigation services to more jobseekers and students and to improve the quality of services in One-Stop Career Centers. At some point in their lives, New Jerseyans of all backgrounds, educational levels and work experience will find themselves exploring employment options and taking steps to achieve their career goals. Today's rapidly changing global economy has made the labor market increasingly complex and difficult to navigate. Even as technology helps connect users with more information and support services than ever before, these resources are often disconnected, sometimes contradictory, and can contribute to "information overload" and misdirection.

To bring clarity to this complex labor market, New Jersey has developed a unified approach to career navigation based on input from a diverse array of experts in the workforce development, higher education, and business communities. The "Path to Employment" empowers New Jerseyans with a job search / career planning process organized around three steps: Plan, Prepare, and Succeed. The "Path to Employment" is not a "one size fits all" prescription, but rather an organized framework of expert insights and actionable guidance designed for digital and in-person engagements that offers users the flexibility to customize their personal path to employment.

New Jersey is establishing an innovative "Career Connections Network" that unifies providers of career services, job search assistance and career planning across the street. This Network will connect One-Stop Career Centers, libraries, community college career services offices, community and faith-based organizations and other entities through the use of the shared, comprehensive "Path to Employment" career navigation model. This Network will offer New Jerseyans an unprecedented number of locations where they can receive assistance through seminars and one-on-one engagements with career exploration and work search experts. All organizations providing career guidance services funded by all four titles of WIOA or by other core workforce programs administered by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development will be members of the Career Connections Network.

New Jersey will provide regular, on-going training to staff providing services to jobseekers in the "Path to Employment" framework to ensure that services are delivered in a consistent manner.

To further support the effort, New Jersey is developing the CareerConnections.nj.gov website to deliver tools and information organized around the "Path to Employment" model directly to users who prefer a digital experience.

New Jersey will provide funding to local libraries across the state, selected competitively, to assist them to participate in the "Career Connections Network" and to provide job search / career planning assistance to individuals. These locations will refer individuals to One-Stop Career Centers for more in-depth assistance.

THEME 4: STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE THROUGH EFFECTIVE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS AND REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Effective Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) are critical to the success of New Jersey's Talent Development system. Led by the private sector but inclusive of key partners, local WDBs will engage in an active governance role to ensure that investments are made in effective programs that local residents can access the services they need for career success and that programs are connected to the needs of local employers.

New Jersey has committed to supporting regional planning, service coordination and resource sharing for all workforce education and training programs, recognizing that labor markets are not constrained by governmental or political boundaries. New Jersey is a densely-populated state and our labor markets are not constrained by state and county boundaries. Many individuals commute across county lines and employers rely on employees from a large surrounding area. While some of the state's key industries are geographically concentrated, many industries have a significant presence throughout the state. As a result, the workforce challenges facing jobseekers and employers in New Jersey cannot be solved by any single county or city working alone. In the coming year, New Jersey will support and strengthen the labor market regions and will develop a process for regional planning and collaboration in workforce development.

KEY POLICIES

Regional Collaboration and Planning

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 requires that the State identify regions in the State, after consultation with the local boards and chief elected officials in the local areas. The regions must be consistent with labor market areas and regional economic development areas in the State, and have available the Federal and non-Federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities under 29 U.S.C. 3151 through 3181 (Chapter 32, Subchapter I, Part B, of WIOA). WIOA also requires regions to collaborate in any other applicable provisions of WIOA, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools.

As outlined in WIOA Section 106, local areas in a designated region must create regional strategic plans. This is a critical step to better coordination of services, leveraging of resources and collaboration with industry and economic development efforts that go beyond local area borders.

The State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) approved Regional Designations on November 10, 2015. SETC Resolution #2015-04 created three (3) workforce planning regions in New Jersey:

- **North Region:** Bergen, Essex, Newark, Hudson/Jersey City, Passaic, Union, Greater Raritan (Somerset/Hunterdon) and Morris/Sussex/Warren
- **Central Region:** Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean
- **South Region:** Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Cumberland/Salem, Atlantic/Cape May

The SETC and LWD will provide staff assistance to local WDBs in the regional planning process. The North, Central, and South regional plans, once finalized and approved by all required partners, shall be submitted to the SETC no later than October 3, 2016.

These plans should include:

- Establishment of regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery agreements
- Analysis of regional labor market data.
- The development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand sectors or occupations for the region
    - Identifying sectors and/or occupations with the most significant crossover within local areas to maximize regional planning
    - Insure vendors within the regional area offer identified credentials
- The establishment of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate, for the region;
- The coordination of transportation and other supportive services, as appropriate, for the region;

- The coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers; and
- The establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with Governor on local level of performance for, and reporting on, the performance accountability measures described for local areas or the planning region.

Local Area Designations

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 requires that the Governor designate local areas that are consistent with labor market areas in the State, are consistent with regional economic development areas in the State, and have available the Federal and non-Federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities under 29 U.S.C. 3151 through 3181 (Chapter 32, Subchapter I, Part B, of WIOA) and any other applicable provisions of WIOA, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools. This is to be done through consultation with the State workforce development board and after consultation with chief elected officials and local boards, and after consideration of comments received through the public comment process as described within 29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(E)(iii)(II).

WIOA states that during the first 2 full program years following July 22, 2014, the Governor shall approve a request for initial designation as a local area from any area that was designated as a local area for purposes of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) for the 2-year period preceding July 22, 2014, performed successfully, and sustained fiscal integrity. The period of initial designation for local areas is from July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017. This covers Program Years 2015 and 2016. Local areas must submit requests for initial designation using the process included in SETC Policy #2015-02.

WIOA further states that after the initial designation period, the Governor shall approve a request for subsequent designation as a Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) from such local area, if such area has performed successfully, sustained fiscal integrity and in the case of a local area in a planning region, met the requirements described in 29 U.S.C. 3121(c)(1). In addition, the SETC is requiring that the LWDA demonstrate its ability to coordinate planning with its regional partners, and fully support its WDB roles, through two new performance metrics: a Regional Coordination metric and WDB Certification metric. Requests from local areas for subsequent designation must be provided to the SETC by March 31, 2017. The subsequent Local Workforce Area designation will be effective July 1, 2017.

WDB Certification

The Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) are critical to the strategic direction, operation and oversight of programs and services in the local area. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 reinforces the importance of each Local Workforce Development Board by requiring the Governor in partnership with the State Workforce Development Board, to establish criteria based on specific items outlined in WIOA Section 107 to certify local boards.

WIOA Section 107, and New Jersey's administrative code N.J.A.C 12:42-4, requires that the Governor shall, once every 2 years, certify one local board for each local area in the State. Such certification shall be based on meeting membership criteria and the extent to which the local board has ensured that workforce investment activities carried out in the local area have enabled the local area to meet the performance accountability measures and achieve sustained fiscal integrity. All New Jersey Local Workforce Development Boards were certified under WIA as of June 2014.

The LWDB certification process for 2016 will use an updated process and items required for submission, as outlined below, which is slightly abbreviated from the 2014 certification process. In 2018, the LWDB certification process will return to the full process, and may contain additional items required by the State Employment and Training Commission.

WDB Budget & Staffing Requirements

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) stipulates specific functions and responsibilities of the local workforce boards under P.L. 112-128 Section 107(d). Requirements fall within three primary categories: Strategic Functions; System Capacity Building; and Systems Alignment and Effective Operations.

Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) have specific oversight roles and responsibilities, including budgeting, which are outlined in WIOA Section 107. As part of the board's responsibility for strategic planning, the board must ensure that the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) program budget reflects the goals and priorities of the regional and local workforce plans and the needs of local employers.

1. Workforce funding allocations will be provided by the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJLWD) through Notices of Obligation (NOOs) to the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) for each new Program Year (PY), beginning July 1, 2016 (PY 2016).

2. The Local Workforce Development Board (WDB) staff will provide the local board with a draft LWDA Programs Budget showing all workforce funding streams, including the WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) program, any external workforce grants received, and other sources of funding for the local area. The budget must also include the anticipated Level of Service (number of customers to be served) under each program in the local area. A template budget will be provided by the SETC.

3. The LWDA Programs Budget must reflect the amount set aside for local board staffing requirements, as per SETC Policy #2016-03. Local boards should review and approve the LWDA Programs budget and the WDB Staff Budget at the same time.

4. The local board will review and approve the LWDA Programs Budget and the WDB Staff Budget in an open and public process. This process must include:

a. Initial budget review by a WDB-led budget committee, or an existing WDB committee;
b. Budget presentation and recommendations made by this committee to the full WDB at one of its quarterly meetings;
c. Approval by the full WDB within 90 days of receipt of the NOOs by the LWDA.

5. The WDB must then provide the approved LWDA Programs Budget and the WDB Staff Budget to the SETC and NJLWD within ten (10) days of approval.

6. If the budget(s) are modified at any time during the year, the modified budget must be approved by the local board in the same manner as outlined above, and the modified budget must be provided to the SETC and NJLWD within ten (10) days of approval.

7. Failure to provide these budgets to the SETC and NJLWD may negatively impact the provision of workforce funds to the local area.

To further support the role of WDBs and to provide the best opportunity for local area success, the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJLWD) are requiring a fiscal set-aside for Workforce Development Board (WDB) staff.

Local Area Funding Allocations

WIOA Title I funds will be allocated based on the best estimates of the number of individuals in need of services, and reflective of the priorities identified in *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development*.

New Jersey will distribute WIOA Title I funds to local Workforce Development Areas based on the following formulas. The formulas incorporate the federal required elements. The formulae also use data sources that are reliable, available at the county and city level and updated on a regular basis. The "hold harmless" provisions under WIOA will apply to these funding allocations.

Youth Funding

40%	Relative number of disadvantaged youth in each local area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state.
25%	Relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each local area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.
25%	Relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each local area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state.
10%	Excess poverty in urban, rural, and suburban local areas.

Figure 22

Adult Funding

25%	Relative number of disadvantaged adults in each local area as compared to the total number of disadvantaged adults in the state.
25%	Relative excess number of unemployed individuals in the local area as compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state.
25%	Relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the local area as compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.
25%	High school diploma attainment.

Figure 23

Dislocated Worker Funding

25%	Declining Industries: Total projected employment change in declining industries.
25%	Insured Unemployment Data: Number of Unemployment Insurance claimants.
25%	Long-term Unemployment: Number of UI claimants who have exhausted Unemployment Insurance.
25%	Unemployment Concentration: Number of unemployed individuals.

Figure 24

Metrics

To further ensure that local WDBs are following the WDB Certification requirements and are participating in regional collaboration and planning efforts, New Jersey is adding two performance metrics for the WIOA Title I program. These metrics are as follows:

5. Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification: The State will evaluate the WDB local area based on its ability to meet all WDB certification requirements.

6. Regional Coordination: Three workforce planning regions are designated in New Jersey: North, Central, and South. The State will evaluate each WDB's participation in regional planning and coordination efforts.

THEME 5: ENSURING SYSTEM INTEGRITY THROUGH METRICS AND GREATER TRANSPARENCY

New Jersey will make performance data on workforce development programs accessible to workforce decision-makers and the public. The Eligible Training Provider List and Consumer Report Card are critical tools assisting jobseekers and students making decisions about short-term occupational training programs.

Performance Metrics

In preparation to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, New Jersey adopted *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development*. Among the goals included in the

Blueprint is data-informed decision making. New Jersey will make performance data on workforce development programs accessible to workforce decision-makers and the public. The State will examine and use additional performance measures to assess and guide training investments across federal and state workforce programs.

In alignment with the Balanced Scorecard Model, adopted by the SETC in 2012, New Jersey is taking three key steps:

1. Adding additional metrics that will be applied to WIOA Title I programs
2. Applying the WIOA Core Metrics to the WorkFirstNJ Employment and Training Program and the SNAP Employment and Training program, and
3. Adding additional metrics that will be applied to all four titles of WIOA and to the WorkFirstNJ Employment and Training Program and the SNAP Employment and Training program.

These additional metrics, detailed in the following tables, will ensure that all key workforce programs are aligned with the state's strategic approach to talent development.

PRIMARY INDICATORS FOR ADULTS AND DISLOCATED WORKERS	**WIOA Title I**	**WIOA Title II**	**WIOA Title III**	**WIOA Title IV**	**WorkFirst NJ Employment & Training Program**
1. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;	X	X	co-enrolled with WIOA Title I	X	X
2. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;	X	X	co-enrolled with WIOA Title I	X	X
3. The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;	X	X	co-enrolled with WIOA Title I	X	X
4. The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized	X	X	co-enrolled	X	X

postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (subject to clause (iii)), during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program;			with WIOA Title I		
5. The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and	X	X	co-enrolled with WIOA Title I	X	X
6. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause (iv).	X	X	co-enrolled with WIOA Title I	X	X

Figure 25

PRIMARY INDICATORS FOR ELIGIBLE YOUTH	WIOA Title I
1. The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program;	X
2. The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program; and	X
3. The primary indicators of performance described in	X

subclauses (III) through (VI) of subparagraph (A)(i).	

Figure 26

ADDITIONAL METRICS: NEW JERSEY	WIOA Title I	WIOA Title II	WIOA Title III	WIOA Title IV	WorkFirst NJ Employment & Training Program
1. Number of program participants served by the program	X		co-enrolled with WIOA Title I		X
2. Number of program participants exited from the program	X		co-enrolled with WIOA Title I		X
3. Percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment as follows: a. Disability b. Ex-Offender c. No High School Diploma d. Previously or currently in foster care e. Homeless f. Limited English Proficiency or Low Level Literacy g. Long-Term Unemployed h. Public Assistance Customer	X		co-enrolled with WIOA Title I		X
4. Percentage of program participants responding to survey who are satisfied with their training/counseling after exiting from the program	X	X	co-enrolled with WIOA Title I	X	X
5. Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification	X				
6. Number of High Quality Partnerships established:	X				
7. Regional Coordination	X				

Figure 27

Co-Enrollment of WIOA Title I and Title III Participants

It is New Jersey's intent that, effective July 1, 2016, all WIOA Title I and WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser) participants will be co-enrolled in both programs; this is reflective of the new One-Stop service integration and will be reflected in the performance outcomes of both programs.

Eligible Training Provider List and Consumer Report Card

The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), as envisioned by state and federal law, is critical to ensure that the highest level of training services is available to the citizens of New Jersey. Additionally, the Consumer Report Card (CRC), which contains provider and program performance data, is an essential tool not only to the workforce system but to all New Jerseyans making an informed customer choice about available training opportunities.

New Jersey State Law (C:34:15C-10.2) requires the creation of the ETPL and states that "[n]o training provider who is not an approved training provider included on the [ETPL] shall receive any federal job training funds or State job training funds." Federal job training funds include, but are not limited to: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) titles I, II and IV; WorkFirst; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; General Assistance; and SNAP Employment and Training. State job training funds include, but are not limited to: the Workforce Development Partnership Fund and the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills. Job training is defined as occupational training, remedial instruction or occupational safety and health training. New Jersey State law (C:34:1A-86) also mandates the collection and display of specific provider and program performance data on a publically available Consumer Report Card.

WIOA provides that participants in need of training services to enhance their job readiness or career pathway may access career training through a list of state-approved training providers and their state-approved training programs, known as the ETPL. WIOA requires each state to maintain an ETPL which must be accompanied by relevant performance and cost information, known as the Consumer Report Card, and must be made publically available in an easy to understand format in order to maximize informed customer choice and serve all significant population groups. WIOA requires the Governor to establish eligibility procedures for the ETPL. WIOA allows the Governor to designate a state agency to administer all aspects of the ETPL. The Center for Occupational Employment Information (COEI) within the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development shall administer New Jersey's ETPL and Consumer Report Card, which are located online at www.njtopps.com.

III. Operational Planning Elements

(a) State Strategy Implementation

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include–

(1) State Board Functions. Describe how the State board will implement its functions under section 101(d) of WIOA (i.e.. provide a description of Board operational structures and decision making processes to ensure such functions are carried out).

A. Board Functions

The New Jersey workforce development system, diagramed in the following pages, allows the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) (www.njsetc.net) to execute the functions of a state workforce board pursuant to section 101(d) of WIOA, which are:

1. The development, implementation, and modification of the State plan;
2. The review of statewide policies, statewide programs, and recommendations on actions that should be taken by the State to align workforce development programs in the State in a manner that supports a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system in the State, including the review and provision of comments on the State plans, if any, for programs and activities of one-stop partners that are not core programs;
3. The development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in the State, including:
    a. The identification of barriers and means for removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system;
    b. The development of strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment;
    c. The development of strategies for providing effective outreach to and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system;
    d. The development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and jobseekers, particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
    e. The identification of regions, including planning regions, for the purposes of section 106(a), and the designation of local areas under section 106, after consultation with local boards and chief elected officials;
    f. The development and continuous improvement of the one-stop delivery system in local areas, including providing assistance to local boards, one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and providers with planning and delivering services, including training services and supportive services, to support effective delivery of services to workers, jobseekers, and employers; and
    g. The development of strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system;

4. The development and updating of comprehensive State performance accountability measures, including State adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the State as required under section 116(b);
5. The identification and dissemination of information on best practices, including best practices for:
    a. The effective operation of one-stop centers, relating to the use of business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies, including strategies for serving individuals with barriers to employment;
    b. The development of effective local boards, which may include information on factors that contribute to enabling local boards to exceed negotiated local levels of performance, sustain fiscal integrity, and achieve other measures of effectiveness; and
    c. Effective training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis, that effectively use direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure an individual's prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences, and that evaluate such skills, and competencies for adaptability, to support efficient placement into employment or career pathways;
6. The development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the State's one-stop delivery system described in section 121(e), including the development of:
    a. Objective criteria and procedures for use by local boards in assessing the effectiveness and continuous improvement of one-stop centers described in such section;
    b. Guidance for the allocation of one-stop center infrastructure funds under section 121(h); and
    c. Policies relating to the appropriate roles and contributions of entities carrying out one-stop partner programs within the one-stop delivery system, including approaches to facilitating equitable and efficient cost allocation in such system;
7. The development of strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to, and improve the quality of, services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system, including such improvements to:
    a. Enhance digital literacy skills (as defined in section 202 of the Museum and Library Services Act (20 U.S.C. 9101); referred to in this Act as ''digital literacy skills'');
    b. Accelerate the acquisition of skills and recognized postsecondary credentials by participants;
    c. Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals; and
    d. Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas;
8. The development of strategies for aligning technology and data systems across one-stop partner programs to enhance service delivery and improve efficiencies in reporting on performance accountability measures, including the design and implementation of common intake, data collection, case management information, and performance accountability measurement and reporting processes and the incorporation of local input

into such design and implementation, to improve coordination of services across one-stop partner programs;

9. The development of allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for employment and training activities for adults, and youth workforce investment activities, to local areas as permitted under sections 128(b)(3) and 133(b)(3);
10. The preparation of the annual reports described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 116(d);
11. The development of the statewide workforce and labor market information system described in section 15(e) of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49l–2(e)); and
12. The development of such other policies as may promote statewide objectives for, and enhance the performance of, the workforce development system in the State.

New Jersey has established the SETC as the State Workforce Development Board. The SETC is a 41-member board established by state statute in 1989. The SETC structure is governed by this statute, *N.J.S.A. 34:15C.*

The members of the SETC are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate, except for the legislative members who are appointed directly by the Governor. Not more than half of the members appointed by the Governor may be of the same political party.

On May 12, 1995, the Governor signed Executive Order #36 which formally established local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) as an integral part of New Jersey's workforce investment system. The State Employment and Training Commission (SETC, at www.njsetc.net) was created by New Jersey P.L. 1989, C.243 and reauthorized by P.L. 2005, c.354.

B. State Board Operational Structures

The SETC is currently composed as a Human Resource Investment Council and meets the composition requirements set forth at 20 CFR 628.210 and 20 CFR 628.215. As such, the SETC is composed as follows: 30 percent representation from business and industry sectors; 30 percent representation from the State Legislature, state agencies, general local government and local education agencies, including one member of the Senate appointed directly by the Governor, one member of the Assembly appointed directly by the Governor, and the Commissioners of Labor and Workforce Development, Community Affairs, Education, and Human Services, the Secretary of Higher Education, and the CEO of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority; 30 percent representation from organized labor and community-based organizations; and 10 percent representation from the general public.

The current Board make-up is enshrined in State statute *N.J.S.A. 34:15C-6*, which created SETC as a Human Resource Investment Council under the Alternative Entity provision of WIA. In keeping with requirements and expectations of WIOA, New Jersey is seeking to amend State statute to move toward a business-driven State Workforce Board in line with WIOA expectations. New Jersey will seek to amend the Statute to require 51% business sector membership. Within two years of the adoption of this Plan, it is anticipated that state legislation will be enacted to allow New Jersey to achieve this goal. Specifically, New Jersey expects to present draft legislation transitioning the State Employment and Training Council from an HRIC to a WIOA State Workforce Development

Board in the New Jersey Legislature in the current legislative session, 2016-2017. With this guiding legislation in place, New Jersey expects to present the new Board for confirmation, and anticipates the new SETC membership to be in compliance by January 2018.

The proposed change to State statute will include requirements in keeping with WIOA's framework for the membership of the State Workforce Board and New Jersey will still retain the SETC's role as a Human Resource Investment Council under the available exception for an Alternative Entity. Membership will include the following, drawn from and specifying the representation required in the WIOA legislation:

(A) The Governor;
(B) A member of each chamber of the State legislature, appointed by the appropriate presiding officers of such chamber; and
(C) Members appointed by the Governor, of which—
  (i) A majority shall be representatives of businesses in the State, who—
    (I) are owners of businesses, chief executives or operating officers of businesses, or other business executives or employers with optimum policy- making or hiring authority, and who, in addition, may be members of a local board described in section 107(b)(2)(A)(i);
    (II) represent businesses (including small businesses), or organizations representing businesses described in this subclause, that provide employment opportunities that, at a minimum, include high-quality, work-relevant training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the State; and
    (III) are appointed from among individuals nominated by State business organizations and business trade associations;
  (ii) not less than 20 percent shall be representatives of the workforce within the State, who—
    (I) shall include representatives of labor organizations, who have been nominated by State labor federations;
    (II) shall include a representative, who shall be a member of a labor organization or a training director, from a joint labor-management apprenticeship program, or if no such joint program exists in the State, such a representative of an apprenticeship program in the State;
    (III) may include representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or that provide or support competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; and
    (IV) may include representatives of organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of- school youth; and
  (iii) the balance—
    (I) shall include representatives of government, who—

(aa) shall include the lead State officials with primary responsibility for the core pro- grams; and
(bb) shall include chief elected officials (collectively representing both cities and counties, where appropriate); and
(II) may include such other representatives and officials as the Governor may designate, such as—
(aa) the State agency officials from agencies that are one-stop partners not specified in subclause (I) (including additional one-stop partners whose programs are covered by the State plan, if any);
(bb) State agency officials responsible for economic development or juvenile justice pro- grams in the State;
(cc) individuals who represent an Indian tribe or tribal organization, as such terms are defined in section 166(b); and
(dd) State agency officials responsible for education programs in the State, including chief executive officers of community colleges and other institutions of higher education.

(2) DIVERSE AND DISTINCT REPRESENTATION. — The members of the State board shall represent diverse geographic areas of the State, including urban, rural, and suburban areas.

To fulfill its planning, policy and performance roles and to align with industry sector strategies, the SETC has formed or will form the following councils and committees:

SETC Council/Committee	Mission and Responsibilities
Disability Issues: State Rehabilitation Councils	The mission of both the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) Rehabilitation Councils is to advocate for the increase in the number of people with disabilities in New Jersey's workforce. In order to achieve this goal, persons with disabilities must have improved access to New Jersey's workforce programs and services. The two State Rehabilitation Councils will develop policies and program strategies for recommendation to the SETC that focus on identifying the training needs, accommodations, and resources specific to people with disabilities. The integration of these specific policies will ensure that New Jersey's workforce system is equipped to address the diverse needs of the disability community.
Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education	The Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education's mission is to insure and advocate for the execution of equitable gender and labor practices in educational programs and

	workforce training throughout New Jersey. The Gender Parity Task Force was first established by the SETC in 1993, and the Council was permanently established through legislation in 1999. The Council is legislated to consist of 16 members: six members are appointed by the SETC and six members are appointed by the Division on Women, with not more than half of these members shall be of the same political party. In addition, four members serve ex-officio and are appointed by the Commissioners of Children and Families, Education, Human Services, and the Secretary of Higher Education.
Governance Committee	The SETC is responsible for the oversight of local Workforce Development Boards. The SETC develops appropriate standards to ensure local WDBs are in compliance with state and federal law, the state plan and other relevant documents regarding membership and functions. A key role of this Committee is to establish standards and priorities, and to provide oversight and guidance for local Boards with the goal of enhancing and empowering local WDBs in carry out their own planning and oversight responsibilities. The Governance Committee is currently overseeing the adoption of key board governance policies in support of the strategies outlined in the Combined State Plan.
Health Care Workforce Council	The mission of the Health Care Workforce Council (HCWC) is to strengthen New Jersey's health care workforce to develop and support a sustainable, quality health care system for the good of the State and all its residents. The Council makes recommendations to the SETC to ensure strategic investments to meet the needs of health care employers for a highly trained and diverse workforce that will benefit individuals who are starting or advancing in health care careers.
Performance Committee	The Performance Committee supports New Jersey's commitment to system accountability and integrity, demonstrating success through performance standards, outcomes and data quality. The committee provides high-level performance oversight and recommends performance policy that drives program effectiveness and efficiency. It advises the SETC on performance standards for the workforce system. This includes identifying quantifiable performance

	standards for use in evaluating the workforce investment system, and guidelines for procedures to encourage and enforce compliance with these standards, as required by *N.J.S.A. 34:15C-8*. The committee reviews outcomes for federally-mandated performance measures for the State and local areas; reviews recommendations from LWD on additional performance measures; identifies promising practices and facilitates the replication of effective models, and makes recommendations to the Commission on the appropriateness of additional measures and the standards and implementation of such measures.
State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services	The State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) focuses on improving the adult literacy delivery system. It is a bipartisan body created within the State Employment and Training Commission by Statute in 1999 to facilitate state and local policy development, planning and oversight in consultation with stakeholders in the area of adult literacy education. In carrying out its role, the Council is responsible for developing a broad-based State Literacy Plan that focuses on appropriate system-wide performance standards, evaluates adult literacy services, and advocates for professional development and capacity building among practitioners and policy makers. By law, SCALES members are appointed by the Assembly, Senate and the Governor's office.
New Jersey Shared Youth Vision Council	The mission of the New Jersey Shared Youth Vision Council is to empower New Jersey's youth to become productive members of their communities through the development of skills focused on leadership, career preparation and community engagement. The Shared Youth Vision Council was formed to assist New Jersey with the development of a comprehensive youth strategy around the development of workforce policies and program strategies focused on building capacity, fortifying career awareness efforts and highlighting innovative programs that create pathways to employment for youth. The Council connects state agencies, education, community organizations, workforce development programs and other youth related stakeholders around a singular shared youth vision: to assist youth to successfully navigate the labor market and to obtain the skills they need for employment.

Apprenticeship Pathways Committee	WIOA allows for an increased emphasis on the nationally recognized and portable credential attained through registered apprenticeship programs, which includes both the theoretical and work based learning opportunities that employers indicate they desire. To support this initiative, the SETC will explore the development of an Apprenticeship Pathways Committee to work with the Talent Networks and other High Quality Partnerships in the State, to identify industry-recognized Registered Apprenticeship (RA) models and encourage the use, expansion and creation of RA models that meet occupational needs of business and industry. The Committee would also work to develop policy and support initiatives that focus on RA programs in non-traditional career paths and support pay equity. The Committee would make recommendations for policy that support and expand RA programs to ensure that New Jersey's workforce acquires the skills, training and education necessary for sustainable occupations. The Committee would also explore policy that could allow apprentices to receive college credit upon completion of a registered apprenticeship program, which would build upon an existing model, New Jersey Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education (NJ PLACE).

Figure 28

In addition, the SETC formed an ad-hoc task force in partnership with the New Jersey Business and Industry Association (NJBIA). The NJBIA brought this critical business need to the SETC, as a member of the Commission, with a request to form the Employability Skills Task Force to aid in creating a statewide call to action around the lack of employability skills found in new job applicants and existing employees within the workforce. This critical need was underscored by a survey of industry employers, which demonstrated that these skills are needed by employers and required for workers to find success in the world of work. Under the leadership of the Task Force, chaired by NJBIA, one of the outcomes was the creation of High Quality Stakeholder Groups focused on seven key areas: Business/Employer; Workforce Development Boards; Education; Registered Apprenticeship/Organized Labor; Government; Non-Profits; and Higher Education. Current efforts to address the crisis were explored, best practice models within each group were identified, and commitments to address the issue from each of the Stakeholder Groups were provided. NJBIA is in the process of creating and launching a webpage highlighting all of the efforts achieved through the work of the Task Force, and identifying further opportunities to collaborate on this important effort. A formal Call to Action event highlighting the outcomes of the Task Force is planned by NJBIA to be held in early 2016.

C. State Board Decision Making Processes

The State Employment and Training Commission Chair is appointed by the Governor, and the board receives recommendations and reports from its committees and councils, as outlined above. In addition, the members of the state board may, from time to time, request the opportunity to present to the SETC any new initiatives and projects undertaken by their businesses, organizations and agencies, and may provide the SETC with reports on workforce issues.

The SETC takes formal votes on policy decisions, which are most often submitted as resolutions by the appropriate council or committee, for the full board's consideration. The votes are taken at the regular meetings of the SETC, held at least quarterly, and are published in the minutes. The minutes and any corresponding policy resolutions are posted on the SETC website, www.njsetc.net and may be distributed via e-mail to appropriate stakeholders.

D. State Board Functions and Duties

Under New Jersey law, the SETC performs the duties required of the State Workforce Investment Board. As described in *N.J.S.A. 34:15C-5,* "the purpose of the commission shall be to develop and assist in the implementation of a State workforce investment policy with the goal of creating a coherent, integrated system of workforce investment programs and services which, in concert with the efforts of the private sector, will provide each citizen of the State with equal access to the learning opportunities needed to attain and maintain high levels of productivity and earning power. The principal emphasis of the workforce investment policy shall be developing a strategy to fill significant gaps in New Jersey's workforce investment efforts, with special attention to finding ways to mobilize and channel public and private resources to individuals who would otherwise be denied access to the training and education they need to make their fullest contribution to the economic well-being of the State. To the extent practicable, the strategy shall emphasize types of training and education which foster the communication and critical thinking skills in workers and jobseekers which will be of greatest benefit for long term career advancement."

The duties of the SETC are outlined in *N.J.S.A. 34:15C-6,* as follows.

1) Issue the New Jersey Workforce Investment Plan pursuant to the provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2801* et seq.) and section 10 of P.L.1989, c.293 (*C.34:15C-7*); [This duty is in keeping with WIOA Section 101(d)(1), "the development, implementation and modification of the State Plan."]
2) Establish performance standards for workforce investment programs pursuant to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2801* et seq.) and section 11 of P.L.1989, c.293 (*C.34:15C-8*); [This duty is in keeping with WIOA Section 101(d)(4), "(4) the development and updating of comprehensive State performance accountability measures, including State adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the State as required under section 116(b)."]
3) Act to ensure the full participation of Workforce Investment Boards [and now Workforce Development Boards] in the planning and supervision of local workforce investment systems. The commission shall be responsible to oversee and develop appropriate

standards to ensure Workforce Investment Board compliance with state and federal law, the State Plan, and other relevant requirements regarding membership, staffing, meetings, and functions;

4) Foster and coordinate initiatives of the Department of Education and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education to enhance the contributions of public schools and institutions of higher education to the implementation of the state workforce investment policy;
5) Examine federal and state laws and regulations to assess whether those laws and regulations present barriers to achieving any of the goals of this act. The commission shall, from time to time as it deems appropriate, issue to the Governor and the Legislature reports on its findings, including recommendations for changes in state or federal laws or regulations concerning workforce investment programs or services, including, when appropriate, recommendations to merge other State advisory structures and functions into the commission;
6) Perform the duties assigned to a State Workforce Investment Board pursuant to subsection (d) of section 111 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2821) [and now Section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Public Law 113–128]*;
7) Have the authority to enter into agreements with the head of each state department or commission which administers or funds education, employment or training programs, including, but not limited to, the Departments of Labor and Workforce Development, Community Affairs, Education, and Human Services and Higher Education, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, and the Juvenile Justice Commission, which agreements are for the purpose of assigning planning, policy guidance and oversight functions to each Workforce Investment Board with respect to any workforce investment program funded or administered by the state department or commission within the Workforce Investment Board's respective labor market area or local area, as the case may be; and
8) Establish guidelines to be used by the Workforce Investment Boards in performing the planning, policy guidance, and oversight functions assigned to the boards under any agreement reached by the commission with a department or commission pursuant to subsection g. of this section. The commission shall approve all local Workforce Investment Board plans that meet the criteria established by the commission for the establishment of One-Stop systems. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development shall approve the operational portion of the plans for programs administered by the department.

The SETC is also responsible for administering two additional councils, established by state statute, both of which were added to their purview after the Commission was established. The first is the State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) and the second is the Council on Gender parity in Labor and Education (GPC).

The state statute, *N.J.S.A. 34:15C*, will be amended to reflect the new requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, including the functions, roles and responsibilities of the state board and the board membership, as discussed in the State Board Operational Structure

section, and in particular with regard to WIOA Section 101(d), State Workforce Development Board Functions.

(2) Implementation of State Strategy. Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in II(c) above.

This must include a description of—

(A) Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy. Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will fund to implement the State's strategies. Also describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies as appropriate.

A. WIOA Services delivered by Department of Labor and Workforce Development through One-Stop Career Centers (WIOA Title I Activities)

New Jersey is committed to locally-driven and managed One-Stop Career Centers that assist individuals who are unemployed or under-employed to obtain new skills and employment. New Jersey maintains and will continue to build a strong network of One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, libraries, community and faith-based organizations, labor unions and educational institutions to ensure that jobseekers and students, at all levels, have access to high-quality career guidance and job search information and assistance. New Jersey will invest in professional development and staff training and in on-line resources to support this effort.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) is the state agency responsible for delivery of the vast majority of WIOA core programs. Figure 29 outlines the roles and responsibilities for the various State programs:

New Jersey WIOA Programs and Responsible Entities		
Division	**Core Programs**	**Non-Core Programs**
LWD via funding to Local Workforce Development Boards	– Adult (Title I) – Dislocated Worker (Title I) – Youth (Title I)	– WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) TANF Employment and Training and SNAP Employment and Training Programs.
LWD via State and Local Government Staff	– Wagner-Peyser (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III)	– Trade Adjustment Assistance for Worker Program (Chapter 2, Title II Tract Act) – Jobs for Veterans State Grants (Title 38, Chapter 41) – Unemployment Insurance

LWD via competitive contracts	– Adult Basic Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II)	– Senior Community Service Employment Program (Title V Older Americans Act)
LWD Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services AND Department of Human Services, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired	– Vocational Rehabilitation (Title I Rehabilitation Act, as amended by Title IV)	–
New Jersey Department of Education		– Career and Technical Education (Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act)

Figure 29

New Jersey's WIOA system is delivered through State and local government staff, and vendor staff, at the State's 29 One-Stop Career Centers. These include at least one Center in each of New Jersey's 21 counties, and multiple centers in some of the State's 17 Workforce Development Boards. New Jersey's local workforce development system and One-Stop Career Centers are described in greater detail in Section VI below.

Services at each One-Stop Career Center will be delivered based on the following format as shown in the graphic below "One-Stop Operations FUTURE STATE." This is a renewed method of service delivery in keeping with a deeper engagement between WIOA Title I, Title II, Title III and Title IV services, and aligns with expectations of WIOA around coordinated service across Titles, building career pathways, deeper business services and regional collaboration.

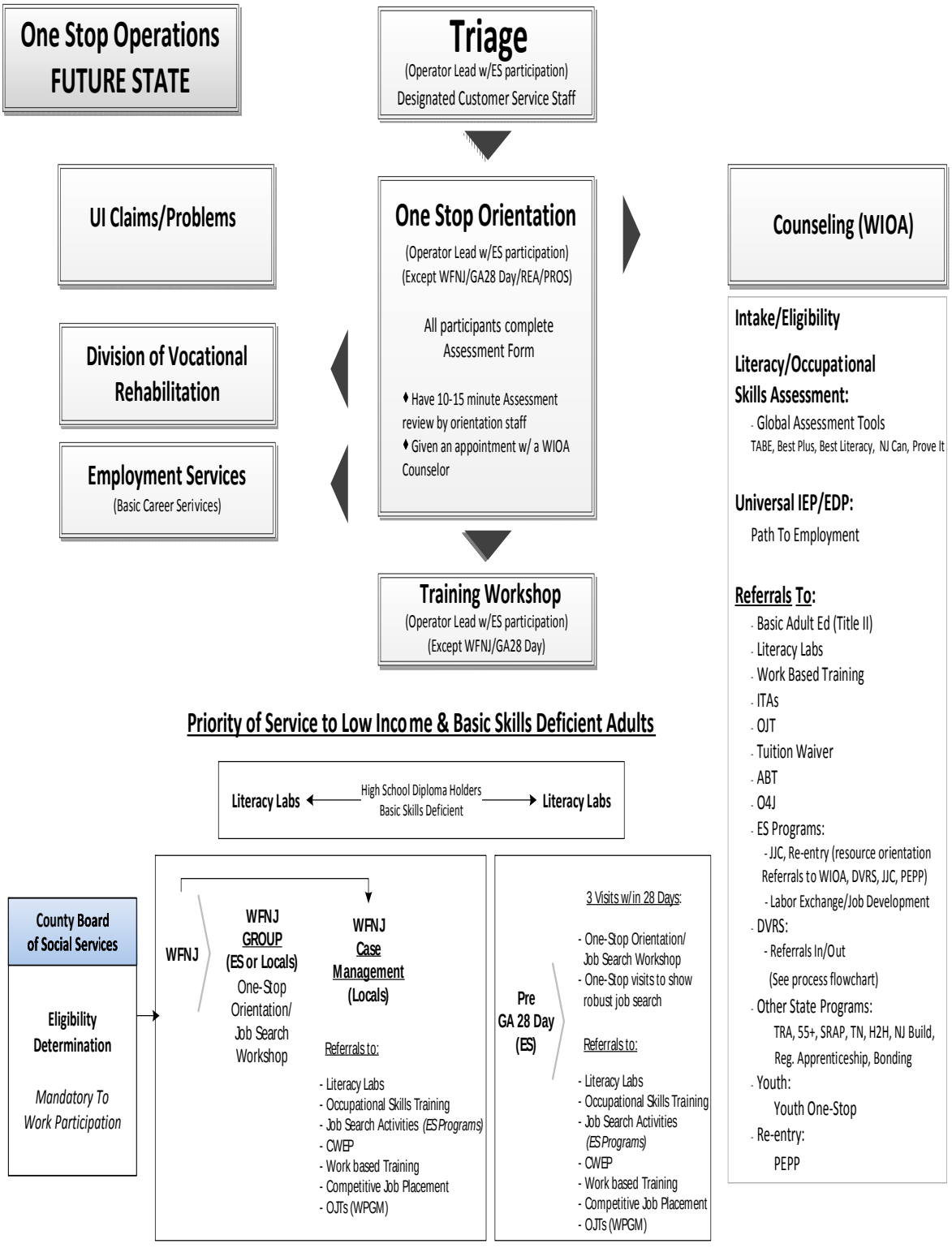

One Stop Operations
FUTURE STATE
Triage
(Operator Lead w/ES participation)
Designated Customer Service Staff
UI Claims/Problems
One Stop Orientation
(Operator Lead w/ES participation)
(Except WFNJ/GA28 Day/REA/PROS)
All participants complete Assessment Form
♦ Have 10-15 minute Assessment review by orientation staff
♦ Given an appointment w/ a WIOA Counselor
Counseling (WIOA)
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Employment Services
(Basic Career Serivices)
Training Workshop
(Operator Lead w/ES participation)
(Except WFNJ/GA28 Day)
Intake/Eligibility
Literacy/Occupational Skills Assessment:
- Global Assessment Tools
TABE, Best Plus, Best Literacy, NJ Can, Prove It
Universal IEP/EDP:
Path To Employment
Referrals To:
- Basic Adult Ed (Title II)
- Literacy Labs
- Work Based Training
- ITAs
- OJT
- Tuition Waiver
- ABT
- O4J
- ES Programs:
- JJC, Re-entry (resource orientation Referrals to WIOA, DVRS, JJC, PEPP)
- Labor Exchange/Job Development
- DVRS:
- Referrals In/Out
(See process flowchart)
- Other State Programs:
TRA, 55+, SRAP, TN, H2H, NJ Build, Reg. Apprenticeship, Bonding
- Youth:
Youth One-Stop
- Re-entry:
PEPP
Priority of Service to Low Income & Basic Skills Deficient Adults
Literacy Labs
High School Diploma Holders
Basic Skills Deficient
Literacy Labs
County Board of Social Services
Eligibility Determination
Mandatory To Work Participation
WFNJ
WFNJ GROUP (ES or Locals)
One-Stop Orientation/ Job Search Workshop
WFNJ Case Management (Locals)
Referrals to:
- Literacy Labs
- Occupational Skills Training
- Job Search Activities (ES Programs)
- CWEP
- Work based Training
- Competitive Job Placement
- OJTs (WPGM)
Pre GA 28 Day (ES)
3 Visits w/in 28 Days:
- One-Stop Orientation/ Job Search Workshop
- One-Stop visits to show robust job search
Referrals to:
- Literacy Labs
- Occupational Skills Training
- Job Search Activities (ES Programs)
- CWEP
- Work based Training
- Competitive Job Placement
- OJTs (WPGM)

Figure 30

In New Jersey's WIOA system, each One-Stop Operator serves to tie the partners together, manage activity, ensure collaboration and coordination of services, and work to build a smooth system of services that maximizes the impact and value of each distinct program and funding stream. Additionally, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) works with each WDB and One-Stop Operator to standardize these elements across the state. The "One-Stop Operations FUTURE STATE" flow chart is being rolled out to all One-Stops and is the model for service statewide.

The One-Stop Operator provides for the integration of State, local government, and vendor agency staff providing WorkFirst NJ (TANF and GA), SNAP, and WIOA funded employability assessment, service identification and sequencing, individual employment plan (IEP) development, and case management services for mandatory work activity participants Services are delivered as shown in Figure 30 above - New Jersey WIOA Programs and Responsible Entities. The staff at each One-Stop includes a mix of State LWD staff and local government (and in the future sub-contracted One-Stop Operator) staff, as well as those from other partners.

B. Customer Flow and Counseling

The customer flow begins with customer "Triage". When a customer enters the One-Stop Career Center, they are greeted by designated customer service staff (Triage staff) directed by the One-Stop Operator (and his/her designee) and including partner staff from all the One-Stop program areas. All customers (except WorkFirst New Jersey/General Assistance 28 Day and RESEA customers) are directed to a One-Stop Orientation group session, led by the One-Stop Operator, to learn about all the programs and services available at the One-Stop. During this Orientation group session, all customers complete a brief assessment form which is review by Orientation staff and the customer is scheduled for an appointment with a WIOA Counselor as appropriate.

Next is the WIOA Eligibility Determination and Literacy/Occupational Skills Assessment process. This process is being standardized statewide, such that the same menu of vetted and approved Assessment instruments are used across the system. New Jersey will use the following tools across all One-Stops:

- Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) – This is the standard basic skills test, broadly utilized and proven
- Best Plus – Face-to-face oral interview of listening and speaking skills to assess English language proficiency
- Best Literacy – Test of reading and writing skills using authentic situations to assess skill level
- New Jersey Career Assistance Navigator (NJCAN) – Several assessments of skills, career interest and suitability.
- Prove It – Assessment used to show proficiency in multiple occupations and skillsets. More than 30,000 test modules are available that can be used in a customized manner to determine customers' readiness for specific jobs.

In New Jersey's prior system, both WIOA and ES had separate Counselors who worked in parallel with customers, and sometimes overlapped in interaction with a given customer. This duplication

has been removed in the current model. Also, there are separate counselors for WorkFirst New Jersey who provide expert counseling customized to the needs of this distinct program. The WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) counselors perform case management of its customers and are funded by state and federal public assistance employment and training funds. As part of this case management, customers may be referred to Employment Services staff for group workshops on job search techniques and work-ready skills, or to literacy labs, occupational skills training, work-based training, competitive job placement and on-the-job training grants, as appropriate.

For non-WFNJ customers, the WIOA counselor and the customer together develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that identifies the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services, in order for the participant to achieve their employment goals, including training goals and activities and goals and activities aligned along a career pathway that each customer sets for themselves, their Path to Employment.

Based on the IEPs, WIOA counselors refer customers to one or a combination of WIOA funded programs and/or state funded partner programs including Basic Adult Education providers under Title II, literacy labs, work-based training, occupational skills training (WIOA and/or state funded), on-the-job training, tuition waivers, Employment Services group activities (such as Jersey Job Clubs), Division of Vocational Services, Re-entry programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance, NJ Build training (in the construction trades), registered apprenticeships, and bonding, to name a few, or to Employment Services for competitive job placement when no additional training is necessary.

C. Training and Other Services

Subsequent to this assessment process, individuals will have access to services in keeping with the goals and activities of their IEP, drawn from the following.

C.1. Training Services

New Jersey delivers training through all WIOA allowable methods, in keeping with WIOA guidance. As an overarching guide to New Jersey's training efforts, the State has developed a policy toward maintaining a high proportion of industry-valued credentials from publicly funded training. Industry-valued credentials will have the following characteristics:

- Valued and demanded by employers
- Portable – skills learned are transferable and provide broad opportunities
- Stackable – skills learned may lead to opportunities for continuous or advanced training and education
- Leads to higher wages, career advancement, and/or increased job security

New Jersey will develop an industry-valued credentials list on an annual basis based on an analysis of labor market data, feedback from employers and stakeholders, and formal adoption of the list by the Credential Review Board. The State intends to create a workforce system valued by employers that also creates bridges for individuals to attain post-secondary credits. New Jersey's goal is to dedicate at least 80% of all federal and state funds spent on occupational training to programs that result in an industry-valued credential or degree. The five-year plan will proceed incrementally for each Local Area as follows:

State Fiscal Year 2017 *(July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017)* – 50%
State Fiscal Year 2018 *(July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018)* – 60%
State Fiscal Year 2019 *(July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019)* – 70%
State Fiscal Year 2020 *(July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020)* – 75%
State Fiscal Year 2021 *(July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021)* – 80%

The State plans on utilizing the new statutory authority in WIOA to test pay-for-performance contracting with WIOA formula funds held at the state level and provide technical assistance for local workforce areas, as requested at the local level, to determine if outcome-based approaches can improve overall WIOA performance.

As part of *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development*, New Jersey prioritizes strategies and investments in work-based learning opportunities including Pre-apprenticeship, Apprenticeship, Internship, Job Shadowing, Job Coaching, Mentoring and On the Job Training models. The following make up New Jersey's main training methods:

- *Adult Basic Education (Title II):* If a customer is determined in need of these services, they are referred directly to WIOA Title II Adult Education services for remedial basic skills, English as a Second/Other Language and related services.
- *Literacy Labs:* Computer labs at One-Stop Career Centers (often blended with the Resource Centers) with extensive computer-based learning tools, and are the state's main effort to provide basic skills, literacy, and English as Second Language training to WIOA customers on a drop-in, open-access basis.
- *Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)* for vocational training through training providers on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) as outlined later in this section and in Section VI. ITA training is delivered based on customer choice and in keeping with the customer's IEP. New Jersey has a vibrant and well-utilized online consumer report card, the New Jersey Training Opportunities site at www.NJTopps.org, which will be strengthened with guidance from the State Credential Review Board. The ETPL list includes more than 732 eligible/certified trainers with more than 7600 distinct programs. As part of the industry-valued credentials focus noted above, New Jersey is in the process of streamlining this list, and putting priority on training providing credentials in high-demand, high-growth industries and occupations. However, because the statewide list of training providers is used so broadly beyond WIA/WIOA by multiple programs and NJ state law requires any training institution accessing any federal or state workforce funds to be on this list, it will always be somewhat larger than those in many other states. Additionally, New Jersey is in the process of developing new policy with regard to the limit or "cap" on Individual Training Account (ITA) vouchers for WIOA customers. Currently, the cap is $4,000 per individual, but New Jersey recognizes some valuable trainings cost more than that.
- *On-the-Job Training (OJT):* Business Services staff at each One-Stop may work with customers and area businesses to develop OJT agreements when appropriate. New Jersey continues to promote greater use of On-the-Job Training (OJT) as it is a method of ensuring that employers gain a workforce with the exact skills and training desired. It is in keeping with the State's Talent Network focus and Talent Networks provide a key resource in

facilitating OJT activity. New Jersey follows all WIA/WIOA regulations regarding OJT provision.

- *Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship*
  Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs and initiatives have and will remain continued strategies for New Jersey. The models, by design, incorporate both theory and experiential learning that business and industry often request, and simultaneously create career pathways for participants. The Registered Apprenticeship model leads to a nationally-recognized industry credential that is both portable and stackable. Strategies to incorporate Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship are project-specific, allowing LWD and its partners to build specific solutions to identified needs and incorporate promising practices gleaned from previous projects.
- *Opportunity Partnership:* This program utilizes State funds to support cohort training for dislocated workers. Employers or groups of employers work with community colleges or private trainers to develop curricula that are needed for targeted openings at their firms, and then commit to interview successful completers from a cohort enrolled in the program. These trainings are paid for by the class rather than through an ITA or other customer-level manner.
- *Other Work-Based Training* including Internship, Job Shadowing, Job Coaching, Mentoring and a number of customized training and related services developed through the Talent Networks and Business Services staff, built to benefit employers and jobseekers; provide better exposure of jobseekers, especially Youth and those with limited work history to the State's key industries and in-demand occupations; and offer customized methods of preparing new and existing workers for specific job opportunities.

C.2. Other Partner Services

Additionally, referrals may be made to the following partner programs that offer a full menu of integrated and unique services alongside the WIOA Title I activities:

- Employment Services programs including basic career services, Juvenile Justice Commission Re-entry and Labor Exchange/Job Development (for direct placement)
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) services as outlined throughout this Plan.
- Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) services as outlined throughout this Plan.
- Trade Adjustment Act and access to Trade Readjustment Allowances, providing services and aid to American workers who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign trade.
- Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP): Also known in New Jersey as the WorkForce 55+ Program, this is a federally funded program that offers economically disadvantaged seniors, 55 years of age and older, jobs and training. Participants receive the counseling, assessment, and training necessary to enable them to be placed in unsubsidized employment. Program pays full training salary at a non-profit or public employer for up to 48 months
- State Rental Assistance Program (SRAP): This program provides tenant-based and project-based rental assistance grants for up to five years to recipients who are not currently

holding a federal Section 8 voucher. Individuals residing in a household receiving an SRAP subsidy are required to participate in the One-Stop Career Centers employment and training services that help them become employed and self-sufficient.

- Helmets to Hardhats (H2H): Designed to help transition active duty military, members of the National Guard and Reserves, and veterans into the best careers in the construction industry in New Jersey
- NJ BUILD (New Jersey Builders Utilization Initiative for Labor Diversity): Program designed to provide training opportunities for minorities and women in the construction trades and construction related trades so that they can have equal employment opportunity in public contracting.
- Federal Bonding Program: A program that gives an incentive for hiring employers through Fidelity Bonds that guarantee honesty for "at-risk" hard-to-place jobseekers. Bonds cover the first six months of employment and are at no cost to both employer and applicant. It is a unique job placement tool to assist ex-offenders, and other at-risk/hard-to-place job applicants (e.g.: recovering substance abusers, welfare recipients, poor credit histories, etc.).

D. Job Placement and Business Services

When a jobseeker is prepared to engage in a job search, either after assessment and developing an IEP or after training has completed, they begin to work closely with the One-Stop system's Business Representatives (business services staff commonly known as "Job Developers") who work directly with businesses on a variety of initiatives including On-the-Job Training (OJT), work experience opportunities, incumbent worker training, and direct placement in response to employer demand.

Business Representatives' work is also being coordinated across the state and across multiple program/funding streams, and are working toward industry specialization as well as part of New Jersey's Talent Network initiative.

D.1. Industry Specialization

New Jersey is moving toward developing teams of industry-specific experts among the business representatives. LWD is promoting a process whereby Business Representatives develop specialization in specific industries or sub-industries. The State recognize that not all One-Stop sites have enough Business Representatives to have distinct individuals for all seven of the State's targeted industries, but as much as possible, are working toward processes to allow for specialization to avoid duplication of effort within industries and collaboration across the state. Serving as part of "sector teams" under the auspices of New Jersey's Talent Network initiative, Business Representatives statewide who work within each target industry will coordinate efforts, collect and share labor market information, share business connections and "job orders" across sites as appropriate (given the State's extensive cross-workforce area and cross-region commuting patterns), and build methods of collaboration and specialization within industries.

D.2. Career Connections

To assist customers with pursuing the activities identified in their IEP, counselors will be supported by the new **Career Connections Path to Employment Training** platform that is being developed. Career Connections is a digital platform for career guidance and job search assistance. Career Connections began as redesign of Jobs4Jersey.com tools used by the Employment Service for labor exchange, but it is now being developed as a multi-function centralized platform for jobseekers to manage their workforce development activity. New Jersey is in the process of offering it for use across the entire system and by all WIOA system partners.

Career Connections includes the following elements:

- Labor exchange
- Standardizing assessment
- Career guidance
- "Plan, Prepare, Succeed" tool for career planning and training selection/preparation activities
- Selection of training providers and a refreshed central platform for the Eligible Training Provider List at njtopps.org.
- Job search assistance

Any individual who is being served by a program funded by Federal or State workforce funds should be able to use Career Connections as the platform and base for their job readiness and career planning activities.

Partners will be able to add content to the digital platform customized to the services and activities of their distinct programs.

By summer 2016, LWD will provide training in the use of Career Connections and delivery of career advising/career navigation services using the Path to Employment approach for counselors and other staff at One-Stop Career Centers and at partner agencies including community colleges, public libraries and community-based and faith-based organizations. This is part of the State's efforts to broaden access to WIOA system services. Career Connections and this training will ensure a high level of consistent and quality service across programs and locations. LWD is making grants to public libraries to support this function, which will help dramatically increase the number of access points for the WIOA system. This program is outlined in greater detail in a separate section.

D.3. Jersey Job Clubs

The Jersey Job Clubs serve as the backbone of state Employment Services delivery. All of the mandatory partner programs refer customers to it. The Jersey Job Clubs are the statewide method of delivering job readiness workshops and related career advising work. New Jersey has determined that providing jobseeker customers with a peer community that could help build, or re-build often broken professional networks was a critical service for all of the system's customers. The result, Jersey Job Clubs, are now universally accessible and encouraged for all enrolled participants in any of the WIOA and partner programs. Activities are centered on Job Club

activities where individuals can meet and share their job search work, share employer contacts they have made, and utilize one another's growing professional networks for potential employment opportunities. Workshops offered through the Jersey Job Clubs include:

- **Core workshops** on topics including resume writing, interview skills, networking, social media in job search, job search assistance, and orientation to other available services.
- Specific workshops for various populations and about specific programs, for those participants as needed within the requirements of those programs.

D.4. America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS)

New Jersey currently utilizes the AOSOS system across all One-Stops, and all core partner programs are able to utilize it as the primary case management resource, for recording and accessing all jobseeker customer data, as well as for reporting on DOL performance measures. Staff use the system in collaborative case management across sites and the multiple staff working with customers. New Jersey is in the process of undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the State's case management system needs as well as identifying any new or updated requirements for case management and reporting systems in WIOA. This work will be undertaken in coming years, but for the present AOSOS will remain for current and immediately expected purposes.

D.5. Re-Employment Portal

Through funding from USDOL, New Jersey is developing a single sign-on workforce profile page and system for unemployment insurance (UI) and workforce participants. Once logged in, the customer can access a personalized dashboard to look at their UI system profile and status, review UI claim information, coordinate their job search activity, access career guidance content, and also set up and receive information and educational content related to their activities, career goals, and other workforce topics.

D.6. One-Stop Operator Selection and Certification

New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development includes a commitment for the SETC regarding Local Workforce Board Certification and Capacity Building. The Commission will build on its foundation of required certification and capacity building for local boards, with an expanded certification process that includes enhanced communication, capacity building and technical assistance in partnership with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

WIOA requires that local areas competitively select the One-Stop Operator. Based on WIOA, One-Stop Operators may be an institution of higher education; an employment service State agency established under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), on behalf of the local office of the agency; a community-based organization, nonprofit organization, or intermediary; a private for-profit entity; a government agency; or another interested organization or entity, which may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization, or a labor organization.

State law N.J.S.A 34:15D-4.7 and 21 also requires that all counseling services in One-Stop Career Centers must be either provided by a job counselor hired and employed by the State pursuant to N.J.S.A 11A or hired and employed by a political subdivision of the State with the exception of those One-Stop Centers grandfathered under P.L. 2004, c. 39. State law further requires that all

staff who are hired and supported by moneys from the Workforce Development Partnership Fund or the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills, including any of those staff located at any One-Stop Career Center will be hired and employed by the State pursuant to N.J.S.A 11A or hired and employed by a political subdivision of the State, with the exception of those One-Stop Centers grandfathered under P.L. 2004, c. 39.

Local Boards are required to comply with both the federal and State law.

Role of the One-Stop Operator:
WIOA defines the minimum role of the One-Stop Operator as a convener, coordinator and manager of the one-stop delivery system in a local workforce area. Local boards can develop a more expanded definition of the role of the One-Stop Operator as long as that role is consistent with state law.

The One-Stop Operator roles are to:

- Coordinate Service Delivery among Partners
- Coordinate Service Delivery among Physical and Electronic sites
- Coordinate Services across Local Area System
- Primary Provider of Services at Physical Centers

And include:

- Manage hours of operation at all sites
- Manage technological resources such as websites, case management information, business networking software, on-line testing sites
- Manage daily operations thru coordination with WIOA Fiscal Agent for lease, utilities, and other invoice remittance
- Manage partner responsibilities as defined in MOU
- Manage services for individuals
- Manage services for business
- Provision of basic services such as orientations, information on careers and labor markets, and resource rooms
- Submission of annual staffing, and operational budgets
- Following federal and state regulations pertaining to handling of EEO responsibilities, customer complaints, and physical and programmatic accessibility
- Implementation of board policies
- Reporting to Board on operations, performance accountability, and continuous improvements

Each local board will select the One-Stop Operator through a competitive process. Any Request for Proposal should clearly delineate the role of the prospective one-stop operator to deliver services “at a minimum” level described within proposed 20 CFR 678.620 or near it, so as to ensure continued compliance with state law. The Local Area process for Competitive Selection of the One-Stop Operator must be open, transparent and made available to all eligible entities. Local

areas must follow state procurement laws at a minimum. Competitive selection must be made prior to June 1, 2017 with implementation of the role of the One-Stop Operator beginning no later than July 1, 2017. Competitive selection must be made no less than every two years.

Local boards must also ensure that the selected One-Stop Operator:

(A) discloses any potential conflicts of interest arising from the relationships of the operators with particular training service providers or other service providers;
(B) does not establish practices that create disincentives to providing services to individuals with barriers to employment who may require longer-term services, such as intensive employment, training, and education services; and
(C) complies with Federal regulations, and procurement policies, relating to the calculation and use of profits.

In keeping with WIOA Section 121(g), New Jersey proposes the following policy on One-Stop Career Center Certification. This policy maintains objective criteria and process through which local boards will certify their One-Stops. New Jersey's proposed Criteria for One-Stop Career Center Assessment and Certification include:

- Accessibility- WDB examines the accessibility of its physical locations. Not limited to physical accommodations, but accessibility looks at staff knowledge, technology, signage, marketing materials and access to programs and services. Use of the One-Stop Accessibility Checklist
- Staff Training/Professional Development with Credentials – Sensitivity towards priority populations, knowledge of the overall local workforce system and the variety of programs and services available to the public
- Employer Engagement and Results – WDB examines the One-Stop's performance and improvement in key business areas - customer satisfaction, financial and marketplace performance, product and service performance, human resource results, supplier and partner results, and operational performance. Also examined are performance levels relative to competitors and other organizations within the system providing similar services.
- Customer Focus and satisfaction – WDB examines how the One-Stop Career Center determines customer/market requirements, expectations, and preferences. Also examined is how the organization builds relationships with customers and determines their satisfaction.
- Information and Analysis – WDB examines the performance measurement of the workforce system and the One-Stop Career Center to ensure they are meeting their performance goals.
- Quality of Operations and Results – WDB examines the key aspects of process management, including customer-focused design of products and service delivery, as well as support, supplier and partnering processes involving all work units. Also examined are how key processes are designed, implemented, managed, and improved to achieve better performance.

- Technology – WDB examine the integrity and responsibility of the local One-Stop Career Center's IT department. The accessibility of the One-Stop Career Center's equipment, technologies and programs ability to implement technology.

Other items or documents to consider:

- Designation of State and Local Level Equal Opportunity EO Officers
- Notice and Communication
- Assurances of Nondiscrimination
- Universal Access
- Compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and 29 CFR Part 37
- Data and Information Collection and Maintenance
- Monitoring Recipients for Compliance
- Compliant Processing Procedures
- Corrective Action/Sanctions
- CARF – One-Stop Certification Process (Example of Accreditation entity's assessment tool)

The local board areas have the autonomy to develop additional criteria that will respond to labor market, economic and demographic conditions and trends found in the local area.

Local Certification processes will be led by a team of Assessors including the WDB Director, One-Stop Operator, Equal Opportunity Officer, DVR Manager, Employment Services Manager, and Member(s) of WDB with oversight provided by Local Board Executive Committee.

New Jersey plans to launch the certification process by July 2016, provide technical assistance to local areas and have at least one One-Stop Career Center certified in each local area by December 2016, with all other Centers and Satellite sites certified by June 2017.

(B) Alignment with Activities outside the Plan. Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be aligned with programs and activities provided by required one-stop partners and other optional one-stop partners and activities provided under employment, training (including Registered Apprenticeships), education (including career and technical education), human services and other programs not covered by the plan, as appropriate, assuring coordination of, and avoiding duplication among these activities.

The prior Section *(Section (2) Implementation of State Strategy, subsection (A) Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy)* addresses the alignment and coordination with the mandatory and optional One-Stop partners and activities including Wagner-Peyser, unemployment insurance, Adult Education and Literacy, Vocational Rehabilitation, TANF/SNAP through WorkFirst New Jersey and other services.

The local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) are often considered the nucleus within their jurisdiction or area. In this pivotal role, it is imperative that LWDB be engaged by entities applying for funding, implementing programs and/or services within the local area. In this way efforts and

resources can be coordinated, maximized and avoid duplication. Carl D. Perkins funding, which supports Career and Technical Education (CTE) requires applicants to consult with the LWDB in the development of the grant applications to ensure: the grant application is in conformity with the plans of the LWDB; the amount of the allocation; approved career and technical education programs to be supported; performance standards and measures to be addressed for the programs; categories of expenditures; justification for the proposed expenditures; and anticipated outcomes. This knowledge assists both the potential grantee and the LWDB to influence the implementation of the grant from a referral or connectivity perspective, with the broader local workforce system.

In relation to Registered Apprenticeship, as outlined in Section VI of the Plan, Registered Apprenticeship initiatives have and will remain a continued strategy for New Jersey. This model, by design, incorporates both the theory and experiential learning components that business and industry often request, and simultaneously create career pathways for participants. The RA model leads to a nationally-recognized industry credential that is both portable and stackable. Strategies to incorporate Registered Apprenticeships are project-specific, allowing LWD and its partners to build specific solutions to identified needs and incorporate promising practices gleaned from previous projects. Business Services staff at local One-Stops are able to help establish or refer WIOA customers to Registered Apprenticeship programs that meet business, industry, and educational/training requirements.

One of the Registered Apprenticeship initiatives that focuses on youth is the Youth Transitions to Work (YTTW) grant program. These grants are funded through the state Workforce Development Partnership (WDP) funds, and are competitively awarded to educate high school juniors and seniors about registered apprenticeship occupations in various industries. A requirement is that programs be implemented through consortia of key partners, including the LWDB and local One-Stop Career Centers. These grants serve as a successful pre-apprenticeship education initiative that offers students extensive insight about the industry, entrance and training requirements and often involves an experiential learning opportunity for participants. Many of the program graduates apply to the formal Registered Apprenticeship program upon completion of their high school education.

In an effort to continue to expand and market registered apprenticeship as a post-secondary option for students, the SETC has been facilitating dialogues to expand partnerships between government agencies involving SETC, LWD, United States Department of Labor – Employment and Training Administration (USDOL-ETA) and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). This effort focuses on the development of a data sharing agreement that will allow USDOL to verify NJ high school graduates that engage in post-secondary education through a registered apprenticeship program. The verification will be done by the USDOL-ETA Office of Apprenticeship through a crosswalk of NJDOE data on high school graduates, 16 months after graduation, utilizing the USDOL-ETA RAPIDS database. While the details remain under review, New Jersey is hopeful that a data sharing agreement will be reached to capture the utilization of the Registered Apprenticeship model of post-secondary education and high school graduates.

Additional New Jersey efforts focused on administering pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs and initiatives are provided through the New Jersey Builders Utilization Initiative for Labor Diversity (NJ Build) and focused on assisting women and minorities to pursue careers in construction. Funding for these programs are derived from an allocation of one-half of one percent of construction projects funded entirely with appropriated funds or a combination of funds from appropriated and other sources, as identified through Public Law 2009, Chapter 313 and 335. The program funds are competitively awarded by LWD to contract for training opportunities for minorities and women in the construction and construction-related trades. The purpose is to increase the number of minorities and women that can realize equal employment opportunities on publicly funded contracts. Current NJBUILD pre-apprenticeship initiatives are under contract in Hudson County, the City of Camden, the City of Jersey City, and the City of Newark. The collective goal of the NJ Build initiatives is to prepare women and minorities for entry into a union registered apprenticeship program or employment in a construction-related job. The duration of the contracts are 18 months.

Other efforts around Registered Apprenticeship have been influenced through the State Employment and Training Commission's ongoing work with stakeholder groups including LWDB and One-Stop Career Centers on policy, programs and initiatives that target women in non-traditional careers that utilize the Registered Apprenticeship model. This work, in part, is supported through the SETC Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education (GPC).

Developed in 2015, two initiatives summarized below represent High Quality Partnerships focusing on non-traditional careers and pay equality, and support the mission and duties of the Gender Parity Council. These programs have already delivering documented results and are identified for expansion. The GPC has discussed them as potential best practices models and encourage similar efforts in other industries and/or occupational fields, some of which utilize registered apprenticeship as the delivery model of training and education.

Sisters in the Brotherhood (SIB)

A recruitment and retention effort imparted upon the New Jersey Locals of the Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters (NRCC) by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters (International). The initiative focuses on ensuring that a minimum of 10% of all registered apprentices within the trade are women by year 2018, and maintaining that percentage moving forward. The lessons learned have influenced positive modifications to the recruitment, support, education and training programs within the NRCC. During 2015, the NRCC SIB effort engaged more than 34 partners which included educational institutions, employers, correctional facilities, community and faith based organizations, local and state government, which includes the One-Stop Career Centers and more.

Women in Sustainable Employment (WISE) Pathways

A career-exploration course designed for women to explore nontraditional, in-demand jobs in the construction, gas, water, electric and energy industries, with some occupations being registered

apprenticeship programs. This forty-hour program was created to educate women about career paths in these industries, and provide strategies in conflict management, team building, and workplace expectations. Additional focus is placed on resume writing, practice online applications and interviewing; and participants can be connected with recruiters from participating companies. This program was designed and implemented through a quality partnership between employers, organized labor and higher education, to design and implement this career exploration program. The goal is to expand the initiative into other counties, post-secondary educational institutions and employers in the future.

In addition, the SETC continues to staff and support the New Jersey Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education (NJPLACE) initiative. The NJPLACE initiative focuses on awarding college credits to registered apprenticeship programs, and other industry-recognized credentials and certificates to authenticate the post-secondary education, learning and knowledge attained through these training experiences. This initiative is yet another example of a High Quality Partnerships that engage higher education, business and industry, organized labor, national credentialing entities, and government to assist individuals who participate in these types of training programs and services.

(C) Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals. Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services to individuals including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B). The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Coordination With Partners

New Jersey coordinates the services provided by partner agencies using its One-Stop Career Centers located in each of the WDB areas and through use of a common case management system – America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS). The partners are primarily located at the same comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers in each of the WDB areas and utilize AOSOS for case management and tracking of participants. Additionally, the use of common assessment tools provides more comprehensive information on all of the participants in the system.

One-Stop Career Center Operators oversee service delivery at each One-Stop Career Center and are responsible for creating Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with each partner to ensure seamless service delivery and define partner responsibilities and contributions to the local delivery system. Resource sharing agreements complement and build on the MOUs to ensure funding supports the One-Stop Career Center infrastructure.

Additionally, LWD was awarded a grant from USDOL to build its partially developed workforce longitudinal data system (WLDS). The proposed fully developed WLDS will connect workforce and employment data with the administrative data systems of P-12 and postsecondary education in New Jersey. The design and proposed analysis are aligned with the overall workforce innovation development goals of LWD, as a robust WLDS is a critical component to the implementation and

success of more effective Re-employment and Talent Development Strategies. The creation of a longitudinal database will support four major objectives:

1. Implementation of performance metrics beyond the Common Measures.
2. Evaluation of programs, particularly those for hard to serve populations, using quasi-experimental and other methodologies.
3. Data-driven integration of unemployment insurance and re-employment efforts.
4. Support and expansion of sector-based initiatives, including stackable credentials.

The WLDS will include:

- Workforce data: (1) America's One-Stop Operating System: WIOA Title I, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, state-funded Workforce Development Partnership, Re-employment and Eligibility Assessment, Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers, Veterans Services (DVOP and LVER), National Emergency Grants, and WorkFirst New Jersey; (2) WIOA Title II; (3) Unemployment Insurance Benefits; (4) Vocational Rehabilitation
- Employment data: (1) NJ Unemployment Insurance Wage Records; (2) WRIS2
- Education and training data: (1) NJDOE P-12 students (SLDS); (2) Perkins Act (vocational students); (3) Postsecondary Education student unit records; (4) student records from providers on the Eligible Training Provider List

As a new initiative aimed at enhancing integration and efficiency, the State is creating a new web-based system to track:

- Participants' Services
- Training Provider Contracts
- Cost per Participant
- Cost per Training Provider
- Training Duration per Participant

The goal of the web-based system is to create a snapshot of each claimant's past, current, and future training level so that whether in the field or in the administrative office, anyone is able to identify where a claimant has been and where they is going. This system will have the ability to provide reports to management on overall program performance and will support the TAA Field Representative who needs case management details on the participants they serve. AOSOS is currently dependent on the data being manually entered, sometimes weeks after it has occurred, depending on caseload. With this new system, AOSOS will be automatically updated as the contracts are being generated. In addition, current contracts are prepared on paper and sent via the postal service. This new web-based software will allow the provider and the state avoid unnecessary delays by allowing for immediately approval a contract. This system will also provide a real-time accounting of dollars encumbered and reimbursed by the program.

The State is currently seeking quotes to automate the existing OJT system and customize it for TAA, including TAA contracting, by getting training contracts online using the OJT contract system.

This online update will be paid for using TAA funds and will help improve accuracy, accountability, reporting and long-term tracking of the services.

A. Coordination and Co-enrollment with WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy

The goal of Title II Adult Education and Literacy programming in New Jersey is to prepare residents with the basic reading and math skills to succeed in the workplace. The State expect that most individuals accessing Title II services will also be accessing WIOA Title I workforce development services concurrent and integrated with their literacy and basic skills services. All individuals receiving WIOA Title I services may not require Title II assistance, and, similarly, some individuals receiving Title II services may not need or be suitable for WIOA services. However, where appropriate, in cases where the person requires the Title II services, New Jersey will co- or cross-enroll them into the two programs simultaneously and work to build a coherent, coordinated program of services between the two programs.

New Jersey is working toward ever more coherent collaboration and coordination among the Title I and Title II activities. Central to this are several components:

1. A shift to more workplace and career-focused basic skills education curriculum
2. An integration of basic skills training into the subsequent steps of occupational skills training.
3. More co-location of Title II services with One-Stop Career Center services

A.1. Career Focused Basic Skills

The Title II population generally mirrors the Title I population, with many unemployed individuals lacking basic skills. And a significant portion of the State's population overall could benefit from literacy and English language programs. For example, 17% of New Jersey adults lack Basic Prose Literacy skills and 14% of the state's 18+ population report speaking English less than "very well." 47% of adults who speak a language other than, or in addition to English, report speaking English less than "very well." These deficiencies have real impacts. 12% of New Jersey residents have not earned a high school diploma, and the population of those without a high school diploma who are not in the workforce (34%) is double the rate that those with some college or an Associate's degree are not in the workforce (17%). Adults with less than a high school diploma on average earn about half of the state's median income.[xxv]

In order to be successful in achieving their workforce goals, many of the State's workforce development customers require improved basic language and math skills and/or English language skills.

While Title II is still meant to be open for a broad population beyond those seeking employment services, the program does have performance outcomes, so New Jersey will move away from open-entry, open-ended Adult Education and Literacy services. Additionally, New Jersey will work toward improving curricula and making program curricula more consistent across the State and is exploring developing standardized curricula, or providing curricula guidelines to promote common standards and best models of content across all Adult Education classes.

The performance goals of WIOA are a functional level increase (one or two grade levels) in reading and math scores based on a pre-test and post- or in-program administration of the Test of Adult Basic Education. New Jersey's goal is to achieve this goal for 60% of participants.

A.2. Integration of Title II into Title I Occupational Skills Training

GOAL: Within five years, New Jersey's Adult Education system will be firmly connected with WIOA Title II providers, including the community college system, to move people seamlessly from English as a Second Language and/or basic literacy skills training through to a postsecondary credential, including integrated basic skills alongside workforce career exploration and planning, and a transition to skills training and credentials.

LWD is in the process of providing planning grants to local workforce development areas for consolidation of literacy funds with workforce development and a more seamless transition from basic skills training to occupational training. The solicitation for providers of both Title I and Title II programs will include clear expectations for how to integrate these services, including Bridge Program models as well as more comprehensive blending of the curricula.

Basic Skills curricula will be contextualized. Based on New Jersey's seven target industries and the Talent Network initiative, New Jersey will work toward making each student's basic skills curriculum content specialized to the industry sector and occupational target they have identified in their IEP.

New Jersey will also build more blended classrooms where the adult education teacher and the teacher of occupational skills curriculum deliver training in the same classroom, concurrently, offering their respective services in a collaborative integrated manner. This effort will both save time – when customers are working toward both goals concurrently and in a coordinated manner – and build stronger outcomes – when individuals have consistent positive feedback of content across the two parts of their curricula and purpose and contextualization of basic skills in subject matter of great interest and relevance to them.

A.3. Co-Location of Title II and Title I Services

New Jersey is in the process of re-structuring how Title II is delivered across the State. Currently, grants are made to entities in each county of the state for delivery of these services. In the future, as part of aligning Title II into the same system as WIOA Title I, grants will be made to entities within Local Workforce Development Areas for the delivery of these services and State staff within the LWD Workforce Development Division will participate in the delivery of these services. Having the same boundaries, both regional and by local area will support improved program integration between Title I and Title II. Additionally, some funding should be distributed based on proposals from the three Regions that now make up the New Jersey WIOA regional designations. These regional Consortia will be able to build programs and projects together for delivery of Adult Education and Literacy as well as for integrating those services within the One-Stop system.

In coming years, Title II services should, as much as possible, become co-located with WIOA Title I services at the One-Stop Career Centers or other delivery sites. With a trend toward One-Stop

Career Centers locating on-site at community colleges, and strengthening of these relationships as part of the Talent Network and Career Pathway efforts, the further integration by co-locating Adult Education and Literacy with Title I at community colleges and other educational partners based on participant needs, helps further strengthen this important collaborative work.

The current formula for allocating Title II funding to local areas is based primarily on the local high school dropout rate in the local area's public school system(s). New Jersey will work to include the same workforce development focused WIOA Title I formula elements as well as a measure of the overall foot traffic and utilization of the One-Stops in the formula for Title II funding.

B. Coordination and Co-enrollment with WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act Services

Wagner-Peyser Act services are fully and seamlessly integrated within the One-Stop Career Center system. Wagner-Peyser staff are staff of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development as are WIOA Title I staff, work within the same Division and are sited at each One-Stop Career Center alongside WIOA Title I staff. The State provides universal and comprehensive access and customer service through the foundational support provided by WIOA Title I and Wagner-Peyser funds, such that all One-Stop Resource Rooms as well as infrastructure at the One-Stops, Counselor staff, Business Services Representatives and other functions are supported jointly by WIOA Title I funds and Wagner-Peyser funds.

Each One-Stop Career Center has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between required and optional partners, which outlines partners' responsibilities. Since a significant portion of WIOA and Wagner-Peyser staff at each site are staff of LWD, and work in the same division, the breakdown of duties can be closely coordinated by LWD and One-Stop leadership. Customers with significant barriers to employment may be served by Wagner-Peyser and WIOA-funded staff dedicated to assisting with the needs of special populations such as customers with disabilities, veterans, older workers, and public assistance and other low income individuals. Sharing of information, skill levels and employee development plans assists in providing comprehensive services. The Talent Network initiative is at the heart of all coordination and Wagner-Peyser program is fully embedded alongside WIOA Title I in delivering services through New Jersey's Talent Networks. As outlined in subsection *(4) Assessment of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners*, below, effective July 1, 2016, all WIOA Title I and WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser) participants will be co-enrolled in both programs; this is reflective of the new One-Stop service integration and will be reflected in the performance outcomes of both programs.

As shown on the One-Stop Operations FUTURE STATE flowchart, Employment Services (ES) and UI Claims/Problems are core components of the customer flow within the One-Stop system. Dislocated Workers receive and manage their Unemployment Insurance benefits through the online system. They can also meet with staff as needed at any One-Stop Career Center. Wagner-Peyser provides dislocated workers and other jobseekers with labor exchange services virtually and at the bricks and mortar One-Stop Career Centers. This service is currently offered through the Jobs4Jersey.com website and this function is being transitioned to the new Career Connections web portal.

The WIOA and Wagner-Peyser programs use the common data system, America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS) and will continue to use a common system if a new case management system is developed in New Jersey.

C. Coordination and Co-enrollment with WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

New Jersey utilizes an option to deliver Vocational Rehabilitation services through two distinct programs. The majority of services are delivered through Vocational Rehabilitation staff at the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, for any individuals with disabilities. A portion of funds is segmented and delivered to the separate Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired within the New Jersey Department of Human Services with a focus on serving individuals who are blind, vision-impaired or deaf-blind. These services and how they will coordinate with the wider WIOA services will be discussed in the following two subsections.

C.1. Programs within Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Vocational Rehabilitation services in New Jersey are intended to serve the thousands of New Jersey residents with disabilities. In the New Jersey school system, there are more than 200,000 students with Individualized Education Programs based on providing specially designed instruction in relation to their identified disabilities. This is a huge number. Several hundred more may have a 504 plan for accommodations within the general classroom.

Transition services by state statute start at age 14, and 15% of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) federal funding is earmarked to serve students with disabilities with pre-employment transition services. The DVRS within the Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the CBVI within the Department of Human Services are developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Office of Special Education Programs in the New Jersey Department of Education in order to make sure that all students with disabilities in transition have the opportunity to receive pre-employment transition services as per WIOA statute.

DVRS is the primary agency responsible for delivering high-quality services to consumers with disabilities other than those who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind. Consistent with the requirements of WIOA, DVRS is committed through its array of programming to helping its consumers secure integrated, competitive employment. In pursuit of this general objective, DVRS administers services ranging from counseling and guidance, vocational assessment and training, supported employment, to specific supports based on individual vocational rehabilitation need.

DVRS subscribes to the Employment First principles adopted by Governor Christie, and the agency believes that these principles should be accomplished in the context of long-term career pathway development.

DVRS is committed to working with all WIOA partners, and currently 16 of the 18 Vocational Rehabilitation offices throughout the State of New Jersey are co-located at One-Stop Career Centers. They collaborate on a range of activities, and the goals and recommendations within this

section outline the main priorities for collaboration and integration of these services within the WIOA system.

DVRS has information on its website, developed in conjunction with the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired that is standard and reciprocal across the two programs, and that information also provides common language and references to services and programs delivered by LWD that the populations served by the two organizations can access.

Goals to Further Align Vocational Rehabilitation with WIOA Title I One-Stop System:

1. Goal 1: By September 30, 2017, the number of individuals with DD, including ASD applying for DVRS services will increase by 50%. Strategic objectives to meet this goal include the following:
    a. Provide education and communication – All identified stakeholders will know about the DVRS Employment First (EF) initiative by the end of year one. Surveys will be used to determine initial training needs for DVRS staff members and CRPs.
    b. Collaborate with interagency partners – Identify key state partners and research how other states are collaborating on EF initiatives. Design the process, roles and responsibilities for partners.
    c. Improve DVRS access for individuals with significant disabilities – Develop a plan for obtaining valid statistics of how many individuals with DD are served by the DVRS. Create a plan to prioritize students with DD to be linked to DVRS two years prior to exiting the school.
    d. Develop innovative and expanded services that offer increased employment opportunities – Verify successful Innovation and Expansion grantees for possible expansion. Determine possible sites for a Project SEARCH Pilot.
    e. Engage employers – Take advantage of the new 503 regulations. Engage LWD talent networks. Find options for work trials through internships. Replicate the Schedule A targeted hiring events throughout the state.

    ** UPDATE: DVRS has successfully engaged with Project SEARCH and will support up to four sites by September 2016.*

2. Goal 2: By September 30, 2017, there will be an increase in the number of Deaf/HH consumers seeking DVRS services and communication access and services for Deaf/HH will be consistent, reliable, and result in employment. Strategic objectives to meet this goal include the following:
    a. Provide education and communication – Identify stakeholders from the Deaf/HH community. Encourage participation from the Deaf/HH with the SRC. Develop marketing materials in ASL.
    b. Collaborate with interagency and community partners – Identify key state partners needed to support the DVRS D/HH goals. Design the process, roles and responsibilities for partners. Determine the skills needed for ASL SE staff. Identify interpreter vs. SE needs for D/HH consumers.
    c. Improve access to DVRS for D/HH consumers – Install videophones in every office. Develop a plan for obtaining valid statistics of the number of D/HH served by DVRS. Create a plan to allow D/HH transition students to be referred to the regional Deaf

Centers two years prior to exiting school. Use the model state plan for the Deaf consistently throughout New Jersey.

d. Develop innovative and expanded services that offer increased employment opportunities – Expand services of the regional Deaf Centers. Assess DVRS projects to consider how they could serve D/HH consumers. Determine required training for counselors working with D/HH.
e. Engage employers – Take advantage of the new 503 regulations. Engage the LWD talent networks.

** UPDATE: Regional DLS are assigned to every local office to provide ASL to DVRS consumers. Training has been identified for counselors working with HH consumers.*

3. Goal 3: By September 30, 2015, the DVRS will provide training and technical assistance to counselors on SE and SE services, as follows:
    a. Provide training to staff related to the definition of SE and SE services to include appropriate identification of SE goals on the IPE, coding of SE services on the IPE and the case closure page in the case management system;
    b. Analyze the decline in the number of individuals who have SE goals on their IPEs and achieve SE to determine the reasons underlying the decline in these respective performance measures and develop strategies to address the reasons identified; and
    c. Review and analyze the case management settings utilized to identify SE goals and SE services on an IPE and the case closure page and develop a systematic process to ensure accurate coding and reporting.

    ** UPDATE: Goal 3 has been completed*

4. Goal 4: By September 30, 2016, the DVRS will implement quality assurance (QA) processes and conduct the following:
    a. Training on existing and revised policies and procedures for all staff involved in their implementation;
    b. Review of service records by staff not functioning as VR counselor supervisors;
    c. Develop fiscal controls and evaluation methods to ensure that providers are not billing DVRS through multiple contracts;
    d. Review and refine instrumentation for conducting service record reviews;
    e. Conduct surveys of transition-age youths who exit the VR program after eligibility is determined, but before their IPEs are developed, to determine the reasons why these individuals are withdrawing from the program; and
    f. Develop mechanisms to collect and aggregate the results of the preview process and provide results to the training function to inform the design and evaluation of training.

5. Goal 5: By September 30, 2015, the DVRS will partner with two additional NJ Talent Networks to identify strategies that will increase access for individuals with disabilities in the targeted industry sectors, increase wage levels for individuals served, and expand relationships with employers throughout the state.

    ** UPDATE: Goal 5 has been completed*

6. Goal 6: By September 30, 2016, DVRS will hold public forums to report on specific topics related to its service delivery and integration with the WIOA system, such as how DVRS is performing at the Employment First goal, and how services are succeeding with the deaf and hard of hearing population.

State Rehabilitation Council Recommendations
Specific SRC recommendations for the Plan are provided in Section VI. Program Specific Requirements for Core Programs in the section on the Vocational Rehabilitation, item (a) Input of State Rehabilitation Council.

C.2. Programs operated by the Department of Human Services, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
New Jersey has utilized the option in Federal law allowing Vocational Rehabilitation services for the blind and vision-impaired to be delivered by a separate entity from that serving other individuals with disabilities. New Jersey believes that a distinct agency for the blind and vision impaired can provide higher quality and more customized services, in particular training services, to address the unique needs of this population, and can yield better employment outcomes.

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI or Commission) is the primary agency responsible for delivering high-quality services to consumers who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind. Consistent with the requirements of WIOA, CBVI is committed through its array of programming to helping its consumers secure integrated, competitive employment. In pursuit of this general objective, CBVI administers both a comprehensive, residential training program and programs that focus on blindness-specific pre-employment training, including development of communications skills, orientation and mobility, nonvisual independent living techniques, and adjustment to blindness training.

CBVI subscribes to the Employment First principles adopted by Governor Christie, and the agency believes that these principles should be accomplished in the context of long-term career development.

CBVI is committed to working with all WIOA partners, including One-Stop Career Centers, to provide technical assistance that will help guarantee that general employment focused services are provided in accessible forms to consumers who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind.

Services are integrated with wider DVRS services and the entire One-Stop system through a number of mechanisms. Currently, CBVI's programs are not generally co-located with One-Stop Career Centers or other Vocational Rehabilitation services. As noted, the majority of services are by itinerant staff who deliver services directly to blind and visually impaired New Jersey residents in their homes or other community locations most suitable for delivery of those services. New Jersey confident that successful coordination and collaboration can occur through referral and partnership.

CBVI has information on its website, developed in conjunction with DVRS that is standard and reciprocal across the two programs, and that information also provides common language and references to services and programs delivered by LWD that the populations served by the two organizations can access.

CBVI-Specific Initiatives are outlined in detail in Section VI. Program Specific Requirements for Core Programs in the section on the Vocational Rehabilitation, item (c) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System.

State Rehabilitation Council Recommendations
Specific SRC recommendations for the Plan related to the activities of the CBVI are provided in Section VI. Program Specific Requirements for Core Programs in the section on the Vocational Rehabilitation, item (a) Input of State Rehabilitation Council.

D. Coordination and Co-enrollment with the WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) program (TANF Employment and Training and SNAP Employment and Training programs)
The Department of Human Services' Division of Family Development (DHS/DFD) is the agency responsible for overseeing the WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) TANF and GA and SNAP benefit programs. WFNJ and SNAP cash assistance and social services are administered at the local level by the 21 county agencies, under DFD supervision, and through various contracts with vendors for certain services. LWD is responsible for WFNJ and SNAP employment-directed and workforce development activities as outlined below. Employment-directed and workforce development activities are administered at the local One-Stop Career Centers under LWD supervision. By integrating the WFNJ and SNAP population into the One-Stop Career Center system, opportunities for self-sufficiency, employment retention and career advancement are maximized.

A **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** is in place between the Department of Human Services and Department of Labor and Workforce Development guiding the close collaboration between the two entities in the delivery of WFNJ and SNAP services. The Memorandum of Understanding includes agreement upon numerous aspects of this coordination including: a Service Plan for WFNJ and SNAP Employment & Training services; State Plan relevant language; Financial Arrangements; Eligibility Determinations; Local Planning Processes; Monitoring and Enforcement; Data Collection, Verification and Reporting Requirements; Notices and Hearings; Regulations; Information Technology and Miscellaneous elements.

D.1.Policies and Procedures
1) Pursuant to the Executive Reorganization Act of 1969, P.L. 1969, c.203 (c.52:14C-1 et seq.), this plan consolidated responsibility in LWD for significant elements of the WFNJ Program, employment-directed and workforce development activities, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program work-related activities previously administered by DHS, Division of Family Development (DFD) for the period beginning July 1, 2004 and thereafter.
2) To the extent not inconsistent with State and Federal statutory authority, all workforce programs and activities funded in whole or part, directly or indirectly, through the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, as amended; the WorkFirst

New Jersey Program, P.L. 1997c c.13, c.14, c.37, c.38, as amended; the Federal Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, here in after the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); and the General Public Assistance Law, P.L. 1947, c. 156, as amended, shall be administered by LWD pursuant to Sections I through X of this Memorandum of Understanding.

3) To the extent not inconsistent with State and Federal statutory authority, LWD is responsible for all employment and job readiness activities in the WFNJ, Child Support and SNAP programs.
4) The areas of employment and job readiness activities, which LWD shall be responsible for are as follows:
    a. Career guidance;
    b. Labor market information;
    c. Employability assessment;
    d. Employability plan development;
    e. Employment-directed case management;
    f. Subsidized employment in the private and public sectors;
    g. Unsubsidized employment in the private and public sectors;
    h. On-the-job training (OJT);
    i. Community Work Experience Program (CWEP);
    j. Community service programs;
    k. Job search and job readiness assistance
    l. Vocational education training
    m. Employment-related education and job skills training;
    n. Basic skills/literacy;
    o. Work-related educational enhancements;
    p. A proportionate share of employment and training related expenses;
    q. Referral and access to work support services (e.g., transportation and childcare);
    r. Early Employment Initiative;
    s. Career Advancement Voucher; and
    t. Supplemental Workforce Development Benefits Program (Smart STEPS)
5) Nothing in the Memorandum of Understanding shall alter the role of DHS as to the single state agency for administration of the Title IV-A (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), Title IV-D (Child Support) and the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program.
6) All functions, powers, duties of DHS not transferred to LWD in this Memorandum of Understanding shall remain with DHS.
7) DHS recognizes LWD shall be the state entity responsible for the administration, design, implementation, and where appropriate, operate any or all Workforce programs, activities, and initiatives.

D.2. Funding

From the funds appropriated from the TANF block grant, the Federal SNAP program and from the General State Fund, a proportionate share of both program and all related administrative dollars necessary to manage these programs, and to carry out the responsibilities of LWD as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding, will be appropriated to LWD at the beginning of each fiscal year that this Memorandum of Understanding is in effect. The amount appropriated shall be

equal to the amount expended for the preceding year adjusted for any caseload changes or changes in the State or Federal funding appropriated for the current year.

General State funds will be utilized before any other nonfederal source and the General State Fund will be the payer of last resort for State funds. Payment under the Memorandum of Understanding is subject to the availability of Federal and State funds. If during the term of this Memorandum of Understanding, the Federal and/or State government reduces their funding, DHS has the right to proportionately reduce Memorandum of Understanding funding. A final expenditure report is due to DFD by September 30 of each year.

D.3. Process and Customer Flow

New Jersey provides workforce services to TANF recipients who are mandatory work participants, the employable State General Assistance recipients, and SNAP recipients who are required to participate in work activities as a condition of continued eligibility for benefits. It is the goal of DHS and LWD that as many of these individuals as possible be given access to employment and training services delivered through the One-Stop Career Centers and move toward employment and self-sufficiency.

Coordination and collaboration in delivery of WFNJ and SNAP alongside the WIOA program begins at the individual's first visit to a One-Stop Career Center. A determination is made at intake as part of the Assessment process to determine the existing employment and training credentials of the WFNJ/SNAP work registrant and necessary services to insure that they work registrant is able to obtain sustainable employment. Client information in the DHS TANF/SNAP recipient database is downloaded/matched daily with the AOSOS system in order to automatically identify the welfare status of individuals who have been determined eligible for TANF, GA and/or SNAP benefits and are mandatory work registrants, in order that LWD can identify individuals to whom outreach for employment and training services must be made. Throughout the service process, coordination continues through DHS' read-only access to the individual's AOSOS case file, such that DHS can know the customer's status with their planned workforce related activities in order to ensure their participation rate and continuation of TANF/SNAP benefits. Read -only access to AOSOS is provided to all County Boards of Social Services and the Division of Family Development (DFD) staff who request access for specifically identified staff.

WFNJ customers are served by counselors who local government staff, in a service model closely parallel to the WIOA Title I service menu and processes. These counselors are co-located and managed alongside the WIOA counselors. A Client Flow is developed in each local workforce area, with a format through which these clients flow into and within the wider WIOA system. The State has given recommendations of how this process should work, and each One-Stop Operator operates it in their own way under those guidelines.

WFNJ and SNAP work registrants normally receive funded employment and training services through WFNJ allocated dollars though there is some co-enrollment, in particular when a

customer may access training funds or unique training programs that are delivered by the WIOA system.

New Jersey is exploring developing a policy to guide delivery of training services within WFNJ and building a system parallel to the WIOA Individual Training Account system through which WFNJ funds can be placed into a pool to be used for training for WFNJ customers. Because New Jersey is already at the forefront of delivery of a true statewide and multi-program Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), and programs beyond WIOA utilize the list as a proven source of information about quality training programs and providers, this parallel ITA system can build on the technical and administrative functions, as well as the menu of approved training providers, in place through the ETPL. Further details on the ETPL are provided in a separate subsection of Section VI of this Plan.

D.4. Smart Steps

LWD provides TANF grant and support services reimbursement to the Division of Family Development for WorkFirst NJ TANF recipients who have been approved by the One-Stop system to pursue a college level program leading to an AAA/AAS or BA/BS degree. The grant and support services reimbursement is through NJ Workforce Development Program funds and stops the five (5) year TANF eligibility clock while the TANF participant is pursuing their college level degree.

This innovative collaboration is another example of New Jersey's close collaboration among programs and deep commitment to blending funding to the greatest extent possible within existing law and regulations in order to best serve New Jersey residents.

E. Coordination and Co-enrollment with Trade Adjustment Act

New Jersey previously adopted a policy of 100 percent co-enrollment for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), which has been functioning since 2006. New Jersey uses Wagner-Peyser resources for re-employment services to deliver comprehensive services to all Trade-affected dislocated workers. Trade Act participants are currently co-enrolled in both the former WIA Dislocated Worker and Trade Act programs, making for a seamless transition to the WIOA requirement of coordination and integration with core and partner programs. To assist with coordination and integration of TAA, a new Trade Act coordinator and four new staff members were hired. These state staff work with local One-Stop Career Center staff to insure efficient coordination between TAA and core and partner programs. Additionally, TAA Field Representatives are located within One-Stop Career Centers. The State will utilize these staff to continually provide assistance and training to local One-Stop Career Center staff to ensure that efficient coordination and integration is occurring and that data is properly captured in the AOSOS system. TAA is within the WIOA dislocated worker category in AOSOS, so individuals are WIOA-registered; thus they receive assistance from the TAA program rather than usual WIOA Dislocated Worker program services. One-Stop counselors can offer IEP development, literacy testing, and other assessments of skills gaps. They assist them to identify skills and competencies, overcome barriers, and skills required to find new employment. By being co-located in the One-stop environment, New Jersey TAA participants can easily learn about resources such as TANF, DVR and other supportive services offered in the community if needed.

There are currently seven total TAA field representatives in the State. These seven representatives rotate between One-Stops to meet and service clients. Even though TAA staff is located in the One-Stop Career Centers, they do not pay into One-Stop operations funds. Space is granted to TAA staff to allow for maximum TAA funding to be allocated toward training purposes. Currently 10% of TAA funding is for staffing costs, with the remaining 90% allocated for client training. This commitment to training funding has proven successful. Currently in the State, 53% of TAA clients were employed within three months of receiving services. Of the 53% that entered employment, 94.9% were employed for a period of six months or longer.

The process for a dislocated worker receiving One-Stop services begins with a group orientation with TAA staff where staff will discuss options available for the dislocated workers and will collect applications. Next, staff will mail out an entitlement letter to each client. Once clients receive the letter they will set up and appointment with their TAA field representative in their local One-Stop Career Center. Since some TAA clients may have lower level skills or may require ESL training, they will use the Learning Link tool before being referring into any WIOA programs. Learning Link is a digital tool at the One-Stop to help clients get sent to the proper training level based on their individual needs.

At the time of the Trade Act orientation, customers are informed on the Jersey Job Clubs, Talent Networks, use of resource center computers, and provided with labor market information.

Clients will then work with field representative or their WIOA counselor to develop a workforce plan which will help dictate which training they are to receive. Training providers for TAA clients are paid via a Purchase Service Contract (PSC), which is similar to an ITA but is paid regardless of the success of the training, whereas an ITA is only paid upon successful completion of the training service. Staff will also inform clients of apprenticeship opportunities. Since TAA staff are located within the One-Stops, they can ensure that all TAA clients receive appropriate information concerning workplace opportunities such as apprenticeships.

The State will further ensure collaboration and alignment of TAA services with WIOA core and partner programs is through development of Talent Networks, which serve as the State's high-quality sector partnership model. Additionally, the state's Rapid Response Team will help ensure individuals available for TAA services are directed to One-Stop Career Centers.

F. Supportive Services Provision and Coordination

In keeping with WIOA, New Jersey is committed to offering appropriate support services jobseekers need to succeed in the labor market. New Jersey encourages LWDBs to develop partnerships to provide a variety of services through partnerships with local public agencies, private not-for-profits and other entities, and supports them in securing these partnerships. The State requires LWDBs to develop local policies and procedures for the use of WIOA funds for supportive services if they intend to utilize WIOA funds for that purpose. Under these local policies, One-Stop Career Centers may use funds to a reasonable level for services of this kind. Local policies may vary but in general support service expenditures may include such things as

childcare, transportation, work clothing or uniforms, equipment or tools for training or work, testing or credentialing fees subsequent to training, and a range of other services needed to address barriers individuals face to succeeding in WIOA programs, training and/or employment.

Homeless Individuals

The 2015 Point in Time Count of the homeless population in New Jersey revealed that approximately 10,211 individuals in 7,411 households were experiencing homelessness on the nights of the count. The top reasons reported that caused homelessness were the loss of a job and the inability to find work, and in light of this reality, New Jersey's workforce system is committed to strengthening the employment needs of homeless populations. As part of this effort, the Homelessness Working Group (an initiative of the Interagency Council on Homelessness), comprised of senior leadership from the New Jersey Departments of Human Services, Labor and Workforce Development, Community Affairs, and several other state and local entities have been tasked with identifying ways to better address the needs of the homelessness and those at risk of becoming homeless.

In light of these efforts, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) plans to host a statewide planning meeting on strengthening workforce services for homeless populations in the summer of 2016. The planning meeting will provide an opportunity for state agencies, homeless-serving organizations, and employment services agencies to convene, highlight best program and community workforce services practices, and identify gaps that exist in delivery of workforce services to homeless individuals.

It is our intent that the planning meeting will equip local areas with strategies to identify key action steps for providing and improving access to quality jobs in the context of employment, training, and career pathways.

(D) Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers. Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

The Business Relations staff at each One-Stop may include state LWD staff funded through WIOA Title I, staff of the local One-Stop Operator, staff funded through Wagner-Peyser 10% funding, Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVERs) and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Placement Specialists (DVOPs), Rapid Response staff and Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) funded staff. All work in coordination under the guidance of the WDB Director and One-Stop Operator management, and share efforts across their site, as well as participating across the industry specialization mentioned above.

With the expected deployment of the Salesforce client relationship management (CRM) platform in 2016, New Jersey will better coordinate the business services work within each region. All partners will have access to the system and can enter and view contact notes, status updates, job orders and other interactions with each business customer. For "job orders" the system will better serve employers by dedicating a lead staffer to review jobseeker resumes coming from

throughout the system and deliver the qualified candidates to the business. The system is demand-driven, working closely with the employer to understand their specific needs and identifying pre-screened candidates that will be a good match for the positions.

New Jersey will continue to focus on work with employers that will give its workers good opportunities for self-sufficiency sustaining employment.

A. Coordination of Business Services with Vocational Rehabilitation

The business services unit from DVRS serves as a liaison with the other business representatives within the One-Stop system. DVRS staff and WIOA Title I business representatives share information on targeted hiring events, business contacts, job fairs, and other interactions. The main activities where staff work collaboratively are in staffing and supporting hiring events by employers within the State's targeted industries. DVRS staff will work in parallel with WIOA Title I staff in identifying potential qualified candidates in response to these hiring events and will present those candidates to the lead business representative coordinating hiring with the employer.

Additionally, DVRS staff work with businesses to identify a firm or worksite's need for modifications to physical, organizational or other aspects of their business in order to be more welcoming and accessible for individuals with disabilities, both as employees and as customers. DVRS staff can support other business representatives in helping companies develop better accessibility plans and make reasonable accommodations when hiring individuals with disabilities.

All Vocational Rehabilitation business services staff will have full access to the Salesforce platform, which will be the client relationship management system for the entire WIOA and One-Stop system statewide. This will allow smooth communication on specific businesses and WIOA Title I business representatives will be able to easily task the DVRS staff to respond to a business need or other specific activity like a modification assessment or other work.

B. Coordination of Business Services with Adult Education

The Adult Education staff do not provide direct services to businesses but collaborate as needed on business services with the other partners in the One-Stop Career Center system.

A business can apply directly to the Title II system operator seeking support in providing English as a Second Language training for their employees. However, in most cases these services are readily available at nearby community colleges or other Adult Education and Literacy ESL programs, so firms can simply refer their employees to existing classes and work with the Adult Education staff to help enroll them, provide transportation support or other logistics to that access.

C. Coordination of Business Services with Veterans Programs

NJ is at forefront in the nation in using its Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) funding to work with businesses. New Jersey's Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) and Disabled Veteran Opportunity Program contacts (DVOPs) have developed national best practices in making

outreach to businesses, developing priority hiring partnerships with New Jersey companies, and placing veterans into employment.

Many New Jersey firms and national employers with New Jersey locations are seeking qualified and dependable veterans, and many have stepped up to hire significant numbers of veterans and build coordinated hiring initiatives with Veterans and One-Stop programs. This systematic approach by large companies is something New Jersey's WIOA and partner staff have been highly successful in building. When building one of these relationships, LWD dedicate a lead business representative (usually one of the LVERs) to be the company's main point of contact to respond to their needs statewide, and to manage the local relationships between various company worksites and One-Stops such that the same level of services is offered across the state. The JVSG system is in the process of demonstrating and mentoring other Business Representatives in this model, since this kind of centralized contact and statewide coordination is a central part of the "sector team" approach being developed under New Jersey's Talent Network initiative.

The LVERs now work within the same LWD division as other business representatives and are fully integrated within the wider Business Services division. They are deeply embedded with the other Business Services staff at New Jersey's One-Stop Career Centers. Because there are fewer LVERs and DVOP staff statewide, there is not representation at every One-Stop Career Center. However, they are mobile and strategically sited across New Jersey's workforce regions, and can provide customized services to companies out of any of the One-Stop locations across New Jersey.

D. Coordination of Business Services with Trade Adjustment Act

The Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) program does not have its own job developers but utilizes the Business Representatives of the WIOA One-Stop system to provide placement support for TAA program participants. New Jersey continues to build expertise about the TAA program and unique factors related to TAA recipient/participants among all Business Representatives in order to provide the highest quality of placement services for them.

(E) Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions. Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's community colleges and area career and technical education schools, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job- driven education and training system. WIOA section 102(b)(2)(B)(iv).

New Jersey is committed to blending industry, literacy development and experiential learning solutions to fill the talent needs of New Jersey employers. Career Pathways provides a strategic framework to establish a series of education and training experiences that result in industry-valued credentials. The model is industry focused, has diverse entry and exit points and includes integration of adult basic skills, digital literacy, employability skills and work-based learning. New Jersey ensures that Education and Training investments are directly aligned with industry by requiring a minimum workforce training investments result in an industry-valued credential or degree.

As outlined elsewhere in this Plan, *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development* promotes extensive coordination of education and training in conjunction with the WIOA system. New

Jersey is transforming its focus to industry driven, high quality partnerships as the pre-requisite criteria for determining workforce education and training collaborations and investments. These partnerships are embedded in industry intelligence and expanded through the re-engineering of current projects, results focused project management and staff development. Key goals of New Jersey's Talent Development Strategy include: aligning resources with partners including education providers through planning and service coordination; developing community alliances and employment networks linking One-Stop Career Centers, trainers and education institutions, community partners, and jobseekers; a career pathways approach which engages industry, literacy, and experiential learning solutions to fill talent needs; and results-driven partnerships focused on high quality, employer-centered collaborations.

The new policies on Industry-Valued Credentials, Individual Training Accounts and the Eligible Training Provider List continue to bring the education and training providers in close coordination with WIOA planning with regard to the focus of training efforts toward high-growth, high-demand occupations that pay good wages.

Within the State's regional clusters, New Jersey Talent Networks proactively seek partnerships with employers, educational institutions, workforce development, community and faith-based organizations to ensure the state's workforce needs are upheld and help to drive economic growth. Using labor market data in combination with intelligence gathered from these high-quality partnerships, Talent Networks target the natural labor market regions of each industry and develop regionally specific plans to equip workers with the skills employers want and that offer industry-led career pathways.

(F) Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers. Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's other education and training providers, including providers on the state's eligible training provider list, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

New Jersey requires that all of WIOA funded training programs incorporate information on Career Pathways for key industries, as developed within the Career Pathways State Policy Framework, for participants and partners. This includes education and training providers on the Eligible Training Provider List which currently includes more than 732 eligible/certified trainers with more than 7,600 distinct programs. As noted elsewhere in this plan and required under WIOIA, Registered Apprenticeship programs are automatically approved on the ETPL and remain valuable strategies for New Jersey.

Further, New Jersey's new policy being developed to increase the maximum amount available through Individual Training Account (ITA) vouchers will allow for more engagement with other education and training providers.

(G) Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access. Describe how the State's strategies will enable the State to leverage other Federal, State, and local investments that have enhanced access to workforce development programs at the above institutions, described in section (E).

As noted in prior sections, the One-Stop system is deeply integrated with the State-funded WorkFirst New Jersey program. These two programs are able to leverage extensive effort of the State LWD staff of both programs, and in particular the coordination and cooperation among Business Services staff of the two programs who operate in close collaboration in order to ensure increased access to education and training services.

(H) Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials. Describe how the State's strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

New Jersey is committed to improving access to postsecondary credentials for New Jersey residents who participate in WIOA programs.

Talent Networks:

As outlined in *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development*, New Jersey will use the High Quality Partnership framework as the pre-requisite criteria for determining workforce education and training collaborations and investments. The State will build and expand on high quality industry partnerships by refocusing and re-aligning key partners and staff; re-engineering the Talent Networks to be focused on high quality partnership development and to link and leverage existing programs to the High Quality Partnership Framework.

This will result in a strong focus on preparing workers to meet the demands of industry by acquiring industry-valued credentials and a commitment to building career pathways that include portable and stackable credentials.

ETPL and Industry-Valued Credentials List:

As described elsewhere in this plan, LWD is in the process of developing an Industry-Valued Credential List to guide training investments across federal and state workforce programs. Once developed, the Industry-Valued Credential List will be cross-walked with the ETPL to understand the eligible providers in the state that offer Industry-Valued Credentials. Within the ETPL, training programs that result in a credential found on the Industry-Valued Credentials list will be indicated so users can easily access the information. This effort is currently underway and a draft Industry-Valued Credentials list was released for public comment in March 2016. The final list for 2016-2017 will be released in May 2016 and will go into effect on July 1, 2016.

Registered Apprenticeship & Pre-Apprenticeship

Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs and initiatives, as already outlined, remain valuable strategies for New Jersey. The RA model, by design, incorporates both the theory and experiential learning components that business and industry often requests, and simultaneously create career pathways for participants. The RA model leads to a nationally-recognized industry credential that is both portable and stackable.

The SETC continues to staff and support the New Jersey Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education (NJPLACE) initiative. The NJPLACE initiative focuses on awarding college credits to

registered apprenticeship programs, and other industry-recognized credentials and certificates to authenticate the post-secondary education, learning and knowledge attained through these training experiences. This initiative is yet another example of a High Quality Partnerships that engage higher education, business and industry, organized labor, national credentialing entities, and government to assist individuals who participate in these types of training programs and services. The SETC will explore avenues to expand the existing NJPLACE initiative into new industries and occupations.

The LWD, through its partnerships, has created models of pre-apprenticeship programs and services that have proven to be effective, yielding positive outcomes. These models require curricula that incorporates occupational specific skills training, basic skills, contextualized learning, and employability skills, at a minimum. They are required to be administered utilizing High Quality Partnerships, depending on the program, consisting of employers, secondary and or post-secondary educational institutions, organized labor, community and faith-based entities, etc. Many of these programs are required to raise the educational attainment of participants by one grade level of for every 100 hours of instruction, as measured by the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Payments under many of the pre-apprenticeship programs are structured through verifiable performance goals and/or milestones. In addition, some of these pre-apprenticeship programs result in industry recognized certificates or certifications upon successful completion and/or full acceptance into the formal registered apprenticeship program.

In an effort to continue to expand and market Registered Apprenticeship as a post-secondary option for students, the SETC has been facilitating dialogues to expand partnerships between government agencies involving SETC, LWD, United States Department of Labor – Employment and Training Administration (USDOL-ETA) and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). This effort focuses on the development of a data sharing agreement that will allow USDOL to verify NJ high school graduates that engage in post-secondary education through a registered apprenticeship program. The verification will be done by the USDOL-ETA Office of Apprenticeship through a crosswalk of NJDOE data on high school graduates, 16 months after graduation, utilizing the USDOL-ETA RAPIDS database. While the details remain under review, New Jersey is hopeful that a data sharing agreement will be reached to capture the utilization of the Registered Apprenticeship model of post-secondary education and high school graduates.

The SETC Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education will continue to support efforts to identify occupational training that award credentials as part of their efforts to advocate for equitable gender, labor practices and pay in educational programs and workforce training.

(I) Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies. Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be coordinated with economic development entities, strategies, and activities in the State.

New Jersey will use the Talent Networks to further regional coordination, create meaningful employer partnerships, and better understand the current and future talent needs of the state's strategic industries. Talent Networks will engage employers, convene and coordinate state and local economic development agencies, training providers, Workforce Development Boards, and

other system stakeholders in order to create a unified approach to workforce and economic development. The Office of Business Services has dedicated a special statewide initiatives coordinator to serve as the liaison with the Lt. Governor's Business Action Center and local economic development agencies. Successful coordination of economic development funds, tax credits, and training grants has facilitated economic development opportunities in several depressed urban areas with high concentrations of unemployed and underemployed workers including Camden, Atlantic City, Jersey City, and Asbury Park.

(b) State Operating Systems and Policies

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the State operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the State strategy described in section II Strategic Elements. This includes—

(1) The State operating systems that will support the implementation of the State's strategies. This must include a description of–

(A) State operating systems that support coordinated implementation of State strategies (e.g., labor market information systems, data systems, communication systems, case-management systems, job banks, etc.).

(B) Data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers.

A. State Operating Systems

In order to achieve its mission of increasing the number of residents with an industry-valued credential or degree through high quality partnerships and integrated investments, the New Jersey workforce system must have operating systems and infrastructure that support service integration, accountability, and transparency for all stakeholders. New Jersey's current and planning operating systems that will support this mission include the following:

State Operating Systems to Support Coordinated Implementation

Career Connections
AOSOS
Jobs4Jersey and OnRamp
Salesforce

Career Connections

Career Connections is a new digital platform under development by LWD that will provide the primarily tool for Public Labor Exchange as well as career guidance information and job search strategies. It will be a uniform platform for all partners to use with their clients for standardizing assessment, career guidance, career planning, selection of training, and job-search assistance, and to easily connect with the programs and services available through the talent development networks. All core partners and other program partners will be able to add content to the site through a content approval process. This multi-functional platform will be supported by more than 900 staff statewide who will participate in a unified career navigator training curriculum as described elsewhere in this Plan.

America's One-Stop Operating System

America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS) is at the core of New Jersey's common data system used to support its workforce development system business needs for all programs exclusive of DVRS (discussed separately, below). Developed under a federal, multi-state and local areas partnership, AOSOS has the flexibility to meet the operational, tracking and reporting goals of WIOA's vision for the consolidation and coordination of multiple employment and training programs' services. New Jersey is in the process of developing business requirements for a system that would ultimately replace AOSOS.

The mission-critical AOSOS, and any subsequent or renewed system, supports a number of federal and state workforce development programs including: Workforce Investment Act (WIOA) Title I; Wagner-Peyser Public Labor Exchange; Veterans Labor Exchange Programs (LVER and DVOP); Trade Adjustment Act (TAA); NJ's Workforce Development Partnership Program (WDP); and, WorkFirst New Jersey (TANF, Food Stamps, and General Assistance). AOSOS includes data-sharing interfaces with Unemployment Insurance, Department of Human Services systems and an interactive voice response system (IVR) that allows staff to generate automated telephone calls to One-Stop customers for a variety of business purposes.

Jobs4Jersey.com and OnRamp

In 2011, New Jersey launched Jobs4Jersey.com and OnRamp, a web-based "front door" to AOSOS that allows jobseekers and employers to find each other using a set of state-of-the-art job and talent matching tools. The online OnRamp tools assist jobseekers in creating resumes and performing effective job searches by matching their skills to employer job listings. Employers use the same skills-based matching tools to match their job listings against a database of jobseeker resumes. Jobs4Jersey.com functions are being rolled into a new iteration of the Career Connections platform in 2016.

Salesforce

New Jersey recognized the need for a more streamlined approach to information sharing and service tracking among the partners that are conducting outreach to and providing services to business and industry. LWD and its partners have recently adopted Salesforce as a tool to support the Business Services Unit. Launching in spring 2016, the Salesforce application will be available to business services representatives/liaisons from the following programs: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I; Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act; Jobs for Veterans State Grants; Trade Adjustment Act (TAA); NJ's Workforce Development Partnership Program (WDP); WorkFirst New Jersey (TANF, Food Stamps, and General Assistance); Senior Community Services Employment Program; and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

B. Data Collection and Reporting

Data Collection and Reporting Processes

AOSOS
LACES (Literacy, Adult and Community Education System)
AWARE Vocational Rehabilitation Case Management System

New Jersey Consumer Report Card
New Jersey Longitudinal Data System
Wage Record Interchange System 2

America's One-Stop Operating System

As noted above, AOSOS supports a number of federal and state workforce development programs including: Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I; Wagner-Peyser Public Labor Exchange; Veterans Labor Exchange Programs (LVER and DVOP); Trade Adjustment Act (TAA); NJ's Workforce Development Partnership Program (WDP); and, WorkFirst New Jersey (TANF, Food Stamps, and General Assistance). AOSOS includes data-sharing interfaces with Unemployment Insurance, Department of Human Services systems and an interactive voice response system (IVR) that allows staff to generate automated telephone calls to One-Stop customers for a variety of business purposes.

LACES

The primary tool that will be utilized by the LWD Literacy Program to evaluate local programs on an annual basis is LACES (Literacy, Adult and Community Education System), New Jersey's management information system for adult education. LACES is a statewide, comprehensive, web-based system, which maintains student information including student demographics, assessments, goals, and performance outcomes. The system allows data to be tracked by individual student, class, instructor, and program. In addition, LACES provides a wide range of information, including snapshots of student and program performance, and personnel qualifications. On an annual and ongoing basis, LWD staff reviews each provider's enrollment as well as performance, which is evaluated according to NRS indicators through LACES.

AWARE Vocational Rehabilitation Case Management System:

DVRS upgraded its case management system to a fully functional AWARE system from Alliance Enterprises during FFY 2014. This was DVRS's first full year working in the upgraded AWARE system. AWARE made it possible for DVRS to streamline information, easier to generate and compile data and reports required by RSA in a timely manner and for internal management reviews.

AWARE provides all required reporting elements from the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). These reports include:

- Quarterly VR 113 – Cumulative Caseload Report
- Annual VR 911 – Case Services Report
- Annual VR-2 – VR Program/Cost Report

In order to encourage continuous monitoring and improvement, all the way through to the front line staff, every counselor has access to their caseload; managers have access to their local office information, and field chiefs / upper management can look at the state as a whole. As with other programs in LWD, a dashboard approach is used to track the employment outcomes monthly, at minimum.

New Jersey Consumer Report Card

Training providers on the Eligible Training Provider List have their participant outcomes (employment rate, retention rate, average earnings) calculated, and posted on the New Jersey Consumer Report Card website, www.NJTopps.org. Quarterly provider reports are also disseminated to One-Stop Career Center staff to assist them in helping customers select appropriate training providers. In addition, separate reports are generated for each of New Jersey's 17 WDBs that detail the employment outcomes that their customers realized after completing the training programs to which their WDB referred them. These localized results assist the WDBs in setting performance benchmarks that training providers must meet in order to receive customers with Individual Training Account (ITA) vouchers, and they allow One-Stop staff to gauge the performance of the training providers in their area so they can better assist their customers in making career and training decisions.

Longitudinal Data System

New Jersey was awarded a grant under the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) to expand LWD's partial workforce longitudinal data system into a complete system encompassing data from education (P-12), the workforce system and postsecondary education. This system will further encourage the integration of activities by providing more robust outcome measures and improved evaluations.

The State of New Jersey also received federal funding to expand the current data system NJSMART to track students from preschool through higher education institutions and into the workforce. This successful Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) Grant funds both Education and Higher Education. The project leverages the cooperation of several state agencies and better integration of collected data to create a P-20W data resource. This data resource will be used to identify key variables that impact a student's ability to succeed in college and complete a college degree; an integral part of being prepared for the emerging job market. The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) has a statutory obligation to collect, analyze and evaluate data on New Jersey institutions of higher education. OSHE collects data from 30 state colleges and universities and 9 independent institutions into the Student Unit Record Enrollment (SURE) system to track student demographics and academic progress.

In order to create and sustain a more robust state longitudinal data system, OSHE will expand its data collection and integrate with the data collection systems of the New Jersey Department of Education and LWD. Creating this unified data warehouse and linking data at a student/individual level will help the agencies more easily and efficiently share data, create aggregate level dashboards and consumer reports, and fulfill federal reporting requirements for each of the agencies. These reports will help inform the agencies of emerging community needs and influence the implementation of public policy. Funding will be used to expand the State's current data system from K-12 into one that tracks students from pre-k through workforce entry. This expansion will provide valuable information to better help measure the effectiveness of programs and to drive improvement efforts.

Wage Record Interchange System 2

Additionally, New Jersey is a member of the Wage Record Interchange System 2 (WRIS2), which allows for the evaluation of long-term employment and earnings outcomes of CTE participants at both the secondary and postsecondary level. WRIS2 also allows for the evaluation of CTE programs in providing the knowledge and skills needed to obtain employment and achieve a family-sustaining wage in the workforce.

In addition to each of these data collection and reporting tools, New Jersey implements standard monthly dashboard reviews for the approximately 50 grants, programs and projects in the Workforce Development unit within LWD. This ensures accountability for outcomes, compliance, and fund spending. It also serves as an early-warning management tools in order to make mid-stream corrections. This is especially advantageous because it encourages data review that is more frequent than the standard quarterly reporting of the common measures.

(2) The State policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategies (e.g., co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes where appropriate). In addition, describe the State's process for developing guidelines for State-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to a one-stop delivery system, including benchmarks, and its guidance to assist local boards, chief elected officials, and local one-stop partners in determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure in accordance with sec. 121(h)(1)(B). Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, the State must also include such guidelines.

New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development (described in Section II, Strategic Planning Elements, State Strategy, above) is the key State policy guidance that supports the strategies New Jersey is implementing.

Alongside the Blueprint, New Jersey is putting in place a number of new policies that will support implementation of the strategies outlined in Section II of this Plan. These include:

- Policy on **Co-enrollment between WIOA Title I and Title III.** As outlined in subsection *(4) Assessment of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners*, below, effective July 1, 2016, all WIOA Title I and WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser) participants will be co-enrolled in both programs; this is reflective of the new One-Stop service integration and will be reflected in the performance outcomes of both programs. This will significantly enhance the coordination between these two programs and avoid duplication and redundancy across the programs and services.
- Policy on **Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I, Title II and WorkFirst New Jersey** that will support the State's goals including (for some or all programs) measures on:
    - Number of program participants served by the program
    - Number of program participants exited from the program
    - Percentage of program participants served with certain barriers to employment such as disability, ex-offender status, lack of high school diploma, and homeless status.
    - Percentage of program participants responding to survey who are satisfied with their training/counseling after exiting from the program

  - Local Areas' success in meeting Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification requirements
  - Number of High Quality Partnerships established
  - Success in regional coordination.
- The development of the seven statewide **Talent Networks** including a number of key statewide activities such as:
  - Development of Industry Intelligence to Inform Workforce Investments: Each Talent Network work closely with LWD's Labor Market Analysts to inform the understanding of key industry workforce trends and of the workforce needs of employers. The Talent Networks will engage employers and industry associations to provide input into the development of the list of industry-valued credentials and degrees. The Talent Networks will host Industry Summits to inform key workforce stakeholders of key employer needs. The Talent Networks will also partner with LWD Labor Market Analysts to produce an Annual Workforce Report for their industry that combines quantitative data and feedback from employers.
  - Development of High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships: Each Talent Network will work intensively with employers, local Workforce Development Boards, educational institutions and other stakeholders to develop Targeted Industry Partnerships in three geographic areas of the state. Collectively, the Talent Networks will develop 20 such partnerships. For each partnership, the Talent Network will engage employers and identify industry workforce needs, assemble workforce and education stakeholders to assess capacity and facilitate the development of a workforce plan for the industry for the specific area. LWD will work with each Talent Network to identify possible funding sources for implementation of promising programs.
  - Assist in Rapid Response Efforts: Each Talent Network will contribute to Rapid Response efforts in their specific industry, using their knowledge of industry need to help inform services and assistance to impacted workers.
- Policy on **Industry-Valued Credentials** and development of an Industry-Valued Credential List that will guide and support WIOA training that is in-demand, portable, stackable and leads to higher wages, career advancement and increased job security. The Industry-Valued Credential List will be cross-walked with the ETPL so users can easily access the information in making training decisions.
- Policy on the **Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)** with increased expectations for training provider eligibility and performance and an improved Consumer Report Card.
- **Local Workforce Development Board Certification policy** that increases expectations on local boards on performance, governance, regional coordination and other elements of high-functioning WDBs leading strong local WIOA systems. Additional related policies strengthening local systems are being put in place regarding **LWDB Budgeting**, **One-Stop Roles and Responsibilities** and **One-Stop Certification**, each with renewed expectations for effectiveness, efficiency, collaboration (both across programs and regionally) and high performance.
- **Regional Planning policy** providing expectations for regional Memoranda of Understanding to guide regional collaboration.

- The **Adult Literacy Library Partnership Pilot Program** that will deliver Adult Education and Literacy services sponsored and supported by the LWD Adult Education system at public library locations throughout New Jersey.

Several Memoranda of Understanding between State agencies also provide key policy guidance that supports New Jersey in fully realizing the goals set out in this Plan and the Blueprint. These include:

- MOU Between New Jersey Department of Human Services and Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) guiding the WorkFirst New Jersey program and its coordination with the WIOA system.
- MOU between the LWD Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired guiding the division of labor, coordination and collaboration between these two entities for delivery of Vocational Rehabilitation services.
- MOU between LWD and the Department of Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities.
- MOU between LWD, the Juvenile Justice Commission and State Parole Board on coordination of services for juvenile ex-offenders/re-entering individuals.
- MOU between the SETC Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education and Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, School of Management and Labor Relations – Center for Women and Work to provide a gender and pay equity lens on industry data and occupations, and explore ways to strengthen career pathways, and credentials within industries.

The SETC and LWD are working with the local workforce development boards, local elected officials and One-Stop partners on an infrastructure funding policy. The finalized policy will provide guidance for determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure in accordance with sec. 121(h)(1)(B).

(3) State Program and State Board Overview.

(A) State Agency Organization. Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.

New Jersey's Combined State Plan is led by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) and the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), which is the State Workforce Development Board and is described further in Section III(b)(3)(B) of this plan. While not directly included in this plan, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Department of Education (DOE), Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE), and the Department of Human Services (DHS) have key roles in the workforce system in New Jersey. The Commissioners of each Department, and the Secretary of Higher Education, are appointed by and responsible to the Governor. The SETC acts as a hub that enables workforce system collaboration; the membership of the SETC includes the Commissioners of these Departments and the Secretary of Higher Education. The Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA) is a member of the SETC. LWD and the SETC work jointly with the Lt. Governor's Office and the

New Jersey Business Action Center in the Department of State to further align New Jersey' s workforce system with the economic direction and business and industry needs of the State.

By state law, since 2004, the majority of workforce-related programs (including Title II Literacy funding and "to work" services under TANF) have been consolidated in the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD). These programs include all employment-directed and workforce development activities of the WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) program and General Assistance and Food Stamp Act and the Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs authorized by Title II of the Workforce Investment Act. This consolidation occurred in recognition of the need to reduce system fragmentation, leverage workforce resources, reduce duplication and simplify services for customers.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) is responsible for the following WIOA core and partner programs:

- WIOA Title I, Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth
- WIOA Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy (Adult Education and Family Literacy Programs)
- Wagner-Peyser Act (Employment Service)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (Trade Act Programs)
- Programs authorized under part B of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Programs authorized under Chapters 41 and 42 of Title 38, U.S.C., and 20 CFR 1001 and 1005 (Veterans Programs, including Veterans Employment, Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, and Local Veterans' Employment Representative Program
- Programs authorized under state unemployment compensation laws (Unemployment Insurance)
- Programs authorized under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) administered by Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families)
- Programs authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (Senior Community Service Employment Program)

In addition, LWD and New Jersey's local network of workforce development boards and One-Stop Career Centers partner closely with programs operated by the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA). These include:

Department of Education (DOE)

- Secondary Vocational Education programs (Perkins IV/Secondary)
- Postsecondary Vocational Education programs (Perkins IV/ Postsecondary)

Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

- Training activities funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Public Housing Programs

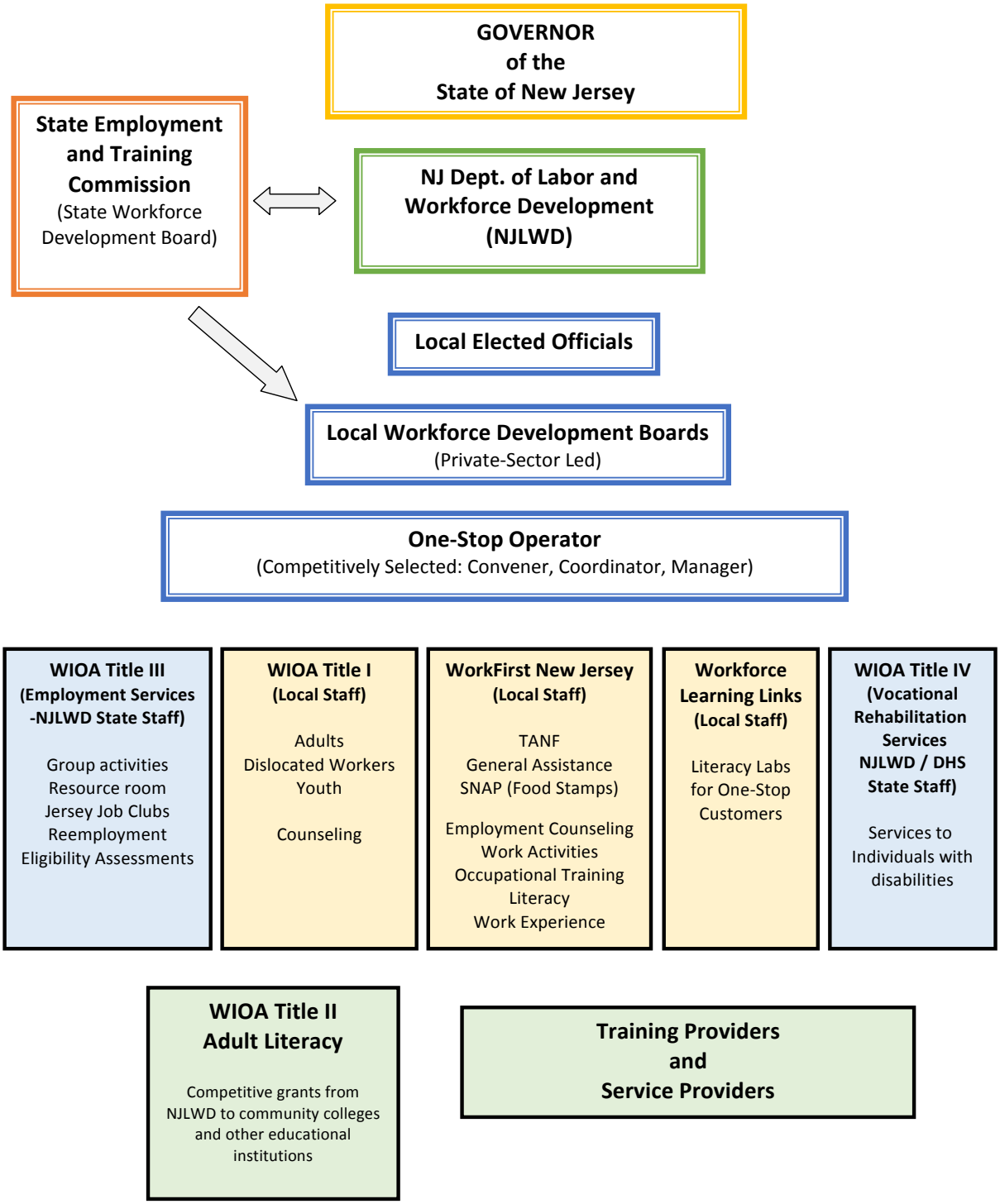


Figure 31

The One-Stop Career Center network and its community partners are New Jersey's front-line for workforce development services and activities. At the local level, there are 18 local workforce

development areas overseen by 17 local workforce development boards. These Boards manage a network of 29 One-Stop Career Centers.

Workforce Development Area	One-Stop Career Center Location
Atlantic – Cape May Counties	Pleasantville, NJ
	Wildwood, NJ
Bergen County	Hackensack, NJ
Burlington County	Westampton, NJ
Camden County	Camden, NJ
Cumberland – Salem Counties	Vineland, NJ
	Salem, NJ
Essex County	East Orange, NJ
Gloucester County	Thorofare, NJ
Hudson County	Union City, NJ
Jersey City	Jersey City, NJ
Mercer County	Trenton, NJ
Middlesex County	New Brunswick, NJ
	Perth Amboy, NJ
Monmouth County	Eatontown, NJ
	Neptune, NJ
Morris – Sussex – Warren Counties	Randolph, NJ
	Morristown, NJ
	Newton, NJ
	Phillipsburg, NJ
City of Newark	Newark, NJ
Ocean County	Toms River, NJ (2)
Passaic County	Patterson, NJ
	Passaic, NJ
Greater Raritan (Somerset – Hunterdon Counties)	Flemington, NJ
	Somerville, NJ
Union County	Elizabeth, NJ
	Plainfield, NJ

Figure 32

(B) State Board. Provide a description of the State Board, including---

(i) Membership Roster. Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

The State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) is established as the State Workforce Development Board in New Jersey. The SETC was created by P.L. 1989, Chapter 243. It is incorporated into state statute under *NJSA 34:15*. The SETC meets the requirements of an alternative entity under WIOA Section 101(e)(1) as it:

- was in existence on the day before the date of enactment of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998;
- is substantially similar to the State board described in subsections (a) through (c); and

- includes representatives of business in the State and representatives of labor organizations in the State.

While the SETC meets these technical criteria, the Commission plans over the next two years to ensure its membership more directly reflects the membership requirements of the State Workforce Development Board and, in particular, will work toward establishing a 51% business and industry majority membership. This shift will require changes to the New Jersey state statute and the State will work toward this the two years following submission of this plan.

Membership

The membership distributions of the SETC are as follows: 30 percent representation from business and industry sectors; 30 percent representation from the State Legislature, state agencies, general local government and local education agencies, including one member of the Senate appointed directly by the Governor, 1 member of the Assembly appointed directly by the Governor, and the Commissioners of Labor and Workforce Development, Community Affairs, Education, and Human Services, the Secretary of Higher Education, and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority; 30 percent representation from organized labor and community-based organizations; and 10 percent representation from the general public.

The Governor appoints the Chairman of the SETC and two legislative members. Public members are appointed by the Governor and are confirmed by the Senate. The membership includes representatives from business, organized labor and community-based organizations, state and local education and governmental agencies, and private citizens. Members of the Governor's Cabinet also serve on the SETC: the Commissioners of the Department of Community Affairs, Department of Children and Families, Department of Education, Department of Human Services, and Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and the Secretary of Higher Education. All members serve without compensation. The diverse, bipartisan membership of the SETC insures that all concerned parties can fully participate in developing an effective workforce system for New Jersey.

The current SETC membership roster, as of April 1, 2016, is included in Figure 33 below.

State Employment and Training Commission Membership

Business and Industry	*Current Term*
Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* Director, Feliciano Center for Entrepreneurship at the School of Business, Montclair State University	2014-2017
Michael J. Carey Warren, New Jersey	2014-2017
Nicholas P. Gacos President, Colorado Café Associates	2013-2016
Andrea B. Karsian CEO, Wholesale Auto Supply Company, Inc.	2013-2016

Jody Levinson Hillsborough, NJ	2013-2016
Sally J. Nadler, SPHR University Relations Manager, PSE&G	2014-2017
JoAnn Trezza VP of Human Resources, Arrow Shed, LLC	2015-2018
Melanie L. Willoughby Senior Vice President, Government Affairs, NJ Business & Industry Association	2015-2018
Robert P. Wise, President & CEO, Hunterdon Healthcare System	2015-2018
Organized Labor/Community-Based Organization	***Current Term***
Dana W. Berry Executive Director, Starting Points for Children	2013-2016
Stephen C. Hornik, Sr. President Emeritus, Monmouth-Ocean AFL-CIO	2015-2018
Joseph A. McNamara Director, NJ Laborers'-Employers' Cooperation and Education Trust	2014-2017
Harvey J. Nutter Executive Director, Greater Paterson Opportunities Industrialization Center	2013-2016
Clifford R. Reisser Training Director, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 269	2014-2017
Julio Sabater President/CEO, Urban Workforce Advantage	2015-2018
Carolyn Carter Wade, President, Communication Workers of America, Local 1040	2013-2016
Charles Wowkanech, President, NJ State AFL-CIO	2014-2017
Government Representatives	***Current Term***
Allison M. Blake, Ph.D., LSW Commissioner, NJ Department of Children and Families	2014-2017
Kevin M. Brown Executive Director, Juvenile Justice Commission	2014-2017
Elizabeth Connolly Acting Commissioner, NJ Department of Human Services	Ex-Officio
John G. Donnadio, Esq. Executive Director, NJ Association of Counties	2013-2016
Anthony Ferrera Township Administrator, Hillsborough Township	2013-2016

Rochelle Hendricks Secretary of Higher Education	Ex-Officio
David C. Hespe Commissioner, NJ Department of Education	Ex-Officio
Melissa Orsen CEO, NJ Economic Development Authority	Ex-Officio
Ronald L. Rice Senator, New Jersey Senate	2016-2017
Charles A. Richman Acting Commissioner, NJ Department of Community Affairs	Ex-Officio
Harold J. Wirths Commissioner, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development	Ex-Officio
Public Representatives	***Current Term***
Teri Duda Senior Vice President, Government Affairs, Berkeley College	2014-2017
Tapas K. Sen, Ph.D. President, Transformation Strategies International, Inc.	2013-2016

Figure 33

(ii) Board Activities. Provide a description of the activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively.

The vision of the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) is that New Jersey's Workforce System is an innovative and dynamic talent development engine that fuels the state's 21st Century ambition for success in a global economy.

SETC's mission is to improve the skills of New Jersey's workforce by creating a coherent, integrated system of employment and training programs and services which, in concert with the efforts of the private sector, will provide each citizen of the State with equal access to the learning opportunities needed to attain and maintain high levels of productivity and earning power.

The SETC partners with business, employees and jobseekers, organized labor, and state and county agencies to set policy, develop plans and evaluate the performance of the workforce system to improve the workforce for the economic viability of New Jersey.

The SETC identifies and analyzes critical issues relating to workforce readiness and provides policy guidance to the Governor and to state professionals in the fields of employment, training and education; supports innovative programs that advance collaboration among governmental agencies; and, reports to the Governor on the progress that has been made and the issues that must be addressed in the area of employment, training and education.

Under New Jersey law, the SETC performs the duties required of the State Workforce Development Board. As described in *N.J.S.A. 34:15C-5,* "the purpose of the commission shall be

to develop and assist in the implementation of a State workforce investment policy with the goal of creating a coherent, integrated system of workforce investment programs and services which, in concert with the efforts of the private sector, will provide each citizen of the State with equal access to the learning opportunities needed to attain and maintain high levels of productivity and earning power. The principal emphasis of the workforce investment policy shall be developing a strategy to fill significant gaps in New Jersey's workforce investment efforts, with special attention to finding ways to mobilize and channel public and private resources to individuals who would otherwise be denied access to the training and education they need to make their fullest contribution to the economic well-being of the State. To the extent practicable, the strategy shall emphasize types of training and education which foster the communication and critical thinking skills in workers and jobseekers which will be of greatest benefit for long term career advancement."

The duties of the SETC are outlined in *N.J.S.A. 34:15C-6,* as follows:

1) Issue the New Jersey Workforce Investment Plan pursuant to the provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2801* et seq.) and section 10 of P.L.1989, c.293 (*C.34:15C-7*); [This duty is in keeping with WIOA Section 101(d)(1), "the development, implementation and modification of the State Plan."]
2) Establish performance standards for workforce investment programs pursuant to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2801* et seq.) and section 11 of P.L.1989, c.293 (*C.34:15C-8*); [This duty is in keeping with WIOA Section 101(d)(4), "(4) the development and updating of comprehensive State performance accountability measures, including State adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the State as required under section 116(b)."]
3) Act to ensure the full participation of Workforce Investment Boards [and now Workforce Development Boards] in the planning and supervision of local workforce investment systems. The commission shall be responsible to oversee and develop appropriate standards to ensure Workforce Investment Board compliance with state and federal law, the State Plan, and other relevant requirements regarding membership, staffing, meetings, and functions;
4) Foster and coordinate initiatives of the Department of Education and Higher Education to enhance the contributions of public schools and institutions of higher education to the implementation of the state workforce investment policy;
5) Examine federal and state laws and regulations to assess whether those laws and regulations present barriers to achieving any of the goals of this act. The commission shall, from time to time as it deems appropriate, issue to the Governor and the Legislature reports on its findings, including recommendations for changes in state or federal laws or regulations concerning workforce investment programs or services, including, when appropriate, recommendations to merge other State advisory structures and functions into the commission;
6) Perform the duties assigned to a State Workforce Investment Board pursuant to subsection (d) of section 111 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2821) [and now Section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Public Law 113–128]*;

7) Have the authority to enter into agreements with the head of each state department or commission which administers or funds education, employment or training programs, including, but not limited to, the Departments of Labor and Workforce Development, Community Affairs, Education, and Human Services and Higher Education, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, and the Juvenile Justice Commission, which agreements are for the purpose of assigning planning, policy guidance and oversight functions to each Workforce Investment Board with respect to any workforce investment program funded or administered by the state department or commission within the Workforce Investment Board's respective labor market area or local area, as the case may be; and
8) Establish guidelines to be used by the Workforce Investment Boards in performing the planning, policy guidance, and oversight functions assigned to the boards under any agreement reached by the commission with a department or commission pursuant to subsection g. of this section. The commission shall approve all local Workforce Investment Board plans that meet the criteria established by the commission for the establishment of One-Stop systems. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development shall approve the operational portion of the plans for programs administered by the department.

The SETC is also responsible for administering two additional councils, established by state statute, both of which were added to their purview after the Commission was established. The first is the State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) and the second is the Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education (GPC).

(4) Assessment and Evaluation of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners.
(A) Assessment of Core Programs. Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.
(B) Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs. Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner program included in the plan will be assessed each year. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

Assessment of Core Programs and One-Stop Partner Programs

In *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development*, one of the goals identified for the state workforce development system is more data-driven decision making. New Jersey will make performance data on workforce development programs accessible to workforce decision-makers and the public. In order to assess the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs, New Jersey will utilize the performance measurement system outlined in section 116 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as well as additional metrics that have been adopted by the SETC for federal and state workforce programs.

A. Primary Indicators of Performance

New Jersey will assess its core programs at the state, regional and local levels based on the primary indicators of performance outlined in section 116 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act including:

1. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
2. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program
3. The median earning of programs participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
4. The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized industry credential or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program
5. The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and
6. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

Local targets have historically been set based on the same federal regression model as used at the state level. New local targets will be set after the state targets have been approved by USDOL.

B. Primary Indicators For Eligible Youth

The primary indicators of performance for the youth program authorized under chapter 2 of subtitle B shall consist of:

1. the percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program;
2. the percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program; and
3. the primary indicators of performance described in subclauses (III) through (VI) of subparagraph (A)(i).

C. Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I, WIOA Title II and WorkFirst New Jersey

Explanation: Co-Enrollment of WIOA Title I and Title III (Wagner-Peyser) Participants

It is New Jersey's intent that, effective July 1, 2016, all WIOA Title I and WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser) participants will be co-enrolled in both programs; this is reflective of the new One-Stop service integration and will be reflected in the performance outcomes of both programs.

Explanation: Performance Measures for the WorkFirst New Jersey Program

It is also New Jersey's intention to apply the WIOA Title I Primary Indicators to the WFNJ program; this will be included in subsequent SNAP and WorkFirst Employment and Training Plans beginning July 1, 2016.

Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I, WIOA Title II and WorkFirst New Jersey

7. Number of program participants served by the program
8. Number of program participants exited from the program
9. Percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment as follows:
    a. Disability
    b. Ex-offender
    c. No high school diploma
    d. Previously or currently in foster care
    e. Homeless
    f. Limited English Proficiency or Low Level Literacy
    g. Long-Term Unemployed (continuously unemployed for at least 12 consecutive months)
    h. Public Assistance customer
10. Percentage of program participants responding to survey who are satisfied with their training/counseling after exiting from the program

Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I ONLY

4. Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification
   The State will evaluate the WDB's local area achievement based on its ability to meet all WDB certification requirements.
5. Number of High Quality Partnerships established:
   High Quality Partnerships are those workforce and education efforts that are employer-driven and have developed a clearly defined mission and vision statement, with defined roles, responsibilities and impact measures for all partners. These partnerships will drive programs and investments with current industry and workforce data, and will focus on collaborative curriculum development based on industry need. All programs will integrate the use of career pathways, and provide both interim process measures as well as outcome measures, which will be particularly focused on industry-valued credentials, employability skills, and experiential learning. It is additionally expected that programs will develop plans for sustainability beyond the life of any one funding stream. High Quality Partnerships are characterized by some or all of these factors:
    a. **Employer Driven Partnerships:** Partnerships shall include private sector employers, and may include but are not limited to: educational institutions; nonprofit organizations or industry associations; and local or state government agencies.
    b. **Clear Roles and Responsibilities:** The program shall have clearly delineated roles and responsibilities for all partner participants, including a clear coordinator, convener, or backbone organization. Participants should have a shared vision and mission around a challenge area, and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions, such as may be found in a strategic plan.
    c. **Employer Valued Degree or Credential:** The education and/or training provided by the program leads to skills, degrees, or credentials that create advanced opportunities for students or jobseekers in high-demand fields or identifiable

career pathways. Programs should use existing career pathways models, or develop new pathways models.

d. **Data Informed Strategies:** The program shall integrate quantitative and qualitative labor market or institutional data in identifying industry sector demand. This data will be shared broadly among all partner participants. The program will endeavor to provide education and/or training in a skills or credentials in-demand category as identified by the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Credential Review Board.
e. **Collaborative Curriculum:** Curriculum shall be demand based, and developed in collaboration with partnership participants. The program includes at least one of the following: career awareness and readiness; mentorship; internship, apprenticeship, or other experiential learning; and/or employability skills training.
f. **Program Effectiveness:** Program provides for measurable evaluation of the partnership, which could include such tangibles as evaluation of improved skills, employment for students or jobseekers, program growth, or increased funding. Additionally, the program shall lead to an industry-valued degree, credential, or employment for students or jobseekers. The program measures and evaluates job placement effort made by, or in collaboration with, a Partner Organization responsible for connecting students or jobseekers to employment opportunities.
g. **Sustainable Plans:** The program shall have a plan for continued funding of initiative, which may include single-source or a variety of funding streams, including braided funding strategies. This should include a plan for continuing staffing and resource allocation sufficient to continue or expand the effort.

6. Regional Coordination

Three workforce planning regions are designated in New Jersey: North, Central, and South. The State will evaluate if each region has effectively administered their activities under WIOA which requires that each region engage in a planning process that results in:

a. the preparation of a regional plan;
b. the establishment of regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery agreements;
c. the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region;
d. the collection and analysis of regional labor market data (in conjunction with the State);
e. the establishment of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate, for the region;
f. the coordination of transportation and other supportive services, as appropriate, for the region;
g. the coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers; and
h. the establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures for local areas or the planning region.

The SETC's Performance Committee advises the SETC on performance standards for the workforce system. Local WDBs are required to have a One-Stop Committee to monitor performance of the workforce system in the local area and achievement of negotiated performance goals. In the performance review process, the SETC and local WDBs will use dashboards to monitor performance and make strategic mid-course corrections for the system.

(C) Previous Assessment Results. Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, provide the results of an assessment of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner program included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

New Jersey met or exceeded all WIA Program Year 2013 and 2014 common measures performance standards negotiated with the U.S. Department of Labor. Since the inception of the Workforce Investment Act, New Jersey has consistently demonstrated its commitment to provide outstanding workforce services to the individuals and employers of the State.

New Jersey became a common measures reporting state beginning in Program Year 2009. Under the common measures waiver approved by the USDOL | ETA on November 12, 2009 and renewed on December 13, 2012 for PY 2012 through PY 2017 as part of New Jersey's Unified State Plan, the State will no longer negotiate and report on the following performance measures under WIA Section 136 (b): WIA adult and dislocated worker credential rates; participant and employer customer satisfaction; older youth measures; and younger youth measures (outcomes for these measures will continue to be collected for informational purposes).

The State will use the three adult and dislocated worker common performance measures to negotiate goals and report outcomes for the WIA adult and dislocated worker programs. The State will use the three youth common performance measures to negotiate goals and report outcomes for the WIA youth program. The following tables display the State's common measures goals and the actual outcomes for Program Years 2013 and 2014.

Program Year 2014

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Adult Program				
Entered Employment	85.10%	83.60%	98.20%	Met
Retention	86.40%	84.30%	97.60%	Met
6 Month Avg. Earnings	$13,039	$14,281	109.50%	Exceeded
Dislocated Worker Program				
Entered Employment	83.30%	84.30%	101.20%	Exceeded

Retention	87.50%	87.40%	99.90%	Met
6 Month Avg. Earnings	$18,500	$18,983	102.60%	Exceeded
Youth Program				
Youth Placement	68.50%	65.90%	96.20%	Met
Youth Degree Attainment	75.00%	68.90%	91.90%	Met
Literacy & Numeracy	60.00%	61.20%	102.00%	Exceeded

Figure 34

Program Year 2013

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Adult Program				
Entered Employment	84.6%	82.9%	98.0%	Met
Retention	86.4%	84.9%	98.3%	Met
6 Month Avg. Earnings	$12,856	$13,031	101.4%	Exceeded
Dislocated Worker Program				
Entered Employment	83.3%	82.7%	99.3%	Met
Retention	87.5%	86.6%	99.0%	Met
6 Month Avg. Earnings	$18,365	$18,234	99.3%	Met
Youth Program				
Youth Placement	66.8%	66.5%	99.6%	Met
Youth Degree Attainment	75.0%	73.5%	98.0%	Met
Literacy & Numeracy	56.2%	64.3%	114.4%	Exceeded

Figure 35

(D) Evaluation. Describe how the state will conduct evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs; how such projects will be coordinated with, and designed in conjunction with, State and local boards and with State agencies responsible for the administration of all respective core programs; and, further, how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA.

New Jersey will conduct regular evaluations of core WIOA programs as guided by the State Employment and Training Commission's Performance Committee and in concert with LWD's Workforce Research and Analytics unit with the Office of Research and Information. These evaluations will be conducted by outside third-party evaluators selected on a competitive basis. The evaluations will use a variety of methodologies, including quantitative and qualitative techniques, including customer satisfaction, and will be designed to provide actionable results to inform program and policy decisions. The evaluations will incorporate data from the state's Workforce Data Quality initiative and will utilize a variety of data sources. Representatives of local boards serve on the SETC's Performance Committee. The Performance Committee will be charged with developing a research and evaluation agenda, with input from local boards, state agency partners and other stakeholders.

(5) Distribution of Funds for Core Programs. Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

USDOL requests states to provide a description of how core program funds will be distributed to local workforce development areas. In accordance with WIOA Sections 128 and 133, New Jersey will allocate Title I funds by the formulas outlined in Sections 128 (for Youth funding) and Section 133 (for Adult and Dislocated Worker funding), utilizing the Discretionary Allocation formula as outlined in those Sections.

New Jersey distributes the entire available amount of the local allocation for the WIA Adult and Youth programs to the local areas. Following the formulas in the WIOA Act and detailed in subsections below, New Jersey utilizes five percent of the funds for state administration. The remaining amount is distributed by formula to the local areas. New Jersey does not use the 30% discretionary formula for these programs.

The hold harmless provisions prescribed by the WIOA Act will be used. Funding will be allocated such that no eligible agency (local workforce development area, for these purposes) shall receive an allotment that is less than 90 percent of the allotment (share of the distributable funding under Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker categories) the eligible agency received for the preceding fiscal year and will not exceed 130% of the percentage share from the preceding fiscal year. The use of this formula prevents any major shift of funding year-to-year to the local areas.

As the State Plan focuses more on targeted sectors and Talent Networks, it will expand both the participation of businesses and employees, maximizing whenever possible their particular resources. Acknowledging that businesses and employees can be partners and not merely consumers is a shift in vision that should benefit all partners in the service delivery system.

State Workforce Development Program (WDP) funds and partnerships with the Talent Networks will be leveraged to train jobseekers in a manner that ensures readily available employment opportunities by greater use of On-the-Job Training (OJT) instead of traditional Individual Training Accounts (ITA). OJT requires employers' selection and employment of those jobseekers approved for such training, thus providing employers a workforce with the exact skills and training desired. Both jobseekers and employers positively participate in New Jersey's talent development system exchange through the use of OJT. This is a more effective strategy to align ITA with economic or labor market needs.

The State will also engage in employer-focused training developed in partnership with the Talent Networks to address specific industry demand. Through broader partnerships with community colleges and other accredited training providers, these customized training programs are steadily becoming feeder programs to skilled trades' employment in New Jersey. Closer ties with the New Jersey Business and Industry Association recently led to the development of a training program for fabricated metal manufacturing employers. Unlike the traditional ITA-based training where participants enter a labor demand occupational training program in the hopes of finding a job

upon completion, the model used with the fabricated metal manufacturing training brought together employers, education, and the State's talent development system in an innovative program that offers a promise of employment to participants who successfully complete the training program.

Employers participating in this training model prescreened and approved participants and helped develop the training content with a local community college. New Jersey plans to expand on the successful model by partnering with the Talent Networks for similarly designed training programs in other key industries. To better facilitate this leveraging of resources and partnerships, the Demand Occupations List will be reduced to more accurately align the talent development system with specific economic and labor market needs.

Further, Title I funds will be leveraged through the local WDBs to facilitate the consolidation of One-Stop Career Center staff performing the business outreach function under central leadership. LWD Business Services Representatives, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/General Assistance (GA) On-the-Job Training Contract Writers, and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) will work in a coordinated fashion that avoids duplication of effort and that benefits employers and jobseekers by more effectively and efficiently addressing the needs of both for the ultimate matching of appropriate jobseeker skills with existing employment opportunities.

(A) For Title I programs, provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—
(i) Youth activities in accordance with WIOA section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3),

In accordance with WIOA Section 128(b)(3), New Jersey will use the Youth Discretionary Allocation, using the following formula hereby approved by SETC to allocate Youth activities.[xxvi]

- 40% based on the relative number of disadvantaged youth in each local area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state;
- 25% based on relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each local area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state;
- 25% based on relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each local area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state;
- 10% based on excess poverty in urban, rural, and suburban local areas.

Disadvantaged youth is defined as an individual age 16 through 21 who received an income, or is a member of a family that received a total family income that, in relation to family size, does not exceed the higher of - the poverty line, or 70 percent of the Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL).

Excess unemployment is defined as the greater of either 1) the total number of unemployed individuals in the Local Area minus 4.5% of the total Local Area labor force, or 2) is equal to zero.

Substantial unemployment is defined as any Local Area where the unemployment rate is above 6.5% for the most recent 12 months.

(ii) Adult employment and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3),

In accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3), New Jersey will use the following formula to allocate Adult employment and training activities to local areas.[xxvii]

- 25% based on the relative number of disadvantaged adults in each local area as compared to the total number of adults in the state;
- 25% based on the relative excess number of unemployed individuals in the local area as compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state;
- 25% based on the relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the local area as compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state;
- 25% based on high school diploma attainment.

(iii) Dislocated worker employment and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) and based on data and weights assigned.

In accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2), and based on data and weights assigned, New Jersey will use the following formula to allocate Dislocated Worker employment and training activities. This formula utilizes the most appropriate information available to distribute amounts to address the State's worker readjustment assistance needs.

- 25% based on declining industries, based on the total projected employment change in declining industries;
- 25% based on insured unemployment data, based on the number of unemployment insurance claimants;
- 25% based on long-term unemployment, based on the number of claimants who have exhausted unemployment insurance
- 25% based on unemployment concentration, the number of unemployed individuals, in a local area.

(B) For Title II:

(i) Describe how the eligible agency will award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State, including how eligible agencies will establish that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness.

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) is the eligible agency that will provide 3 to 5 year grant opportunities in Adult Literacy Education on a competitive basis to eligible entities in the state of New Jersey.

An eligible entity must be registered on the Eligible Training Providers List, and must be licensed to provide education and training services in the State of New Jersey. The RFP process will

continue to implement a consortium model, which requires a lead entity to convene and manage the adult literacy services for the local workforce area.

(ii) Describe how the eligible agency will ensure direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds and how the eligible agency will ensure that it is using the same grant or contract announcement and application procedure for all eligible providers

As part of the RFP process, the lead entity must demonstrate the capacity to equitably convene all eligible literacy providers in the local areas, while coordinating programs and services with their local One-Stop Career Centers. Coordination between the local area Title II providers and One-Stop Career Centers must be based on the community's collective needs. The WDB boards need to work in partnership with the Title II consortiums to develop clearly articulated local plans that are in alignment with the regional and state plan. The literacy plans for both regional and local workforce areas must define the unique needs of all levels of literacy learners. The plans must articulate the process in which, WDBs, local one-stop career centers, title II providers and the various local area literacy stakeholders should collaborate, the methods for improving accessibility of title II programs and services and strategies for strengthening curriculum content and professional development activities for the state.

(C) Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

In the case of a State that, under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act designates a State agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind, describe the process and the factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.

As outlined in Section III, New Jersey utilizes an option to deliver Vocational Rehabilitation services through two distinct programs. The majority of services are delivered through Vocational Rehabilitation staff at the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, for any individuals with disabilities. A portion of funds is segmented and delivered to the separate Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired within the New Jersey Department of Human Services with a focus on serving individuals who are blind, vision-impaired or deaf-blind. These services and how they will coordinate with the wider WIOA services will be discussed in the following two subsections. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) work under a Memorandum of Understanding at the beginning of the WIA system in 2000, outlining:

- the criteria determining to which program an individual customer is referred based on their disability;
- methods of referral between the two agencies and their services and programs;
- eligibility;
- consultation and coordination between the two agencies;
- interagency meetings, exchange of materials, interagency liaisons

The MOU allocates funds based on an 80%/20% split, with 80% of allocable funds going to DVRS and 20% going to CBVI for their respective program operations. This allocation is justified by the following factors.

1. Population: The distribution takes into account the proportion of persons with disabilities who are expected to be served by each agency, based on prior history. This factor has been quite stable since the MOU was first signed in 2000.
2. Level of services. In general, it is understood that delivering high-quality vocational rehabilitation services to blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers is more expensive on average than it is to deliver similar services to persons with other disabilities, because of the extra training required to enable these consumers to function successfully and independently with limited or no vision. Specifically:
   a. CBVI administers a year-round, residential program to provide blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers with training in pre-employment blindness skills, e.g. Orientation and Mobility; Braille or other low-vision communication strategies; assistive technology instruction; skills of independent living (techniques for independently managing in the home, including cooking, dressing, cleaning, money management, etc.); and classes on Adjusting to Blindness or Vision Loss.

   b. Similarly, these same services are offered to some consumers in their homes, where they are unable or unwilling to invest an extended period, on average approximately twenty weeks, in New Jersey's intensive residential program.
   c. Additionally, some consumers are sent out-of-state for blindness-specific, pre-employment training, where CBVI does not offer the particular instruction needed for a given consumer's employment objective.
   d. Due to the nature of the disability, a disproportionate number of blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers require substantial amounts of post-secondary education in order to qualify for the types of jobs where blind, vision- impaired, and deaf-blind consumers have traditionally been most successful and accepted within the labor market.
   e. The cost of assistive technology that enables blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers to function effectively remains disproportionately high, as compared to unmodified technology used by non-disabled or non-blind consumers of vocational rehabilitation.

(6) Program Data

(A) Data Alignment and Integration. Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

(i) Describe the State's plans to make the management information systems for the core programs interoperable to maximize the efficient exchange of common data elements to support assessment and evaluation.

(ii) Describe the State's plans to integrate data systems to facilitate streamlined intake and service delivery to track participation across all programs included in this plan.

(iii) Explain how the State board will assist the governor in aligning technology and data systems across mandatory one-stop partner programs (including design and implementation of common intake, data collection, etc.) and how such alignment will improve service delivery to individuals, including unemployed individuals.

The State's efforts to align and integrate data systems includes a number of elements and areas where the SETC assists the governor in aligning technology and data systems across programs. These efforts will all support improved service delivery.

As stated previously in this plan, America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS) is the core data system used to support the New Jersey workforce development system. AOSOS currently meets the operational, tracking and reporting requirements of WIOA and supports a number of federal and state workforce programs including: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I; Wagner-Peyser Public Labor Exchange; Veterans Labor Exchange Programs (LVER and DVOP); Trade Adjustment Act (TAA); NJ's Workforce Development Partnership Program (WDP); and, WorkFirst New Jersey (TANF, Food Stamps, and General Assistance).

AOSOS currently includes data-sharing interfaces with Unemployment Insurance and Department of Human Services (DHS) systems. For example, when a case manager from the Division of Family Development (DFD) at the Department of Human Services identifies an individual as a mandatory work participant, he/she flags the individual's file in the DHS case management system. Each night, the Division of Family Development's system exports data on these flagged individuals into AOSOS, so the One-Stop Career Center automatically receives the individual's file. Furthermore, DFD has read-only access to AOSOS to follow up on services.

While AOSOS provides workforce partners with the basic functionality needed, LWD will explore new and different technology solutions that could help to integrate services and facilitate information sharing to a greater extent. One such possibility to be explored is the case management solution currently employed by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS). DVRS utilizes Aware Solutions, the leading records management software for Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals in the social services industry. This allows vocational rehabilitation staff and leaders to effectively manage and analyze client services, program finances and overall agency performance. There is potential for LWD to expand the utilization of Aware Solutions' case management technology to the other core programs and non-core programs. Having all programs on a universal case management system would offer clients a more seamless experience, would increase the flow of communication among programs, and would help to eliminate duplication of services.

The current AOSOS system provides a solid foundation as noted above, for collecting and using customer data across New Jersey's WIOA programs. However, the State intends to improve upon

the current system to provide even greater interoperability and data integration. While AOSOS provides workforce partners with the basic functionality needed, LWD will explore new and different technology solutions that could help to integrate services and facilitate information sharing to a greater extent. As noted above, New Jersey is in the process of developing a new system that will replace AOSOS, and will maintain the high level of quality and data management within that system, but offer additional functionality and interaction across programs and sites. One option being considered as noted elsewhere is the case management solution currently employed by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS).

One other data system integration effort that is underway at LWD is the development of a single sign-on for Unemployment Insurance and workforce services. Claimants will be able to use one sign-on to see the status of their UI claims as well as services for which they are eligible or already enrolled in through the workforce system.

The Integrated Workforce Registration System is national initiative to promote and enhance the partnerships and shared missions of the Unemployment and Workforce Development systems within the New Jersey Department of Labor. This system will integrate common core functions making the re-employment experience more seamless and friendly by directing customers via a common registration process to all of the services provided by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. This single sign on system for jobseekers will result in a common workforce registration system for Unemployment Insurance, re-employment services, resume creation and job and skill matching.

Creating common systems having single centralized logins with guided access to the unique online services of the various programs (including WIOA Title I, WorkFirst New Jersey and Wagner-Peyser) is a long-term goal associated with the several data improvements being planned. The SETC's Performance Committee will continue to lead these efforts in conjunction with LWD and the other relevant State and Local entities including the LWDBs.

(iv) Describe the State's plans to develop and produce the reports required under section 116, performance accountability system. (WIOA section116(d)(2)).

The State's Common Data System, AOSOS, is used to track program progress, especially with respect to performance targets. LWD provides local areas with the following reports to monitor their progress:

- Quarterly reports documenting primary indicators of performance against goals for each WDB area (similar to the ETA 9090 report used by LWD for federal reporting)
- Quarterly or monthly reports (depending on the specific measure) documenting performance outcomes for the New Jersey Balanced Scorecard and additional performance measures for each WDB area.
- Quarterly basic rosters of WIOA participants

(B) Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success. Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

New Jersey became a common measures reporting state beginning in Program Year 2009 under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). As such, performance indicators are already in place that measure the progress of adult, dislocated worker, and youth who have exited from core programs. Among those measures are entered employment rate, employment retention rate, average earnings, and degree/certificate attainment.

In Program Year 2016, New Jersey will incorporate the primary indicators of performance as required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for adults, dislocated workers, and youth as related to participant progress after exiting. They are as follows:

ADULT MEASURES:

- Employment rate in second and fourth quarter post exit
- Median earnings in second quarter post exit
- Credential rate

DISLOCATED WORKER MEASURES:

- Employment rate in second and fourth quarter post exit
- Median earnings in second quarter post exit
- Credential rate

YOUTH MEASURES:

- Placement in employment, training or education activities in second and fourth quarter post exit
- Median earnings in second quarter post exit
- Credential rate

In addition, CBVI will work in collaboration with the WIOA Training Unit and DVRS within LWD to develop specific training protocols for staff with the One-Stop Delivery System with the goal to increase awareness about issues related to physical and programmatic accessibility of the various components of that system. CBVI staff will be available to provide ongoing technical assistance and coaching to build staff skills sets that promote a welcoming environment for individuals with disabilities, including those individuals who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind.

(C) Use of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data. Explain how the State will meet the requirements to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

Per federal workforce grant reporting requirements, State Wage Records are used in the calculation of programs' quarterly common measure performance outcomes. As over ten percent of the State's working residents cross a state border to go to work each day, New Jersey also uses the Wage Record Interstate System (WRIS) and Federal Employment/Wage Data (FEDES) wage systems to more accurately evaluate and determine program performance outcomes.

(D) Privacy Safeguards. Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

LWD has issued guidance to the local workforce development areas regarding privacy. This guidance provided the local areas with the federal requirements pertaining to the handling of personally identifiable information for both hard and electronic records. The guidance also required all local areas to develop documented policies that ensure compliance with the federal requirements. As part of its regular monitoring, the Program Compliance Unit will verify that these polices have been developed and are being implemented. Additionally, the Office of WIOA Technical Assistance and Capacity Building will incorporate privacy safeguards into the professional development that will be provided to all one-stop staff. Training and monitoring will be updated to reflect the most current statutes and interpretations to ensure that all staff are regularly made aware of, and comply with, the provisions of the law. Requirements related to the General Education Provisions Act are covered by Department of Education funded programs as indicated in the definition of applicable program in 20 USCS 1221.

(7) Priority of Service for Veterans. Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor. States should also describe the referral process for veterans determined to have a significant barrier to employment to receive services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.

Priority of service provisions for veterans is embedded in the eligibility guidance provided to local workforce development areas. In addition, local Boards will also be required to develop their own priority of service policy that meets the requirements codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C.

LWD will also establish guidance on how to determine veterans and veterans with significant barriers early in the triage and intake process within the One-Stop Career Centers. This will require cross training of Employment Service and WIOA-funded staff in the One-Stop Career Centers who are functionally responsible for triage. There is and will continue to be prominent signage in all One-Stop Career Centers informing customers that veterans receive priority of service.

Through the Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Employment Veterans Representatives (LVER) help veterans with significant barriers to employment successfully navigate the job market and receive the support they need to return to the workforce. When a veteran comes into the One-Stop Career Center, he or she is

triaged at intake to determine if he/she has a significant barrier to employment. One-Stop Career Centers utilize a standard form to determine if barriers exist and if a veteran should be referred to a DVOP for mentorship.

(8) Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Disabilities. Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

In August 2010, LWD reorganized its structure to include the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) within the workforce development system. This provides a solid foundation to work with the State's workforce investment system. DVRS is a core participant in the One-Stop system and maintains an active presence in the 17 local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) as well as the SETC, New Jersey's State WDB. This close involvement ensures that physical and programmatic accessibility is at the forefront of all efforts of the WIOA system.

SETC has a relationship with the two State Rehabilitation Councils, outlined in prior sections, dedicated to the cause of increasing the number of individuals with disabilities in the workforce. Through the recommendations of the Councils, policies and practices are examined to ensure that One-Stop services are fully accessible to all. Members from both Councils assisted in the creation of an Accessibility Checklist. The Accessibility Checklist will be used to analyze the competency of a One-Stop Career Center in the areas of: staff training and knowledge; employer engagement; customer focus; quality of programs; and technology. The Accessibility Checklist will be a foundational element of the One-Stop Career Center Certification process to be launched in spring 2016. Specifically the One-Stop Certification policy maintains objective criteria and processes through which local boards will certify their One-Stops. New Jersey's proposed Criteria for One-Stop Career Center Assessment and Certification include as their first item:

- Accessibility- WDB examines the accessibility of its physical locations. Not limited to physical accommodations, but accessibility looks at staff knowledge, technology, signage, marketing materials and access to programs and services. Use of the One-Stop Accessibility Checklist

The Councils also seek to educate and inform their members and their organizations on critical disability workforce issues. The relationship between the two State Rehabilitation Councils and the SETC provides the platform where ongoing conversation will continue to ensure that the full array of One-Stop services is available to individuals with disabilities.

SETC and the State agencies serving people with disabilities also seek to educate and inform their members and their organizations on critical disability issues and work together to ensure that the full array of One-Stop services is available to individuals with disabilities.

Other specific strategies include the following:

- Participation by DVRS leadership and staff in all of the LWD efforts to coordinate services to all customers.
- Participation by DVRS leadership and staff with LWD Office of Research and Information committees that identify seven key industry sectors, in order to ensure consideration of employment for people with disabilities in the Talent Network and other sector planning activities.
- Availability of CBVI's welcome and evaluation team to support efforts at the One-Stops. Due to their itinerant nature, CBVI is not on-site at all One-Stop Career Centers, but is able to bridge with them to offer services and provide expertise and technical assistance where needed in serving persons with disabilities.
- LWD has a workgroup that includes representatives from the core partners (DVRS, Labor Exchange, WIOA and Adult Education) as well as TANF and CBVI. This workgroup will develop a common intake policy for all the programs. As part of the implementation of this policy, one-stop staff will be cross-trained in each program so that all customers, including individuals with disabilities, are provided efficient intake and appropriate referral.

In relation to staff training and methods to ensure the programmatic accessibility of One-Stop Career Centers, New Jersey is putting in place a process of staff training by DVRS and CBVI for One-Stop staff. The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) will develop appropriate blindness and low-vision sensitivity and substantive vocational rehabilitation training to be shared with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) and its One-Stop programs so that potential blind and vision-impaired consumers who make initial contact with One-Stop programs are able to receive adequate assistance before, or instead of, referral to CBVI for comprehensive services. CBVI will work in collaboration with DVRS and other core partners in LWD to develop the inter-agency training program to be implemented at the various One-Stop Career Centers throughout the state.

(9) ***Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals who are English Language Learners.*** *Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials.*

New Jersey's One-Stop Career Centers are each equipped with tools and staff to support the needs of individuals with limited English proficiency. Computer labs at One-Stop Career Centers (often blended with the Resource Centers), the Workforce Learning Links offer extensive computer-based learning tools, and are the state's main effort to provide basic skills, literacy, and English as Second Language training to WIOA customers on a drop-in, open-access basis. Additional tools

such as Best Plus, which provides a face-to-face oral interview of listening and speaking skills to assess English language proficiency, are also utilized in the One-Stop Career Centers.

If a customer is determined in need of these services, they are referred directly to WIOA Title II Adult Education services for remedial basic skills, English as a Second/Other Language and related services.

IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs

If the State is submitting a Combined State Plan, describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination of the core programs and the other programs and activities covered by the Combined State Plan.

New Jersey recognized WIOA as a critical opportunity for the state to ensure that its workforce development system is positioned to help individuals obtain the skills and abilities they need to be competitive in an ever-changing economy and ensure the state has the most skilled workforce in the country. The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) and the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) have worked together with key stakeholders to build a strong foundation for New Jersey's workforce system through this plan and through *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development,* which formed the foundation of this comprehensive State Plan.

The planning process was intentionally inclusive and included the following steps:

- ***Workgroups***: Workgroups addressing six key opportunities for transformational change were created in December 2014 to inform the development of the Blueprint. Workgroups, consisting of approximately 10 – 15 members representing LWD, SETC, local WDBs, One-Stop Operators and other key stakeholders, were charged with reviewing the provisions of WIOA, identifying opportunities for policy and operations recommendations, obtaining feedback from stakeholders and coordinating their work with that of the associated SETC Committee. Workgroups focused on the following topics, and reported upward to the respective SETC Committees:
    - Governance and Planning – coordinating with the Governance Committee
    - Performance Accountability – coordinating with the Performance Committee
    - Career Pathways and Industry Partnerships – coordinating with the State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) and the Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education (GPC)
    - One-Stop Operations – coordinating with the full SETC
    - Services to Youth – coordinating with the Shared Youth Vision Council
    - Services to Individuals with Disabilities – coordinating with the State Rehabilitation Councils
- ***NJ WIOA Website***: The website http://lwd.state.nj.us/labor/wioa was launched in January 2015 to provide a place where stakeholders could receive up-to-date national and New Jersey-specific WIOA information. The website continues to be a critical component of both the SETC's and LWD's websites. Individuals were encouraged to submit comments on WIOA implementation to a WIOA Blueprint email address: WIOABlueprint@dol.state.nj.us.
- ***Workgroup Webinars:*** Each Workgroup hosted informational, interactive webinars to provide an overview of WIOA provisions and to provide an additional opportunity for feedback to be received about the various opportunities and challenges stakeholders felt WIOA presented.
- ***Pathways and Partnerships Two-Day Conference:*** In spring 2015, SETC and LWD jointly hosted the "Pathways and Partnerships: Building New Jersey's Blueprint for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity" Conference. The conference included more than 300 stakeholders from across the state representing all the key stakeholders and partners in workforce development.

Breakout sessions were held on each Workgroup topic, offering opportunities for smaller group discussion and participation. The conference featured:

- Overview presentations from national experts about WIOA and critical trends in workforce development.
- Extensive breakout sessions were held on each of the six Workgroup topics, offering the participants an opportunity for smaller group discussions and comments on key questions and issues relating to WIOA implementation.
- Panel of national experts from the National Governors Association, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, the National Skills Coalition and the Council of Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Panel of promising employer-driven partnerships in New Jersey.

- ***Stakeholder Feedback Session:*** In December 2015, the SETC and LWD jointly hosted a two-day policy discussion and feedback session with key stakeholders in the workforce system. Key policies and program initiatives related to Board Governance, Performance & ETPL, Career Pathways and One-Stop Operations were shared with more than 100 representatives from the state board, local workforce boards, state and local partner agencies, community colleges, literacy program providers, and state and local workforce program staff. In addition to the verbal feedback received during these two days, participants were able to submit written comments through an online portal on the LWD website.

Throughout the planning process, workgroups met with SETC standing committees covering governance, adult literacy, youth, and performance to further enhance connection with the SETC. Key policies were adopted as resolutions by the SETC on the recommendation of these standing committees.

Public Comment Process: A public comment period preceded the final approval of the Combined State Plan by the SETC in March 2016. The draft plan was posted on the SETC website for a public comment period and comments received have been summarized and included with the final submission of the plan to USDOL.

V. Common Assurances

#	Statement of Assurance
1.	The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member rep- resents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;
2.	The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;
3.	The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;
4. (a)	4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs, required One-Stop partners, and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public;
4. (b)	The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;
5.	The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for core programs to carry out workforce development activities;
6.	The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);

7.	The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;
8.	The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;
9.	The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;
10.	The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);
11.	Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and
12.	Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

TITLE I-B: ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES

(a) General Requirements

(1) Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas.

(A) Identify the regions and the local workforce development areas designated in the State.

New Jersey Workforce Regions:

The state-led WIOA Governance and Planning Workgroup, comprised of Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) directors and State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) members, examined the requirements of WIOA, the labor market areas and regional economic development areas, and resources in the State, and considered the potential opportunities and challenges involved in creating regional partnerships.

The SETC adopted three regional designation options as part of *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development* in June 2015. Presentations of these three regional designation options were subsequently provided to the New Jersey Association of Counties, to LWDB Chairpersons and Directors, and One- Stop Operators, and Local Chief Elected Officials at regional meetings held throughout the state. In addition, the regional designations presentation was made available for written public comment. The SETC Governance Committee reviewed the workgroup recommendations, the feedback provided through the regional workforce meetings, and public comment received. The committee proposed and SETC subsequently resolved that three (3) workforce planning regions be designated in New Jersey: North Region, Central Region, and South Region.

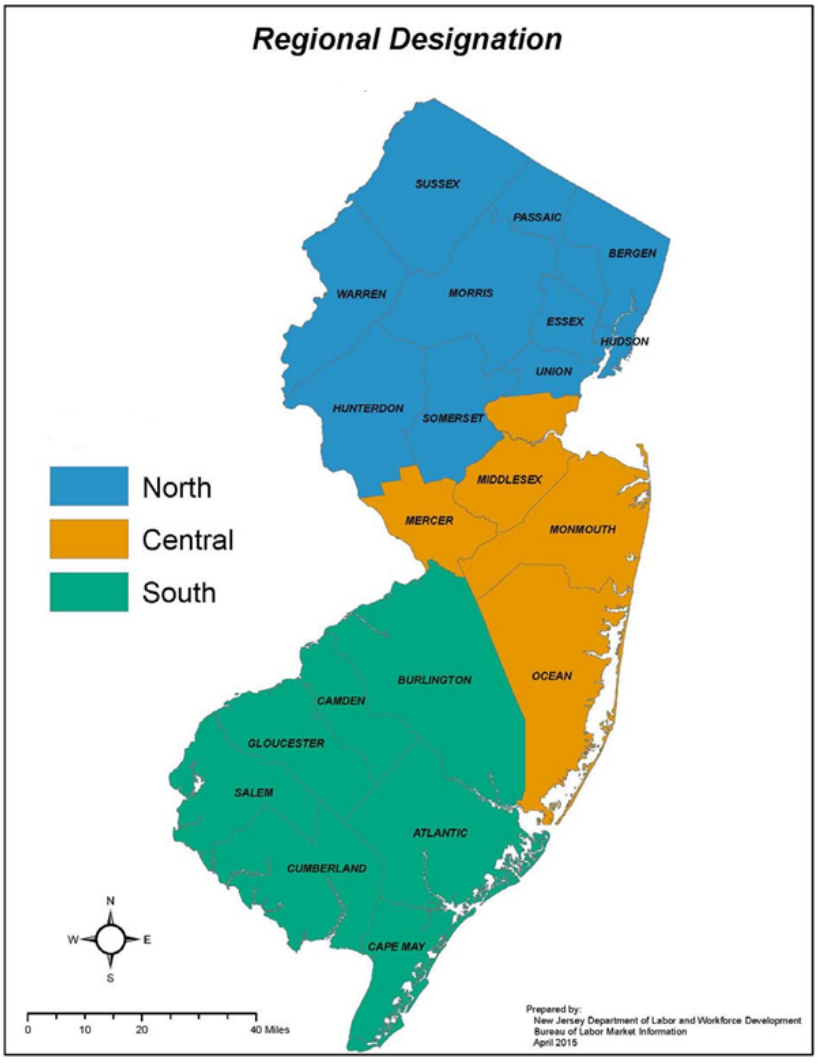


Figure 36

New Jersey Local Workforce Development Areas:

The 18 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) in New Jersey have been designated after reviewing county areas, population size, and the factors and process for initial local area designation described below in Section VI(a)(1)B) of this plan.

North	Central	South
Bergen County	Mercer County	Atlantic-Cape May Counties
Essex County	Middlesex County	Burlington County
Hudson County	Monmouth County	Camden County
Jersey City	Ocean County	Gloucester County
City of Newark		Cumberland-Salem Counties
Passaic County		
Union County		
Greater Raritan (Somerset-Hunterdon Counties)		
Morris-Sussex-Warren Counties		

Figure 37

(B) Describe the process used for designating local areas, including procedures for determining whether the local area met the criteria for "performed successfully" and "sustained fiscal integrity" in accordance with 106(b)(2) and (3) of WIOA. Describe the process used for identifying regions and planning regions under section 106(a) of WIOA. This must include a description of how the State consulted with the local boards and chief elected officials in identifying the regions.

As required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, the State Employment and Training Commission designated local areas for a period of initial designation from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017. At such time, the SETC policy for subsequent designations of local areas will take effect.

Designation Process: The SETC provided local areas with an Initial Designation Request letter Template for local board signature and approval by Local Elected Officials in October 2015. Local areas submitted signed request letter with local elected official approval to SETC on or before December 28, 2015.

After receiving Initial Designation Request letters, SETC and LWD verified local area performance and fiscal integrity for PY 2012 and PY 2013 and approved or denied the requests in March 2016. Local areas will be notified of their approval/denial of initial designation in April 2016.

Performance Success: An area was determined to have performed successfully, for the purposes of initial designation, if:

a) the local area has met or exceeded all common measures under WIA in the two preceding years, Program Years 2012 and 2013. To meet the measure, the local area must have achieved at least 80% of the performance target
OR
b) the local area did not meet one or more of the common measures in either/both of these program years and subsequently created a performance improvement plan or corrective action plan, which was approved by the SETC. The area must have followed through on the

planned improvements and subsequently met or exceeded that measure in the following program year.

Fiscal Integrity: An area was determined to have sustained fiscal integrity if the Secretary of the United States Department of Labor has not made a formal determination, during either of the last 2 consecutive years preceding the determination regarding such integrity, that either the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the area misexpended funds provided under 29 U.S.C. 3151 through 3181 (Chapter 32, Subchapter 1, Part B, of WIOA) (or, if applicable, title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 as in effect prior to the effective date of such part B of this subchapter) due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provision involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration.

The description of how the State consulted with the local boards and chief elected officials in identifying the regions is outlined in above Section (A).

(C) Provide the appeals process referred to in section 106(b)(5) of WIOA relating to designation of local areas.

Any unit of general local government (including a combination of such units) or grant recipient that requests but is not granted designation of an area as a local area may appeal that determination pursuant to the procedure set forth at N.J.A.C. 12:42-3.11 (Appeals).

(D) Provide the appeals process referred to in section 121(h)(2)(E) of WIOA relating to determinations for infrastructure funding.

SETC and LWD are working with the local workforce development boards on an infrastructure funding policy. The finalized policy will detail an appeal process in compliance with WIOA requirements.

(2) Statewide Activities.

(A) Provide State policies or guidance for the statewide workforce development system and for use of State funds for workforce investment activities.

SETC and LWD maintain a comprehensive listing of statewide policies and guidance issued to local areas and partners for the use of State funds from workforce investment activities. State policies can be accessed online at the SETC and LWD websites. With the implementation of WIOA, SETC and LWD have been working to and will continue to update existing policies and/or establish new policies to be in compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as needed.

Early in the implementation of WIOA, New Jersey launched a NJ WIOA website. The website (http://lwd.state.nj.us/labor/wioa) was launched in January 2015 to provide a place where stakeholders could receive up-to-date national and New Jersey-specific WIOA information. The website continues to be a critical component of both the SETC's and LWD's websites.

As new or revised State policies or guidance are established, they are shared with local areas through the following methods:

Policies adopted by the SETC are posted on the SETC website and notice of their availability is provided to local areas via e-mail. Information on new policies is also provided at regular meetings held jointly by LWD and SETC with local area WDB Directors, One-Stop managers, and One-Stop partner staff.

LWD has established the Office of WIOA Technical Assistance and Capacity Building within the Division of Workforce Development Field Services. This office is responsible for ensuring that all new and revised state polices, as established by LWD and/or the SETC (as well as federal policies), are shared with local workforce development areas. These polices are issued through guidance documents called New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notices; they are distributed to WDB Directors, One-Stop Operators and Employment Service Managers and are archived on the WIOA Technical Assistance webpage which is accessed through the WIOA Blueprint website.

(B) Describe how the State intends to use Governor's set aside funding. Describe how the State will utilize Rapid Response funds to respond to layoffs and plant closings and coordinate services to quickly aid companies and their affected workers. States also should describe any layoff aversion strategies they have implemented to address at risk companies and workers

Governor's Set Aside

New Jersey intends to utilize the statewide set aside funding to support special projects and initiatives aligned to the strategic intents of *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development*. In particular, these funds will be targeted toward efforts such as, but not limited to:

1) Expansion of the Career Connections Initiative: This broad partnership of One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, libraries, educational institutions and community and faith-based organizations is designed to strengthen career navigation services for all New Jersey residents.
2) Expansion of high-quality- employer-driven partnerships: The state's seven industry-focused Talent Networks are working with employers, local Workforce Development Boards, community colleges and other key stakeholders to develop Targeted Industry Partnerships across the state. The statewide set aside may be used to fund the implementation of career pathways programs resulting in an industry-valued credential developed through this and related efforts.
3) Investment in Technology Tools and Integrated Data Systems: New Jersey is developing the Career Connections website to deliver career navigation content and tools to jobseekers and employers. The state may use the statewide set aside to fund the development of new tools and the expansion of existing tools. New Jersey may also use the statewide set aside to support the implementation of case management systems and integrated data and reporting systems to support workforce development activities.

The State also intends to utilize set-aside funding to test pay-for-performance contracting strategies to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of limited formula funds to improve outcomes for WIOA participants, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment. The State will offer technical assistance to local workforce areas on how to implement pay-for

performance with local formula funds and expects to enhance overall outcome-based strategies by utilizing existing performance-based contracting in combination with new WIOA pay-for-performance for the achievement of high bar outcomes as outlined in Title I of the NPRM (20 CFR 683.520).

Rapid Response Funds

LWD's Rapid Response Team provides on-site assistance to employers who either request such services, through the Federal WARN Act, or are mandated to use these services through the New Jersey WARN Act. The Rapid Response Team provides appropriate information, referrals and counseling to workers who are subject to plant closings or mass layoffs.

The Rapid Response Team, when applicable, will have an initial meeting with employers who are planning a layoff event. Response Team Specialists will meet with management and/or union personnel (if appropriate) to develop a plan to serve the company's workforce. This initial meeting identifies the services to be offered and the service delivery dates. The Rapid Response Team will present information to the affected workforce that explains Unemployment Insurance, Re-employment Services, Training Assistance, and additional services and resources available.

Unemployment Insurance:

- Explanation of benefit calculations and eligibility requirements
- Assistance in how to file an online or telephone claim
- Review information on dependency benefits, partial claims, direct deposit and taxes.
- Explain how payments would or would not affect claim including severance, PTO, 401k, pension.

Re-Employment Services:

- One-Stop Career Center Registration
- Labor Market Information
- Referrals to available jobs
- Introduction to *Jobs4Jersey.com*
- Referral to Jersey Job Clubs
- Resume Review and Development

Training Assistance**:**

- Introduction to state and federal retraining programs including assistance available through New Jersey Community Colleges, WIOA/WDP grant programs and On-the-Job Training

Additional Customized Services can be provided in the following areas:

- Job Search Workshops
- Resume Workshops
- Help with job solicitation campaigns
- Targeted Job Fair assistance
- Registration Forms Completion

- Help in deciphering federal/state plant closing requirements

LWD's goal is to respond to layoff events in a timely manner and relay meaningful information to the affected workers. LWD also focuses on layoff aversion and how assistance can be provided to companies contemplating a layoff, through the Layoff Aversion Program. Layoff aversion is about keeping companies in business by providing strategic alternatives to keep workers in their present jobs or quickly move them into comparable new jobs.

The Rapid Response Team partners with LWD Business Services Representatives (BSRs) who develop customized solution strategies using private and public sector resources. The following are examples of the private and public sector organizations the BSRs work with to implement layoff aversion strategies:

- Chambers of Commerce
- Industry Trade Associations
- NJ Business and Industry Association
- NJ County College Consortium
- Small Business Development Centers
- State and Local Economic Development Agencies
- Trade Unions

With the hiring of a Trade Act Coordinator and four additional staff members, the State will further support the coordination between Rapid Response efforts and trade-affected layoffs. A Trade Act Representative will participate in every Rapid Response activity until it is determined that the employer is not eligible to file for a Trade Petition.

The Rapid Response team will use various partnerships to assist with further explanation or direction for the affected workforce. Talent Networks have been created in New Jersey, whose goal within Rapid Response is to help skilled workers from companies of seven targeted industry sectors. The Talent Networks, who work solely with industries within these targeted sectors, provide opportunities with growing companies who need access to an available pool of skilled workers.

(C) In addition, describe the State policies and procedures to provide Rapid Responses in cases of natural disasters including coordination with FEMA and other entities.

In the event of a natural disaster, the state will provide Rapid Response services to impacted businesses and their employees. In the case of significant natural disasters that require FEMA involvement, New Jersey convenes a State Response Team under the direction of the Office of Emergency Management in the Division of State Police, Department of Law and Public Safety. This team provides a forum for collaboration between state agencies, FEMA and other federal agencies. LWD's representative on the State Response Team will be responsible for ensuring strong communication and collaboration between the department's Rapid Response efforts and the work of FEMA. In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, LWD worked closely with FEMA in the delivery of a wide variety of employment related assistance to impacted workers, including the

provision of Disaster Unemployment Insurance benefits and the implementation of a National Emergency Grant (NEG). The policies and protocols developed through this collaboration will be used in the event of any additional significant natural disasters.

(D) Describe how the State provides early intervention (e.g., Rapid Response) to worker groups on whose behalf a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition has been filed. (Section 134(a)(2)(A).) This description must include how the State disseminates benefit information to provide trade-affected workers in the groups identified in the TAA petitions with an accurate understanding of the provision of TAA benefits and services in such a way that they are transparent to the trade-affected dislocated worker applying for them (Trade Act Sec. 221(a)(2)(A) and Sec. 225; Governor-Secretary Agreement). Describe how the State will use funds that have been reserved for Rapid Response to provide services for every worker group that files a TAA petition.

Through New Jersey WARN Act, before the first termination of employment occurs, an employer must provide no less than 60 days advance notice in writing to the following entities:

- Commissioner of LWD
- The chief elected official of the municipality where the establishment is located
- Each employee whose employment is to be terminated
- Any collective bargaining unit of employees at the establishment

LWD receives WARN Act notices, New Jersey WARN Act notices, layoff information provided through communication with other state agencies, including the New Jersey Business Action Center, and other partners, including the New Jersey Business and Industry Association, the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, local Chambers of Commerce, and local economic development agencies. The New Jersey Business Action Center is housed in the Secretary of State's office and serves as New Jersey's economic development office.

The Rapid Response team coordinator contacts the company immediately upon receiving the notice of a planned layoff. The coordinator makes every effort to schedule a meeting between the management of the company and the Rapid Response team specialists. These meetings are scheduled with the convenience of the employer in mind and are sometimes held before their regularly scheduled work day, or after their workers have left for the day.

The Rapid Response Team, when applicable, will have an initial meeting with employers who are planning a layoff event. Response Team Specialists will meet with management and/or union personnel (if appropriate) to develop a plan to serve the company's workforce. This initial meeting identifies the services to be offered and the service delivery dates. The Rapid Response Team will present information to the affected workforce that explains Unemployment Insurance, Re-employment Services, Training Assistance, and additional services and resources available.

(b) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements

(1) Work-based Training Models. If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as

part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

New Jersey utilizes a number of Work-based Training Models ranging from On-the-Job training, to customized training and incumbent worker training with the goal of providing high quality training that meets the needs of both employers and program participants.

LWD Business Services Representatives (BSRs), Talent Network agents, and Business Action Center staff are well positioned to identify the businesses interested in utilizing the On-the-Job Training (OJT) or customized training programs. During their daily interactions with businesses, these individuals will identify the opportunities for expanded business relationships and create the connection to the appropriate OJT or Customized Training staff who will then finalize the transaction and ensure customer compliance and satisfaction.

BSRs from both LWD and the Business Action Center work closely with the Talent Networks to partner with high-growth, high-demand industries and economically vital industries to develop potential OJT and customized training strategies. The customized training program partners with employer associations, Industry Talent Networks, and the state college / community college system to develop unique customized training strategies through the use of consortium grants. This allows both small and large employers to participate in beneficial trainings.

In addition to on-the-job training and customized training under Title I, New Jersey also provides OJT to businesses utilizing state Workforce Development Program funds and on-the-job training funds available through the New Jersey WorkFirst (TANF) program. When possible and appropriate, these tools for OJT are utilized in complement with one another to maximize the benefit for businesses and individuals.

(2) Registered Apprenticeship. Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy and services.

Registered Apprenticeship initiatives have been and will remain a continued strategy for New Jersey. This model, by design, incorporates both the theory and experiential learning components that business and industry often request, and simultaneously creates career pathways for participants. The RA model leads to nationally recognized industry credentials that are both portable and stackable. Strategies to incorporate Registered Apprenticeships are project-specific, allowing LWD and its partners to build specific solutions to identified needs and incorporate promising practices gleaned from previous projects. Historically, local areas in New Jersey have not used WIOA funds to support apprenticeship models, but LWD will do more to encourage Business Services staff at local One-Stops to establish or refer WIOA customers to Registered Apprenticeship programs that meet business, industry, and educational/training requirements.
Prior initiatives have included:

Community Health Worker Pilot: LWD worked collaboratively with Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations through the Health Care Talent Network to launch a pilot Community Health

Worker (CHW) apprenticeship training program. The CHW apprenticeship training was funded through the Bergen County College Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant program. CHWs receive employment experience, placement and a nationally recognized apprenticeship certificate and credentialing. The pilot program recruited 20 participants from various counties to serve in advocacy and outreach capacities for the community and help individuals to access appropriate health resources. CHWs complete 160 hours of mandatory in-class training, offered at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, followed by 2,100 hours of on-the job training and finally employment placement. Rutgers anticipates expanding this apprenticeship opportunity throughout New Jersey to other low income and dislocated workers over the next few years and has set an enrollment target of 1,500 participants.

The SETC and the Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education will continue to work with partners, to identify registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities within demand industries. In addition, efforts to strengthen or create linkages between these programs and WIOA and One-Stop services for eligible candidates will become a priority as part of their mission to advocate for equitable gender, labor practices and pay in educational programs and workforce training. Some efforts already underway, with support of the GPC are:

Sisters in the Brotherhood (SIB)
A recruitment and retention effort imparted upon the New Jersey Locals of the Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters (NRCC) by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters (International). The initiative focuses on ensuring that a minimum of 10 percent of all registered apprentices within the trade are women by year 2018, and maintaining that percentage moving forward. The lessons learned have influenced positive modifications to the recruitment, support, education and training programs within the NRCC. During 2015, the NRCC SIB effort engaged more than 34 partners which included educational institutions, employers, correctional facilities, community and faith based organizations, local and state government, which includes the One-Stop Career Centers, and more.

Women in Sustainable Employment (WISE) Pathways
A career-exploration course designed for women to explore nontraditional, in-demand jobs in the construction, gas, water, electric and energy industries, with some occupations being registered apprenticeship programs. This forty-hour program was created to educate women about the career paths in these industries, and provide strategies in conflict management, team building, and workplace expectations. Additional focus is placed on resume writing, practice online applications and interviewing; and participants can be connected with recruiters from participating companies. This program was designed and implemented through a quality partnership between employers, organized labor and higher education, to design and implement this career exploration program. The goal is to expand the initiative into other counties, post-secondary educational institutions and employers in the future.

(3) Training Provider Eligibility Procedure. Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), as envisioned by state and federal law, is critical to ensure that the highest level of training services is available to the citizens of New Jersey. Additionally, the New Jersey Consumer Report Card (CRC), which contains provider and program performance data, is an essential tool not only to the workforce system but to all New Jerseyans making an informed customer choice about available training opportunities.

New Jersey State Law (C:34:15C-10.2) requires the creation of the ETPL and states that "[n]o training provider who is not an approved training provider included on the [ETPL] shall receive any federal job training funds or State job training funds." Federal job training funds include, but are not limited to: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) titles I, II and IV; WorkFirst; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; and SNAP Employment and Training. State job training funds include, but are not limited to: the Workforce Development Partnership Fund and the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills. Job training is defined as occupational training, remedial instruction or occupational safety and health training. New Jersey State law (C:34:1A-86) also mandates the collection and display of specific provider and program performance data on a publically available Consumer Report Card.

WIOA provides that participants in need of training services to enhance their job readiness or career pathway may access career training through a list of state-approved training providers and their state-approved training programs, known as the ETPL. WIOA requires each state to maintain an ETPL which must be accompanied by relevant performance and cost information, known as the Consumer Report Card, and must be made publically available in an easy to understand format in order to maximize informed customer choice and serve all significant population groups. WIOA requires the Governor to establish eligibility procedures for the ETPL. WIOA allows the Governor to designate a state agency to administer all aspects of the ETPL. The Center for Occupational Employment Information (COEI) within the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development shall administer New Jersey's ETPL and Consumer Report Card, which are located online at www.njtopps.com.

ETPL Eligibility:

All training providers seeking ETPL placement must first obtain approval from a qualified government agency in order to offer training programs. Only after this approval is obtained can a training provider apply for ETPL placement. A qualified government agency is an agency authorized by law or regulation to approve a training program. A list of agencies that are currently qualified to approve providers and training programs for schools located in New Jersey is available online at http://njtopps.com/VendorFaqs.aspx.

All training providers seeking placement on the ETPL under WIOA or State law are required to submit a formal application to COEI. An application will not be considered complete unless the provider has submitted up to date student record data or provided a certification that no such data exits (applicable only for new providers). New providers will be added to the ETPL on a continuing basis as they are determined eligible. ETPL eligibility is valid for one year from the date of approval. All providers are required to submit a renewal application to maintain ETPL listing past the initial year.

Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same application requirements as all other training providers. Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors that request to be listed on the ETPL are automatically included on the list and will remain as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor notifies the State that it no longer wants to be included on the list. Registered Apprenticeship programs are subject to all other requirements of the ETPL including the submission of student record data.

Pursuant to State law (C:34:15D-5), "[a]n employer who directly provides training and employment services to his own employees shall not be regarded as a service provider and shall not be subject to any requirement to obtain approval by the State as a service provider, including the requirements of section 13 of P.L.2005, c.354 (C.34:15C-10.1) to be approved as a qualifying school or the requirements of section 14 of P.L.2005, c.354 (C.34:15C-10.2) to be included on the State Eligible Training Provider List." Training providers that are contracted by employers to provide customized training services funded by state or federal sources must be listed on the ETPL.

A training provider and/or its program(s) may be deemed ineligible for ETPL placement, or removed from the ETPL for the following reasons:

a. A training provider does not possess; fails to submit; or loses its certificate/letter of approval from a qualified government agency;
b. The initial and/or renewal application was not completed, was not completed by the established due date, or failed to contain all the required information;
c. A training provider failed to submit timely and accurate student record data;
d. A training provider failed to meet required performance outcomes (if established).
e. A training provider intentionally supplied inaccurate or false information, including student records; or
f. A training provider substantially violated a provision of title I of WIOA or its implementation regulations.

If a provider is removed from the ETPL pursuant to items a-d above, the provider may be reinstated upon COEI's receipt of all required information. If a provider is removed from the ETPL pursuant to items e-f above, the provider shall be removed for a period of not less than 2 years. Providers are liable to repay all adult and dislocated worker funds received during the period of non-compliance.

<u>Performance Standards:</u>
All training providers listed on the ETPL are required to submit data annually for all students enrolled in the programs listed on the ETPL regardless of funding source (private pay and funded students). Failure to submit the required data in a timely manner will result in the provider's removal from the ETPL. Student social security numbers submitted by training providers are matched with wage records collected from employers covered by the Unemployment Compensation Law in New Jersey and other states in order to produce performance metrics that are displayed on the Consumer Report Card.

Metrics that are currently calculated are:

- Number of individuals exiting;
- Percentage of program participants in unsubsidized employment 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit;
- Average quarterly earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit; and
- Estimated annual earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment at 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit.

Statewide minimum performance standards will not be set during the implementation year as eligibility criteria for training programs to be placed on the ETPL. In subsequent years, COEI will report to the State Employment and Training Commission on the status of the performance data available and submit a recommendation regarding whether statewide minimum performance standards should be set for ETPL eligibility. However, the local areas may establish additional criteria for program eligibility within a local area, including the establishment of minimum required levels of performance as criteria for training providers to become or remain eligible to provide services in that particular local area. Training providers should be aware that programs may be approved for some local areas and denied for others based on local criteria and the approved local areas for each training provider will be listed as part of the ETPL.

All performance information for each provider and program will be posted on the Consumer Report Card to help New Jerseyans make an informed decision regarding available training opportunities.

Consumer Report Card:

The Consumer Report Card as currently structured displays the following performance information for training providers and their individual programs:

- Number of individuals exiting;
- Percentage of program participants in unsubsidized employment 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit;
- Average quarterly earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit; and
- Estimated annual earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment at 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit.

COEI is currently working to upgrade the ETPL and Consumer Report Card system in order to display additional performance data.

ETPL and Industry-Valued Credentials List:

As described previously in this plan, LWD is in the process of developing an Industry-Valued Credential List to guide training investments across federal and state workforce programs. Once developed, the Industry-Valued Credential List will be cross-walked with the ETPL to understand the eligible providers in the state that offer Industry-Valued Credentials. Within the ETPL, training

programs that result in a credential found on the Industry-Valued Credential list will be indicated so users can easily access the information.
This effort is currently underway and a draft Industry-Valued Credentials list was released for public comment in March 2016. The final list for 2016-2017 will be released in May 2016 and will go into effect on July 1, 2016.

(4) Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the requirements of WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E), which applies to individualized career services and training services funded by the Adult Formula program.

As part of its One-Stop Certification process, New Jersey will require local workforce areas to identify the process for implementing and monitoring the priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the requirements of WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E). Furthermore, New Jersey will reinforce these efforts through its policy on Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I, Title II, and WorkFirst New Jersey which include the percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment such as disability, ex-offender status, lack of a high school diploma, and homeless status.

(5) Describe the State's criteria regarding local area transfer of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs.

New Jersey is in the process of gathering input and feedback from local workforce development boards, local elected officials, and service providers regarding the local area transfer of funds between adult and dislocated worker programs. A policy will be developed and disseminated to these partners identifying the criteria for transfer of funds between the two programs.

(c) Youth Program Requirements. With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA,—

(1) Identify the State-developed criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants for youth workforce investment activities and describe how the local boards will take into consideration the ability of the providers to meet performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance for the youth program as described in section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii) of WIOA in awarding such grants.

New Jersey lists 10 criteria established by the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC). These criteria, which must be incorporated into the evaluation of youth service programs during procurement, are listed below:

1. The program will have a record of demonstrated effectiveness.
2. The program will not discriminate in any way and will be in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

3. The provider must have the capacity to identify issues that are hindering youth from succeeding in the program and recommend the appropriate support services.
4. The provider must be able to detail how linkages between communities, academic, occupational learning, and work experience will be used to enhance the youth development and employability. They should also demonstrate the involvement of the business/employer community.
5. The program will maintain a close working relationship with the local One-Stop Career Center.
6. Programs with industry-valued credentials as a goal will make arrangements for participants to test for and obtain the credential.
7. Any program offering summer employment opportunities must be linked to academic and occupational learning as a complement to overall year-round program goals. Summer employment opportunities operated as a stand-alone Summer Youth Program are specifically prohibited.
8. The provider must establish specific timeframes for evaluation of participant performance, attendance and progress, including level of academic performance, vocational abilities/skills, aptitudes, and interests.
9. The provider must identify process and strategies to be used to ensure that participants receive planned services and reach planned goals and what corrective actions will be available for participants who are not meeting the requirement of each activity or goals. The provider must detail the internal systems that will be used to report and monitor programmatic and fiscal activities.
10. The provider must permit federal, state, and local area staff and designated agents to conduct regular monitoring activities, including communication with customers and contractor staff at instructional sites.

Therefore, while the framework services can be provided by the grant recipient, all 14 program elements, with the exception of follow-up services, must be procured competitively. Local boards must ensure that they are able to conduct competitive procurement of youth services that will be provided in Program Year 2016. This is a required function of each local board. While a fiscal agent designated by the local chief elected official may be designated to conduct procurement, the One-Stop Operator should not participate in procurement due to conflict of interest.

Program Elements

In order to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants, the programs described in paragraph (1) shall provide elements consisting of—

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential;
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education, which may include—
    i. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
    ii. Pre-apprenticeship programs;
    iii. Internships and job shadowing; and
    iv. On-The-job training opportunities;
4. Occupational skill training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved, if the local board determines that the programs meet the quality criteria described in section 123;
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate;
7. Supportive services;
8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;
9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate;
11. Financial literacy education;
12. Entrepreneurial skills training;
13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and
14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

USDOL has indicated that there is no expectation that any one provider should be responsible for the delivery of all program elements in an area [*WIOA Sec. 129(c)(5)*]. Local boards should identify the existing providers of program elements in their area and procure as necessary where there are gaps in services.

Leveraging Available Resources

20 CFR 681.470 states that non-WIOA funds can be used to provide WIOA youth program elements under certain conditions:

The Department does not require local programs to use WIOA youth funds for each of the program elements. Local programs may leverage partner resources to provide some of the readily available program elements. However, the local area must ensure that if a program element is not funded with WIOA Title I youth funds, the local program has an agreement in place with a partner organization to ensure that the program element will be offered. The Local Board must ensure that the program element is closely connected and coordinated with the WIOA youth program.

For example, YouthBuild is a required one-stop system partner that provides work experience (a program element). A local area could enter into an agreement with a YouthBuild entity, and refer appropriate WIOA-enrolled youth to YouthBuild to receive a WIOA program element with non-WIOA funds. This does not preclude an agency from also responding to an RFP and serving additional WIOA enrolled youth with WIOA funds.

Leveraging of youth funds will expand local program capacity and demonstrate greater fiscal responsibility with the limited funds available. Local areas must demonstrate efforts to identify and enter into agreements with agencies which are already providing program elements. The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the State Employment and Training Commission will provide technical assistance in these efforts.

Individual Training Accounts
Under WIOA, youth age 18 or older may be provided the occupational training program element through an Individual Training Account (ITA). *(20 CFR 681.550).* This is not a waiver, and there is no need to utilize the waiver log in America's One-Stop Operating System when serving youth with an ITA using WIOA funds.

Program vs. Service
WIOA Youth Program - All the WIOA youth services (program elements) that are made available throughout a local area.

WIOA Youth Service **-** An individual WIOA program element. WIOA requires these fourteen elements to be made available by the local area, though they do not have to be provided to every youth. Individual RFPs should be designed to procure particular service(s) (not all).

Program Design
Before issuing requests for proposal, each local area, with the participation of the youth standing committee, should take the following steps:

1. Conduct an environmental scan to identify partner agencies that are providing program elements in the area/region. The local board can then enter into agreements for these program elements to be provided using non-WIOA funds.
2. Consider the WIOA priorities:
   75 percent of funds must be spent on out-of-school youth (not counting administrative funds; must be services to this population only)
   20 percent of all youth funds must be spent on work experience
3. Review records to estimate the total funds that will spent on ITAs in the program year.
4. Consider other relevant factors such as the local labor market.

After taking these steps, the local area can identify the particular services that needs to be procured for which groups of youth (in-school/out-of-school) and at what funding and service levels.

Note on Work Experience Expenditure Requirement: Training and Employment Guidance Letter 8-15 states that allowable expenditures for the work experience expenditure requirement beyond wages include staff time spent on the following: identifying potential work experience opportunities; working with employers to develop the work experience; working with employers to ensure a successful work experience; evaluating the work experience; conducting work experience orientation sessions; classroom training or the required academic education component directly related to the work experience; orientation for employers.

(2) Describe the strategies the State will use to achieve improved outcomes for out-of-school youth as described in 129(a)(1)(B), including how it will leverage and align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available.

Out-of-School Youth will be served through New Jersey's Youth programs described in detail in the immediately prior section C(1) "State developed criteria" and New Jersey commits to deliver the 14 Youth Program Elements in keeping with the WIOA requirements as outlined in section C(3). In the request for proposals from Youth WIOA sub-grantees, New Jersey has required that 75% of WIOA Youth funds must be spent to serve Out-of-School Youth.

New Jersey operates the New Jersey Youth Corps program, which is one of the largest youth service and conservation corps in the United States. Youth Corps is a year-round, voluntary program which engages young adults (ages 16-25) in full-time community service, training, and educational activities. Guided by staff who serve as mentors and role models, teams of youth called "crews" carry out a wide range of service projects. Corps members receive a stipend while enrolled in Youth Corps. Additionally, in return for their efforts to restore and strengthen communities, Corps members also receive:

- Education development in basic skills and preparation to obtain a GED or locally issued Adult High School Diploma;
- Life skills and employability skills instruction;
- Personal and career counseling to build self-esteem, clarify values, and develop leadership skills while they are developing their career portfolio;
- Transition services and continuing support services as they transition to college, training, employment or other national and domestic service opportunities; and
- Community service opportunities which develop positive employability skills while addressing unmet community needs.

Out-of-School Youth over age 18 are also able to participate in the full menu of services available at New Jersey's One-Stop Career Centers, including all of the job search, job preparation, career planning, and training services. These Youth may access Individual Training Account (ITA) training in the same ways that Adult and Dislocated Worker participants may, through the opportunities listed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Youth services collaborate with other WIOA system partners including: Wagner-Peyser in cases where Youth have been employed and are subsequently laid off from their employment; Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) for Youth with disabilities; and WorkFirst New Jersey through coordinated efforts for families and services for young adult TANF or SNAP recipients. In all these cases coordination is substantially the same as the other methods of coordination outlined in Section III on Operational Planning Elements, subsection on State Strategy Implementation, and subsections on Coordination with WIOA Partner programs.

(3) Describe how the state will ensure that all 14 program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2) are made available and effectively implemented.

New Jersey has developed a comprehensive strategy that will connect secondary education, community organizations, workforce development programs and other stakeholders to assist youth to successfully navigate the labor market and to obtain the skills they need for employment. New Jersey's Shared Vision for Youth includes strategies to focus on career awareness, pilot innovative programs, such as pre-apprenticeship programs that create pathways to employment.

The goals for the New Jersey's Shared Youth Vision Council are aligned with the New Jersey Combined State Plan. The strategies of the Council are also aligned with the identified key industries in New Jersey and rooted in the Combined State Plan's core values. The Council's mission is to empower the State's youth to become productive members of their communities through workforce readiness preparation, leadership development and community engagement. Furthermore, the Council focuses on outreach and retention efforts, youth leadership development, youth system capacity building, and employer-led inclusionary workforce programs.

New Jersey is creating an integrated, coherent system of workforce development programs and services that will effectively prepare youth for career-path employment that meets the labor market needs.

Youth services and activities to be used as the strategy for development include:

- Creating a unified policy and interlocking system of supports that recognizes the unique needs of young people and appropriately prepares them for lifelong learning and employment success through the State to local partnerships
- Engaging in ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders, businesses; schools; youth providers; parents and youth themselves, to identify local needs, gaps in service and to map available resources
- Setting service priorities and determining how local resources can best be used to meet the needs of young people
- Setting standards of service that clearly communicates high expectations, accountability, and a focus on youth customers. These standards integrate best practices in youth and workforce development and focus specifically on ensuring that youth have the opportunity to develop career plans that will engage them in lifelong learning and future employment.

- Developing policies grounded in best practices for youth that support the State and local vision
- Coordinating local resources, programs and policies with federal, state and regional initiatives to make the most effective use of funds for youth who face significant barriers to future success

Local WDBs are responsible for developing local program models and delivering the program within the parameters set by federal and state guidelines. They are required to ensure that the WIOA youth program elements are available and included in local proposal designs. The WDB is responsible for creating and maintaining an active Youth Investment Council that effectively leads the development of the local youth workforce investment system. Its mission is to actively engage business, community and educational stakeholders around local needs and priorities for youth services.

Through the work of the Youth Investment Council (YIC), the WDB provides strategic direction and coordination with other programs and initiatives in their communities to make the best use of limited resources. The SETC, the state board, issued guidelines for the development of local plans. LWD provides the monitoring arm of the State to ensure compliance.

The YIC is responsible for developing a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated system of youth services that effectively prepares young people for higher education and future employment by implementing the elements noted below:

- Paid and unpaid work experience, internships, summer employment
- Adult mentoring
- Leadership development
- Occupational skills training
- Alternative secondary school services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Support services
- Tutoring, study skills training/dropout prevention strategies
- Follow-up services

Successful models that are used nationally are researched and often customized to meet the needs of NJ employers or are designed to meet NJ needs and then shared nationally. Job training programs for youth, YTTW models, YouthBuild and others are piloted and expanded or enhanced as funds become available. Experiential education models that incorporate academics with hands-on job readiness, such as the nationally recognized NJ Youth Corps become the basis for the development of alternative in-school and out-of-school education models as well.

(4) Provide the language contained in the State policy for "requiring additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment" criterion for out-of-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and for "requiring

additional assistance to complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment" criterion for in-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII).

As stated in the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development policy document, "Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title I: Youth Eligibility Determination and Documentation Guidelines for Local Workforce Development Areas" issued in June 2015, the following is the State's definition of **Requires Additional Assistance:**

Any local area utilizing the criterion "An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment" must document their policy for defining and documenting the criteria in their local plan. A hard copy of the document(s) used to verify this criterion (see the WIOA Eligibility Desk Aid) **must** be provided and kept in the participant's folder. This criterion is recorded in AOSOS by selecting "Yes" from the drop-down list on the **Employment** tab in the **Comprehensive Assessment** window. The assistance needed and justification must be documented in the fields below "Job Behavior and Skills." The two types of justifications are: (1) to complete an educational program, and (2) to secure and hold employment. The specific issue **must** be recorded.

(5) Include the State definition, as defined in law, for not attending school and attending school as specified in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B)(i) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(i). If State law does not define "not attending school" or "attending school," indicate that is the case.

"Attending school" and "not attending school" are not defined in New Jersey state law or regulation.

(6) If not utilizing the portion of the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), include the specific State definition.

Not Applicable. New Jersey is using the definition under WIOA Section 3(5)(A).

(d) Single-area State requirements. In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)).

States with a single workforce area must also include:

(1) Any comments from the public comment period that represent disagreement with the Plan. (WIOA section 108(d)(3).)

(2) The entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds, as determined by the governor, if different from that for the State. (WIOA section 108(b)(15).)

(3) The type and availability of WIOA title I Youth activities, including an identification of successful providers of such activities. (WIOA section 108(b)(9).)

This section is not applicable to New Jersey. New Jersey is not a single-area state.

(e) Waiver Requests (optional). States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

(1) Identifies the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan;

(2) Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;

(3) Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;

(4) Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

(A) supporting employer engagement;

(B) connecting education and training strategies;

(C) supporting work-based learning;

(D) improving job and career results, and

(E) other guidance issued by the Department.

(5) Describes the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment; and

(6) Describes the processes used to:

(A) Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;

(B) Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;

(C) Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;

(D) Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.

(E) Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report.

(7) The Secretary may require that States provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

New Jersey is not requesting a waiver at this time.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

#	Statement of Assurance
1.	The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients or basic skills deficient;
2.	The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;
3.	The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;
4.	The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);
5.	Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;
6.	The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;
7.	The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);
8.	The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;
9.	If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;
10.	The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.

11.	The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);

Wagner-Peyser Act

(a) Employment Service Professional Staff Development.

(1) Describe how the State will utilize professional development activities for Employment Service staff to ensure staff is able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers.

Employment Service staff, as well as other program areas, will participate in professional development that is provided directly by, or coordinated by, the WIOA Office of Technical Assistance and Capacity Building. This professional development will take several forms, including online, in-person training and webinars. Additionally, professional development resources will be made available to all One-Stop Career Center staff through the WIOA Technical Assistance webpage. LWD also will incorporate training opportunities for One-Stop staff relating the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, in coordination with DVRS and CBVI.

(2) Describe strategies developed to support training and awareness across core programs and the Unemployment Insurance program and the training provided for Employment Services and WIOA staff on identification of Unemployment Insurance (UI) eligibility issues and referral to UI staff for adjudication

The Office of WIOA Technical Assistance and Capacity Building will provide cross-training to Employment Service and WIOA staff members regarding the services available through the core partner programs (WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, DVRS, and Adult Education) as well as UI and TANF. Cross-training in UI will include eligibility and filing procedures to ensure that all One-Stop Career Centers are able to provide customers with meaningful assistance in filing UI claims. The WIOA Technical Assistance webpage will provide staff with cross-training resources.

(b) Explain how the State will provide information and meaningful assistance to individuals requesting assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation through one-stop centers, as required by WIOA as a career service.

New Jersey operates 29 comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers. UI staff has been gradually transforming its service delivery model from in-person services at all sites to a focus on concentrating staff at three regional Reemployment Call Centers. While UI will continue to offer in-person services at nine or ten One-Stops, UI customers will be directed to courtesy telephones and online resources at the majority of One-Stops. Wagner-Peyser staff are trained to resolve common and simple non-monetary issues for UI customers, to assist UI customers with access to online resources and the courtesy phones, to maintain accessibility for customers with disabilities, and to provide translation services to non-English speaking claimants.

(c) Describe the State's strategy for providing reemployment assistance to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals.

Unemployment insurance claimants receive a worker profiling score upon filing for benefits. The score measures the probability of the claimant exhausting benefits before finding new employment. Those claimants determined most likely to exhaust benefits before finding

employment are placed into a pool for participation in the Project Reemployment Orientation System (PROS) program for mandatory services designed to assist these claimants with better structuring their job search. The PROS program consists of an orientation followed by a series of workshops covering self-assessment skills, resume writing, interviewing skills, job search and résumé marketing. Integration of the required PROS workshops with Jersey Job Club offerings will transform PROS into a more robust reemployment program as the two programs become strongly aligned over the next two years.

For those least likely to exhaust benefits, as determined by the worker profiling model, claimants are identified for mandatory Re-employment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) participation during the third week of their claim and generally scheduled around the fifth week of their claim for a ½ day workshop. The REA workshop offers claimants One-Stop Career Center and career assessment information, labor market information, an individualized work search plan, and a review of their eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits. New Jersey will conduct about 20,000 REAs in the current program year, but hopes to dramatically increase the number moving forward due to the proven value of this effective reemployment tool.

Consistent with the goal of targeting services more strategically and moving away from the one-size fits all model employed in the past, PROS and an expanded REA program are hallmarks of LWD's efforts to ensure that services are value-added for jobseeker customers and that mandatory participation services are not perceived as punitive from the perspective of those required to attend.

(d) Describe how the State will use W-P funds to support UI claimants, and the communication between W-P and UI, as appropriate including the following:

(1) Coordination of and provision of labor exchange services for UI claimants as required by the Wagner-Peyser Act;

(2) Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law;

(3) Administration of the work test for the State unemployment compensation system, including making eligibility assessments (for referral to UI adjudication, if needed), and providing job finding and placement services for UI claimants; and

(4) Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources.

Specifically, New Jersey will utilize Wagner-Peyser funds to support UI claimants in the following ways:

- The State automatically pre-registers reemployment service-eligible UI claimants into the One-Stop case management system, America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS), which feeds the OnRamp tool at *Jobs4Jersey.com*. This pre-registration is accomplished through a daily electronic batch data transfer from the UI mainframe system to New Jersey's AOSOS database. Almost all UI claimants are pre-registered in AOSOS; only those claimants who are coded as temporarily laid off and those who are attached to a union

hiring hall are exempt from this pre-registration. This electronic data transfer enables all One-Stop partners to access identifying information on UI claimants in order to offer reemployment services.

- Strategic targeting of new UI claimants for services based on their likelihood of exhausting UI benefits has gradually replaced in person reemployment orientations that gave claimants an equal chance of selection, but due to capacity limitations only served a small fraction of new claimants. Fine-tuning of the UI claimant profiling model and targeting claimants for services by veteran status, industry or occupational affiliation, and duration of unemployment will increase in frequency over the next two years. This will result in One-Stop Career Center staff more effectively serving jobseeker customers translating into better employment outcomes.
- Federal legislation requires all states to provide reemployment assistance to those claimants who are permanently laid off and are identified as most likely to benefit from One-Stop services. Selected claimants are required to participate in this mandatory program of reemployment services. Unemployment claimants who are identified and referred to reemployment services through the profiling system, Project Reemployment Opportunities System (PROS), must participate in reemployment services as a condition of continued UI benefit eligibility. The profiling system also targets individuals with the best chances of quick reemployment by requiring them to attend REA workshops. The goal is to keep jobseekers focused on the search for new employment and to ensure that those no longer looking for work do not continue to receive UI benefits.
- New Jersey Unemployment Compensation law requires that a claimant for UI benefits be able to work, be available for work and be actively seeking work. Generally, the Division of Unemployment Insurance considers a minimum of three employer contacts each week a reasonable search for work. Telephone, in-person contacts, and applying for job openings or sending resumes electronically using the Onramp tool at Jobs4Jersey.com or directly at employer websites, are all acceptable work search methods.
- UI claimants calling LWD for assistance or information may be placed on hold while waiting for the next available customer service representative. Information on One-Stop Career Center reemployment services are shared with claimants as they wait including virtual services available at *Jobs4Jersey.com*.

Data regarding reemployment rates for UI claimants is captured and reported quarterly. The comparison of the reemployment rate for those receiving One-Stop Career Center services is compared to a control group of claimants not receiving services in order to determine effectiveness of service delivery.

Claimants filing online are directed to the One-Stop Orientation video (http://wotcnj.dol.state.nj.us/rborient/index.jsp?sid=nj4jobs) after completing their application for unemployment benefits. The online orientation provide information on re-employment services including labor exchange, basic and occupational skills training, career exploration, and staff-assisted services such as Jersey Job Club workshops, employment counseling, and program eligibility/assessment services available at Jobs4Jersey.com and at the One-Stop Career Centers. Upon filing, claimant information automatically populates the One-Stop case management system

(currently AOSOS) to facilitate service delivery and minimize duplicate data entry. Claimants required to attend mandatory workshops (REA/PROS/RESEA) receive eligibility reviews, group workshops, one-on-one LMI and re-employment planning, and referral to re-employment services such as basic and occupational skills training, Jersey Job Club workshops, and the Jobs4Jersey.com resume builder and job search engine. In order to provide more proactive services to UI claimants, the balance of UI claimants not selected for REA/PROS/RESEA will be required to attend a mandatory re-employment orientation with four weeks of first payment starting in early CY 2016. Claimants not reporting to any mandatory session are referred to UI adjudication staff for a non-monetary review. Claimants and UI applicants visiting a One-Stop Career Center for filing or resolving claims issues are directed by Wagner-Peyser staff to resource room PCs and provided technical assistance on filing or directed to the UI phone back for priority connection to a UI call center. While Wagner-Peyser staff are not UI issues experts, they can assist with technology tools, resolve simple and common UI issues, and encourage claimants to engage in re-employment services. Technology improvements in CY 2016 include the launch of a single sign on web/smart phone application for UI claimants that will provide claimants with a convenient and common vehicle for UI and re-employment services. And, since UI claimants will be required to use the single sign on to certify the continuation of benefits on a weekly basis, engagement with re-employment services will happen on a more frequent basis.

(e) Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP). Each State agency must develop an AOP every four years as part of the Unified or Combined State Plan required under sections 102 or 103 of WIOA. The AOP must include—

(1) Assessment of Need. Provide an assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers in the area based on past and projected agricultural and farmworker activity in the State. Such needs may include but are not limited to: employment, training, and housing.

(A) An assessment of the agricultural activity in the State means: 1) identifying the top five labor-intensive crops, the months of heavy activity, and the geographic area of prime activity; 2) Summarize the agricultural employers' needs in the State (i.e. are they predominantly hiring local or foreign workers, are they expressing that there is a scarcity in the agricultural workforce); and 3) Identifying any economic, natural, or other factors that are affecting agriculture in the State or any projected factors that will affect agriculture in the State.

Despite New Jersey's densely populated northeastern and southwestern regions close to New York and Philadelphia, farming continues to be a significant economic force in the state's rural areas. Approximately 730,000 acres or 15.6% of the state's area is used for farming. In order of sales, Cumberland, Atlantic, Monmouth, Gloucester, and Burlington lead New Jersey's 21 counties, accounting for about 60% of agricultural production statewide.

New Jersey had 10,300 operating farms in 2010 (latest available data) producing and selling about one billion dollars in crops (including nursery and greenhouse). However, the MSFW outreach program and H-2A activities of the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development

are limited to a sampling of the roughly 1,300 farms that use Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs).

Most farm employers are able to attract and retain a well-established workforce each year. However, large employers are more likely to experience worker shortages – some become H2-A employers as a result.

In 2010, New Jersey's **top-selling** agricultural commodities included greenhouse/nursery products (43.3% of agricultural sale), blueberries (6.0%), tomatoes (3.1%) and peaches (3.0%). New Jersey ranked 40th overall among the states in agricultural production in 2010, but ranked significantly higher in selected categories such as cranberries and blueberries:

- New Jersey ranked third in the nation that year in total production of cranberries (562,000 barrels, up 1 percent from the 2009 crop of 555,000 barrels). Harvested cranberry acreage remained unchanged from the 2009 growing season at 3,100 acres.
- The state ranked fourth in the production of cultivated blueberries, with a total value of $62.5 million. Harvested acres and yield were down 3% and 5% respectively from 2009-2010, but prices were up 4%.

In 2015, New Jersey's top five **most labor-intensive** agricultural commodities were:

1) Blueberries (*Peak month*: July)
2) Cranberries (*Peak*: October)
3) Orchards (Peaches, Apples) (*Peak*: Peaches—August; Apples—September)
4) Vegetables (*Peak*: Asparagus-May; Tomatoes-July; Mixed Vegetables-August; Sweet Potatoes-October)
5) Nurseries (*Peak*: March)

These crops were concentrated in the following New Jersey counties:

Blueberries (Atlantic County)
Cranberries (Burlington County)
Orchards (Gloucester, Salem and Cumberland Counties)
Vegetables (Gloucester, Salem and Cumberland Counties)
Nurseries (Gloucester, Salem and Cumberland)

Beyond workforce issues, New Jersey farm employers believe the state's agriculture industry is also impacted by price hikes in fuel and chemicals -- and by wage rate increases due to hiring competition from other sectors.

(B) An assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers means summarizing MSFW characteristics (including if they are predominantly from certain countries, what language(s) they speak, the approximate number of MSFWs in the State during peak season and during low season, and whether they tend to be migrant, seasonal, or year-round farmworkers). This information must take into account data supplied by WIOA Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees, other MSFW organizations, employer organizations, and State and/or Federal agency

data sources such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration.

There is no officially published count of the number of farm workers in the state during the growing season. Estimates are complicated due to the mobility of migrant and seasonal farm workers as they move from crop to crop.

However, a statewide estimate of 12,000 – 14,000 workers during New Jersey's 2014 growing season is based on past estimates, wage and crop surveys and input from partners such as WIA Section 167 grantee PathStone. In addition, data from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, USDA, and New Jersey Farm Bureau was used to further inform and support statistics used in the State's agricultural plan.

The makeup of New Jersey's farm labor workforce is:

- *Seasonal farmworkers* – who during the prior 12 months worked at least 25 full or partial days performing farm work, earned at least half of their income from farm work, and did not do farm work year-round for the same employer.
- *Migrant farmworkers* – who travel to perform farm work and who are unable to return to their permanent residence the same day. The migrant farmworker labor force in NJ consists of intrastate and interstate as well as H-2A farmworkers. The department places particular emphasis in providing services to migrant farmworkers as it recognizes that these workers may be less aware of local area resources and support services.
- *Intrastate migrant farmworkers* – individuals who followed migrant streams within the state. These farmworkers usually migrate throughout MSFW areas within the state.
- *Interstate migrant farmworkers* – individuals who follow migrant streams from state to state. Most interstate migrant farmworkers in NJ migrate through Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, New York and Pennsylvania.
- *H-2A foreign labor certified farmworkers* – individuals with temporary visas authorizing them to work in the United States on a seasonal basis for a predetermined employer under specific terms and conditions.

Spanish and French are common languages spoken by foreign workers in New Jersey, whose three largest countries of origin are Mexico, Haiti and Puerto Rico. The numerous migrant workers always have a need for employer-provided housing. Other leading needs of farm workers include on-site assistance accessing employment services, benefits and worker protections as well as help with unemployment insurance claims.

Farmworkers are especially likely to be disadvantaged in terms of access to information about new or changing labor market conditions or job opportunities. They are also disproportionately poor, and their economic status may limit their physical access to public labor market information and assistance resources.

The physical distances and relative social isolation typical of many rural environments slows the transmission of information by word-of-mouth. Even though seasonal migrant workers may move

great distances from one crop area to another over the course of planting, tending and harvesting seasons, their knowledge is often limited to a familiar circuit of employment opportunities, and they often lack rapid access to information that would enable them to alter routine migration patterns to take advantage of new opportunities. The low educational attainment of farmworkers is a major barrier to efficient access and rapid response to changing labor market conditions.

Workers in agricultural labor or services often perform work in remote locations for short periods of time and therefore may have little or no access to community or government resources, decreasing their ability to obtain information about alternative employment opportunities that could enable them to bargain more effectively.

Past and Projected Agricultural and Farmworker Activity
Outreach Service activities for the period of July 2014 through June 2015 were as follows:

Vineland Office:
Number of MSFWs Personally Contacted - 5,129
Approximate Staff Days Performing Outreach - 103
Number of Applications for Job Orders Taken - 19
Number of One-Stop Career Center Complaints Taken from MSFWs - 6
Number of Apparent Violations Referred to Enforcement Agencies - 0

Hammonton Office (Will be covered by Pleasantville NJ Office 2015-16)
Number of MSFWs Personally Contacted - 6,998
Approximate Staff Days Performing Outreach - 99
Number of Applications for Job Orders Taken - 40
Number of One-Stop Career Center Complaints Taken from MSFWs - 1
Number of Apparent Violations Referred to Enforcement Agencies - 1

The projected activity for July 2015 through June 2016 is that number of MSFW contacts and job orders in the two locations will be comparable to – or slightly higher than– the 2014-15 results.

Available Resources for Outreach
By PY 2015, two Outreach Workers, who formerly were Temporary Employment Service (TES) staff, became permanent year-round bilingual Interviewers – one each stationed in the One-Stop Career Centers in Hammonton, NJ and Vineland, NJ. State vehicles will soon be provided to the Outreach Workers year-round. During 2015, MSFW services in Vineland, NJ moved to the new One-Stop Career Center office on the Vineland campus of Cumberland County College, sharing space with the school's Center for Workforce and Economic Development. The Hammonton, NJ office was closed as part of a statewide consolidation of One-Stop Career Centers, but services continued to be offered through Atlantic County's other OSCC in Pleasantville.

The Outreach Workers are trained in Complaint System procedures and are prepared to take on-site complaints as needed. In addition, apparent violations observed by the Outreach Workers will

be referred to the appropriate enforcement agencies. Outreach Workers will be required to maintain a daily Outreach Log.

Depending on local circumstances (such as MSFW and employer preferences), outreach contacts may occur in agricultural fields during the workday. However, many MSFWs prefer to continue working rather than stopping to talk with an Outreach Worker. In that situation, the Outreach Workers may need to meet MSFWs during lunch or after MSFWs finish their work (usually returning to their living quarters or gathering areas).

Employer Services has plenty of funding currently available. Based upon LWD's analysis of resources available to support outreach and an assessment, there is an adequate and sufficient amount of resources available.

2) Outreach Activities. The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

(A) Contacting farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices.

(B) Providing technical assistance to outreach workers. Technical assistance must include trainings, conferences, additional resources, and increased collaboration with other organizations on topics such as one-stop center services (i.e. availability of referrals to training, supportive services, and career services, as well as specific employment opportunities), the employment service complaint system, information on the other organizations serving MSFWs in the area, and a basic summary of farmworker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment.

(C) Increasing outreach worker training and awareness across core programs including the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the training on identification of UI eligibility issues.

(D) Providing State merit staff outreach workers professional development activities to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers.

(E) Coordinating outreach efforts with NFJP grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.

In Program Year 2015, the designation of Significant and Bilingual Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs) offices will be two One-Stop Career Centers in South Jersey:

- One-Stop Career Center-Vineland: 3322 College Drive, PO Box 1500, Vineland, NJ 08362-1500
- One-Stop Career Center: Pleasantville 2 South Main Street Pleasantville, New Jersey 08232

Vineland covers over 300 farm employers and handles nine H-2A applications in its outreach service area. It is strategically located with access to the most farming intensive counties of the State and it is a Farm Labor Contractors registration site.

Pleasantville covers over 130 farm employers and handles two H-2A and one ARS applications in its outreach service area. It is strategically located with access to South Central and Central New Jersey outreach service areas. It is a Farm Labor Contractors registration site and is located in a town with a crop of national interest which attracts over 8,000 farmworkers during the peak season.

Outreach

Outreach staff will contact 40 MSFWs per day on average with a goal of reaching a total of 8,160 through the Pleasantville and Vineland local offices during the growing season.

Local Office	# of MSFWs to be Contacted during PY 16	Staff Days Conducting Outreach	# of Days per Week	# of Farms, Campsites or Gathering Places per Day	# of MSFW Contact per Day
Vineland	4,080	102	4	5	40
Pleasantville	4,080	102	4	5	40

Figure 38

Significant MSFW office management, outreach workers and other appropriate personnel will be provided with the computer-based training on services to farmworkers and farm employers.

LWD has assigned the necessary personnel to provide effective outreach services to MSFWs. Two permanent Outreach Workers work from the two designated significant MSFW offices to make sufficient visitations into the farmworker community so that a large number of MSFWs are made aware of the full range of Department services, benefits and protections.

Outreach activities are consistent with 20 CFR Part 653.107 and will serve to implement strategies aimed to identify, document and track MSFWs as they access core, intensive, and training services within the state's One-Stop Career Centers (OSCCs) . The outreach program will focus on locating and contacting farmworkers not reached through normal intake activities conducted by local OSCCs. LWD will explore and implement processes intended to meet and exceed DOLETA compliance requirements in providing qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate service delivery to MSFWs.

Outreach visits will be made to the agricultural community between March and November to locate and contact MSFWs at their working, living and /or gathering areas to inform them of current America's JobBank (AJB), PathStone Inc., and other Community-Based Organization services which may be of interest.

Outreach Strategies

LWD program modifications, performance and compliance are consistent with DOLETA strategies for developing an improved and integrated AJB/OSCC system that enhances opportunities for agricultural employers, limited-English proficient individuals, and farmworker adults and youth. Strategies will include:

- Retaining the permanent status of Outreach Workers.
- Increasing the number of MSFW participating in labor exchange activities.
- Increasing the number of agricultural employers utilizing labor exchange services.
- Promoting the use of the Agricultural (Intrastate and Interstate Clearance) Recruitment System (ARS).
- Encouraging participation of MSFWs seeking to transition to higher-wage jobs and permanent non-agricultural employment. • Enhancing collaboration with MSFW service provider organizations.
- Integrating MSFWs and organizations providing service to MSFWs in One-Stop Career Centers (OSCCs).

Outreach Workers will provide MSFWs with information in Spanish and other languages spoken by farm workers about OSCC services and how to access them. The requirements to provide reasonable language assistance services are covered by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 29 CFR Part 37 and subsequent guidance on serving limited English proficient persons issued by the USDOL.

Reasonable language assistance will allow all partners to better serve the MSFW client base. As a result, customer service and satisfaction should remain high for MSFW in the One-Stop environment.

Self-assessments of OSCC offices will include reviews of MSFW daily outreach logs and plans, Complaint System logs, MSFW program performance and compliance reports. Field office reports to the State Monitor Advocate (SMA) will include information compiled through internal and external customer contacts, customer satisfaction surveys, system-generated reports, and input provided by stakeholders.

The SMA will conduct on-site performance and compliance assurance reviews of the MSFW significant offices, and may include other non-significant offices where an agricultural presence is established. Reviews will monitor provision of equitable level and quality of services, and program operations conducive to the attainment of service delivery goals.

The SMA will also support the network of service delivery by providing technical support and training and will be available, in an advisory capacity, to LWD to maintain program integrity and compliance with federal program mandates. MSFW applications and the application-taking process shall be reviewed by the SMA, who shall check overall accuracy and quality – and offer technical advice on corrections or improvements.

Outreach program staff will consider the feasibility of meetings and program-related events in agricultural areas throughout the state. Offices in MSFW significant areas will host events that will include, but may not be limited to, meetings coordinated with federal, state, and local entities to ensure maximum coverage and representation. Outreach activities will include, but may not be limited to the following:

- Contact with OSCC Labor Exchange System partners and affiliated offices, and with non-significant offices to share information, plan and coordinate service delivery.
- Assistance, technical support, and materials to increase, participation of agricultural employers, limited-English proficient individuals; and MSFWs and levels of services provided to them through the state Labor Exchange System.
- Developing and distributing fact sheets in Spanish and English outlining employment and supportive services available to farmworkers.
- Sharing labor market information that includes current and future employment opportunities as well as special recruitment events.
- Informing limited-English proficient individuals and farm workers of employment opportunities with employers participating in local, intrastate, interstate recruitment.
- Conducting follow-up contacts with employers and workers as necessary and appropriate to ensure desired program outcomes.
- Remaining alert to working and living conditions of MSFWs and, upon observation or receipt of information regarding a suspected violation of employment-related law, documenting and referring the information to program management, local office manager and State Monitor Advocate for appropriate action.
- Maintaining daily outreach log activities in accordance with local office instructions.
- Maintain records describing the circumstances and names of employers who refused to allow outreach workers to have access to farmworkers.
- Developing cooperative agreements with partner agencies to coordinate outreach and to share data.
- Coordinating with One-Stop Career Center offices to keep them updated on farm worker issues.
- Conducting field checks in accordance to CFR 653.503 and outreach visits to MSFW, working, living, gathering areas and housing facilities pertaining to outreach program activities.

New Jersey's One-Stop Career Centers, in collaboration with strategic partners and affiliated sites, will coordinate service delivery including, but not limited to:

- Providing a full range of employment services, benefits, and protections on a basis that is qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to services provided to non-MSFWs.
- Accessing and using job order information effectively.
- Facilitating activities in accessing self-assisted services via electronic technologies.

- Referring individuals to agricultural and non-agricultural jobs, training, and supportive services as well as available testing, counseling, and other job development services.
- Referring individuals and family members to supportive services for which they may be eligible.
- Conducting follow-up contacts as necessary and appropriate to ensure desired outcomes.
- Marketing services available in the local office and providing location information for the nearest AJB center or affiliated partner offices.
- Assisting in posting résumés on-line and conducting on-line job searches through the NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development's Jobs4Jersey.com website.
- Assisting in communicating between limited English proficient individuals referred to jobs and employers.

(3) Services provided to farmworkers and agricultural employers through the one-stop delivery system. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

(A) Providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both farmworkers and agricultural employers, through the one-stop delivery system. This includes:

i. How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers;

ii. How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.

Agricultural employers are provided with a single point of contact, a Business Representative at the Business Resource Center who will provide them with information regarding the One-Stop Career Center services, such as how to file job orders through Jobs4Jersey.com, and utilize the New Jersey Automated Call-in System and the Internet. Business Representatives will also be trained in the H-2A program, while Agricultural survey staff members explain the H-2A program and distribute the H-2A Employer Handbook during their field-survey visits. Services and assistance for agricultural employers also include:

- Personalized employer services.
- Information on how to register and use OnRamp at Jobs4Jersey.com for talent needs.
- Current information on applicant availability and labor market information.
- Suggestions and assistance to improve workforce utilization and personnel practices.
- Use of OSCC Labor Exchange System sites for interviewing prospective employees.
- Assistance in obtaining bonding.
- Assistance in writing effective job orders.
- Solicitation and acceptance of job orders, as well as related jobseeker referral and placement services.
- Assistance with pre-occupancy housing inspections for employers requesting approval for participation in intrastate and/or interstate recruitment through the Agricultural Recruitment System, and/or H-2A foreign labor certification.

- Assistance with special and mass recruitments, including best practices to identify and locate intended farm labor pools through appropriate use of media modes and service delivery partnership networks.
- Assistance with processing and obtaining initial and renewed farm labor contractor and/or farm labor contractor employer certifications.
- Assistance with workshops tailored to agricultural employer needs.
- Assistance with internet website linkages.
- Assistance with information on employment and training programs, tax incentives, and subsidized employment.
- Assistance utilizing Work Opportunity Tax Credits, subsidized employment resources, and other employer incentives to promote employment and job upgrades for MSFWs.

(B) Marketing the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.

Both farm workers and farm worker advocacy groups are provided with information throughout the year on how to utilize the Employment Service complaint system whenever Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker customers do not receive the same level of service as non-MSFWs at any of the state's One-Stop Career Centers.

(C) Marketing the Agricultural Recruitment System to agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such publicity.

H2-A agricultural survey staff members and Outreach Workers disseminate on-site information on the ARS to agricultural employers as part of any field visits. Offering more information online and expanding farm employer partnerships are being explored as a way to reach additional employers.

(4) Other Requirements.

(A) Collaboration. Describe any collaborative agreements the SWA has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

New Jersey's One-Stop Career Centers, in collaboration with strategic partners and affiliated sites, will coordinate service delivery including marketing services available in the local office and providing location information for the nearest One-Stop Career Center or affiliated partner offices. In PY 2013, a renewed Memorandum of Understanding signed between LWD and PathStone Inc., continued to facilitate the exchange of data pertaining to services provided to MSFWs.

To expand beyond the central partnership with Pathstone Inc, the SWA and staff host monthly meetings with a wide range of local, regional and state organizations engaged in MSFW support services which is known as the Helping Hands Coalition. Appropriate LWD personnel will also

participate in the USDOL Region I annual Pre-Harvest conference and other Post Harvest meetings. Additionally, agricultural services staff will participate in other local meetings (as well as other important events) conducted by farm-related agencies and organizations (as well as other important events) to promote the use of LWD services.

(B) Review and Public Comment. In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP.

i. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has routinely shared draft Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker policies and procedures via email with a number of South Jersey community based organizations interested in farm worker issues, including: PathStone, Inc.; Legal Services of New Jersey/Farmworkers Project; Comité de Apoyo a Trabajadores Agrícolas (CATA); and the New Jersey Farm Bureau. These groups are also solicited for comments whenever an updated AOP is released for public comment, and respond with input.

(C) Data Assessment. Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

With guidance from the Regional Monitor Advocate, New Jersey is moving toward a two-year cycle of on-site reviews that will reach all 25 One-Stop Career Centers – particularly those that are "non-significant" offices far from the main agricultural areas – to ensure that MSFW services are on par with non-MSFW customers.

(D) Assessment of progress. The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

The projection below represents job order activity in the following sectors of agriculture: Vegetable and Melon Farming, Non-Citrus Fruit, Berries, Greenhouse, Nursery, Trees and Floriculture Production. This analysis takes into consideration that New Jersey is a non-significant, low MSFW activity State. In addition, New Jersey is not a State of traditional or expected labor supply.

	PY 2014	PY 2015
Agricultural Job Orders Received	40	38
Number of Job Orders Filled	10	0
% Filled	25%	0%
% Yet to be Filled	75%	0%
Interstate Clearance Orders Initiated	150	38

Figure 39

The State Monitor Advocate reports that virtually all the Job Orders received in New Jersey are H-2A related Job Orders. Some of these orders are filed under the 50% rule exception (the employer requests -- and is granted -- this exception under CFR 655.135). Under this rule, the recruitment of domestic workers period ends 3 days before the employer's start date. As a result, some of these orders become inactive early -- before the work starts.

(E) State Monitor Advocate. The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

The State Monitor Advocate has been afforded the opportunity to review and approve this AOP.

Wagner-Peyser Act Assurances

#	Statement of Assurance
1.	The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time. (sec 121(e)(3));
2.	The State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 (State agency staffing requirements) if the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers;
3.	If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and
4.	State agency merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with Department of Labor regulations.

Adult Education and Literacy

(a) Aligning of Content Standards. Describe how the eligible agency will, by July 1, 2016, align its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

The State of New Jersey has moved to the College and Career Readiness Standards as the adult literacy content standards for its WIOA Adult Education and Literacy programs. New Jersey has adopted these standards for the adult literacy systems, in order to meet the new requirements under WIOA. The College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Literacy not only meet the requirements of WIOA, the standards measure proficiencies up to a 12th grade level and beyond. WIOA promotes the better coordination between local area Title II providers, One-Stop Career Center programs and services, and the various workforce development partners. Better collaboration of one-stop partners, implementation of proven EFF concepts and resources and alignment of college and career readiness standards, presents New Jersey's adult literacy system with the opportunity to improve. The opportunities for improving New Jersey's adult literacy system includes; service delivery, leveraging of available resources, professional development activities and the establishment of curriculum content criteria.

(b) Local Activities. Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of local activities.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)

Adult education;

Literacy;

Workplace adult education and literacy activities;

Family literacy activities;

English language acquisition activities;

Integrated English literacy and civics education;

Workforce preparation activities; or

Integrated education and training that—

1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and

2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act services in New Jersey are delivered through "Programs of Instruction" that receive AEFLA funds via a competitive grant process. Because of disparate

demographics and economic climates within the State, the resultant variety of student needs, and the dissimilar nature of the institutions and organizations through which ABE is delivered, Programs of Instruction are encouraged to deliver services in the way that most effectively meets the needs in their communities.

Instruction is delivered through classes, small group instruction, and tutoring. In general:

- Instruction is delivered at community colleges, schools, community-based organizations, businesses, community buildings, prisons, jails and honor camps, faith-based organizations, or anywhere students can be accommodated
- Instruction is year-round, from July 1 through June 30 (fiscal year)
- Instruction is offered during daytime, evening and weekend hours to enable certain working adults to participate and effectively utilize available resources

The following types of programs are provided:

- *Adult Basic Education (ABE):* These are classes below the high school level where the primary objective is teaching basic literacy skills. Each course of study describes the focus population; the functioning level of the learners served; the basic literacy and life skills taught; and how these skills will be integrated into a competency-based adult education program. Adult education in elementary basic skills focus on native English speakers whose inability to effectively use these basic skills constitutes a substantial impairment to either obtain or retain employment or to function in society.
- *English as a Second Language (ESL):* This program of instruction is designed to help individuals of limited English proficiency achieve competence in the English language. The inability to understand, speak, read, or write the English language may constitute a substantial impairment to obtain or retain employment commensurate with their abilities, and interfere with functioning successfully in society.
- *Vocational Literacy (VESL or VABE):* These programs are designed to increase the productivity of the workforce through improved workplace English literacy skills. The curriculum focuses on pre-employment and workplace competencies as well as general English language and communication skills. The curriculum also provides students with the necessary basic skills, cognitive skills, and personal and interpersonal qualities important to obtain and retain employment.
- *Adult Secondary Education (ASE or GED):* Adult secondary subjects consist of courses in mathematics, reading, history, science, government, language arts, and other courses leading to a high school diploma. The NJDOE has approved three high school equivalency exams; the TASC developed by Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), the HiSET developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS), and the GED developed by Pearson Vue. Both the TASC and HiSET are composed of five sub-tests covering the areas of mathematics, writing, reading, science, social studies and are currently offered in online and paper formats. The GED is composed of four sub-tests covering the areas of reasoning through language arts, mathematical reasoning, science, social studies and is only offered in an online format.
- *Family Literacy (ABE or ESL):* Family Literacy programs provide services of sufficient intensity and duration to promote sustainable changes in a family, and integrate all of the

following activities: (1) interactive literacy activities between parents and their children; (2) training for parents on becoming the primary teacher for their children and participating as full partners in the education of their children; (3) parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and (4) an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

- *EL Civics* - Citizenship Preparation Education: This program's focus is on literacy skills and uses ESL methodologies and citizenship preparation material to prepare learners to take and pass the USCIS tests. The program also includes outreach services, skills assessment, curriculum development and instruction, naturalization preparation and assistance.
- *EL Civics* - Civic Participation: This program supports the design, creation, implementation, and delivery of instructional activities that either integrate civics education content with existing ESL programs or are stand-alone civic participation programs. Civic Education is an educational program that emphasizes contextualized instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, naturalization procedures, civic participation, and U.S. history and government to help learners acquire the skills and knowledge to become active and informed parents, workers, and community members.

Currently, New Jersey's Consolidated Adult Basic Skills (ABS) and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Grant Program is the mechanism for funding local adult education and literacy activities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 (P.L. 113-128), Title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). These grant programs are awarded through a consortium model with a designated Lead Agency and additional local partners/consortium members.

The lead agency is expected to act on behalf of its partners in both a programmatic and fiscal capacity by providing management and leadership for the conduct and implementation of the adult education and literacy program across the consortium of partners. In the event of other entities receiving WIOA Title II funding and providing WIOA Title II services in the respective WDB regions, the lead agency of the consortium is required to include those service providers' National Reporting System (NRS) data into the consortium database. The lead agency is also required to provide the necessary fiscal information to the state for reporting purposes both to the state and the federal government. Quarterly meetings during the contract period are hosted by the lead agency and attended by all consortium partners. These meetings include county and regional One-Stop Career Center representation and the state Technical Assistant Representative from the LWD, Division of Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity, Literacy Services.

Partner/consortium agencies are expected to adhere to programmatic, data and fiscal requests as deemed necessary and appropriate by the lead agency and to respond to all requests for such data in a timely and comprehensive manner. The One-Stop Operator or designee participates as an ex-officio partner in each of the funded consortia.

In Fiscal Year 2016, the total amount of federal funds available for this grant program is $14,569,560 and New Jersey awarded continuation awards to eligible applicants ranging from $308,200 to $1,637,560. Historically, LWD has offered a one-year continuation, competitive grant

program open to eligible providers to provide adult education and literacy services. In accordance with Federal requirements WIOA, Title II (Sec. 203, (5) (A)-(J)) eligible providers include:

- A local educational agency;
- A community or faith-based organization of demonstrated effectiveness;
- A volunteer literacy organization of demonstrated effectiveness;
- An institution of higher education;
- A public or private nonprofit agency;
- A library;
- A public housing authority;
- A nonprofit institution that is not described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (G) and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals;
- A consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries or authorities described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (H); or
- A partnership between an employer and an entity described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (I).

The awarding of continuation grants to eligible applicants has been based upon educational attainment level for each local area and the following 13 elements:

- The degree to which the eligible provider is responsive to:
    - Regional needs as identified in the local plan under section 108; and
    - Serving individuals in the community who were identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities.
- The ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities; including eligible individuals with learning disabilities;
- The past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, to meet State-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in section 116, especially with respect to eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy;
- The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under section 108, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners;
- Whether the eligible provider's program –
    - is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and
    - uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction;
- Whether activities, including whether reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice;

- Whether activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems to increase the amount and quality of learning and how such technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance;
- Whether activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;
- Whether activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who have access to high quality professional development;
- Whether activities are coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community for the development of career pathways;
- Whether activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with Federal, State, and local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs;
- Whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section 116) and to monitor program performance; and
- Whether the local areas in which the eligible provider is located have a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

In developing their proposals, local adult education and literacy providers are required to consult with the local Workforce Development Board to determine priorities and gaps in service and identify opportunities for collaboration as well as the overall fit of the proposed program with the Workforce Development Board's local area plan.

While many of the Consolidated Adult Basic Skills (ABS) and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Grant Program requirements will remain the same for eligible providers in the future, New Jersey is interested in exploring approaches that encourage regionalism and further system alignment among adult education and literacy and other workforce programs available in the One-Stop Career Centers. In the next grant cycle (FY 2017), LWD will consider releasing funding at the regional level rather than to sub-regional consortia as well as requiring eligible applicants to demonstrate how they will:

- Work toward co-location at the One-Stop Career Centers at least on a part-time basis;
- Integrate occupational skills into program activities and/or contextualize learning; and
- Leverage adult education and literacy as a tool to make career pathways available for individuals from all educational backgrounds.

In doing so, LWD will ensure regions and local providers are provided with the training and support to make these changes. For example, LWD would offer planning grants for local areas to work in tandem with their One-Stop Career System and regional partners, if necessary.

In addition, New Jersey is streamlining the Adult Education and Literacy programs delivery system and leveraging other funding streams to support those populations that are most in need, including TANF, GA, and SNAP participants. New Jersey will work with its partners and Title II providers to facilitate provision of services to a greater number of these customers, as funding allows.

Adult Literacy and Community Library Pilot Program:

Beginning in early 2016, LWD will launch the Adult Literacy and Community Library Partnership (ALCLP) pilot program to create direct partnerships between local libraries and New Jersey's Federal WIOA Title II adult literacy instructional service providers. New Jersey libraries are an essential partner in providing adult literacy services within their communities. LWD views the services provided by New Jersey libraries as complimentary to the WIOA Title II system and as such wants to create new and/or expand existing partnerships between the two groups. The expected outcome is that New Jersey residents will see expanded service opportunities that includes additional locations and time availabilities that meet their needs. This pilot program funding is designed to improve access and instructional opportunities for New Jersey residents to increase their Adult Basic Education and/or English Language proficiency skills through the state's library system. WIOA Title II providers are envisioned to best provide traditional classroom instruction and the libraries to provide the delivery setting and wrap around support services to achieve success.

The Department sets a priority on awarding grants that demonstrate clear and meaningful outcomes. The key outcomes established by LWD for this pilot training grant program are one or more of the following:

1. Functional grade level advancement based on WIOA Title II metrics;
2. Increase in the student's Workplace, Financial, or Health Literacy Skills; or
3. Connection and enrollment to a credential bearing career pathway opportunity.

All funded training efforts must contribute towards greater employability opportunities and/or career advancement for New Jersey residents in need of jobs as well as those in low-wage, lower-skilled occupations.

(c) Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals. Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

Adult education and literacy activities;

Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;

Secondary school credit;

Integrated education and training;

Career pathways;

Concurrent enrollment;

Peer tutoring; and

Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program…

The LWD Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program ensures that not more than 10 percent of 82.5 percent of the funding for the cost of educational programs is allocated for programs for criminal offenders in the correctional facilities as well as for other institutional individuals. Emphasis is on programs that promote: 1) adult basic education; 2) programs for individuals with disabilities as well as other special needs; 3) English literacy programs; 4) secondary school credit programs; 5) transitional support to prepare students to make a successful transition to the community; and 6) life skills and employability skill development to prepare students to gain employment.

LWD will use the same grant announcement and application process to provide funds to serve individuals in correctional facilities and other institutions that is being used for all other eligible providers.

Providers that receive funds to provide programs and services to correctional facilities and other institutions will be required to describe in their grant application, in addition to all other program requirements, how they will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

Ensuring continuity of services for offenders transitioning from prison back to their communities is an important goal for New Jersey. WIOA Title II and State Literacy funds (Workforce Learning Link) are provided to the correctional system so that work-readiness services can be implemented prior to release to help promote a seamless transition to community-based One-Stop Career Center services and then into employment.

Wagner-Peyser provides accessibility for all populations to the full range of One-Stop Career Center employment and training programs. Programs designed to serve the needs of special populations with or without significant barriers to employment are integrated into the universal access provided by Wagner-Peyser and WIA. Members of special populations, however, identified as having significant barriers to employment often require more intensive services to reach the employment goal. Significant barriers include poor previous attachment to the workforce, literacy or language barriers, ex-offender status, educational or occupational skills gap or lack of a credential, physical or mental disability, and driver's license suspension.

To help special populations with significant barriers to employment, New Jersey has created targeted programs and dedicated staff to help ensure positive outcomes. The challenge is to meet

customers where they are by creating a proactive approach to promote and serve special populations. Once special populations enter the One-Stop Career Center system, ensuring that customers receive the services needed to reach their goal becomes a staff responsibility. All One-Stop Career Center staff members need to take ownership for the customer experience by providing warm handoffs when referrals to other service providers are appropriate. That involves taking the extra time to walk customers to where they need to go, introducing them to staff that can help them, and then circling back with customers to make sure their needs were met. Staff need to follow-up with customers to ensure all jobseekers remain engaged and focused on overcoming barriers to enable them to successfully (re)enter the workforce. Maintaining a stronger, more supportive connection to customers will result in better outcomes and improve the perceived value of the One-Stop Career Centers.

As noted previously, the SETC also works with the Department of Corrections and the Juvenile Justice Commission to align educational and training opportunities for incarcerated individuals.

(d) Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program. Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries.

Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program and how the funds will be used for the program.

See section (b) above. New Jersey implements Consolidated Adult Basic Skills and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Grant Programs.

(e) State Leadership. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA.

Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out permissible State Leadership Activities under section 223 of WIOA, if applicable.

Required Activities:

As the state pursues a more regional approach to adult education and literacy, LWD will offer planning grants to consortia to prepare for more system integration and alignment of programs. These planning grants will allow regions time to develop transition strategies to align adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and One-Stop Career Center partners to implement career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.

Furthermore, the state will develop, and fund, a comprehensive, ongoing professional development system that enables adult literacy staff to meet new WIOA requirements. Key to this professional development system will be the requirement that Workforce Development Boards

conduct joint planning and training for One-Stop, adult literacy and WDB staff directed toward establishing partnerships, resource sharing and appropriate and necessary student referrals.

Professional development will utilize multiple delivery modes to reach part-time and other hard to reach staff. This includes a mix of in-person meetings, synchronous online events and resources made available online.

To reinforce the professional development strategies, technical assistance will be provided to eligible providers of adult education and literacy on programmatic and instructional practices that take into account the educational needs of all learners, including access to career pathways, and strategies to tailor curriculum to each student's level. Monitoring visits will be conducted to ensure compliance with any and all regulatory requirements. Upon review of the findings from the monitoring visits if corrective action is necessary proof of completion would be required.

Technical assistance will also include practices aimed at leveraging eligible providers' position as a one-stop partner to facilitate access to employment, training, and supportive services necessary for progress through career pathways.

(f) Assessing Quality. Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

LWD provides Technical Assistance to all program providers through monitoring and corrective action, Report Cards detailing program performance year to date as it pertains to their goals, monthly data quality review, and targeted trainings to review data for accuracy and to find missing details. LWD also provides funding to each consortium to provide professional development specific to the needs of their partner agencies along with Statewide Professional Development opportunities to meet a broader need for the program.

Adult Education and Literacy Certifications and Assurances

CERTIFICATIONS

#	Statement of Certification
1.	The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;
2.	The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;
3.	The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;
4.	All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;

5.	A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;
6.	The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;
7.	The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and
8.	The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program.

ASSURANCES

#	Statement of Assurance
1.	The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions);
2.	The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;
3.	The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA; and
4.	The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities;
5.	The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program; and
6.	Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

Vocational Rehabilitation

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) is the primary agency responsible for delivering high-quality services to consumers with disabilities other than blindness, vision-impairment, and deaf-blindness. Consistent with the requirements of WIOA, DVRS is committed through its array of programming to helping its consumers to secure integrated, competitive employment. In pursuit of this general objective, DVRS administers services ranging from counseling and guidance, vocational assessment and training, supported employment, to specific supports based on individual vocational rehabilitation need.

DVRS subscribes to the Employment First principles adopted by Governor Christie, and the agency believes that these principles should be accomplished in the context of long-term career pathway development.

DVRS is committed to working with all WIOA partners, and is currently co-located in 16 of the 18 offices throughout the State of New Jersey.

(a) Input of State Rehabilitation Council. All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

(1) input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;

The New Jersey State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) provides oversight and advises the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), the designated state unit (DSU) within the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD). LWD is the designated state agency (DSA). The SRC is a partnership of people with disabilities, advocates, and other interested persons who are committed to ensuring through policy development, implementation, and advocacy that New Jersey has a rehabilitation program that is not only comprehensive and consumer-responsive but also effective, efficient, and significantly funded. The SRC is dedicated to ensuring that people with disabilities receive rehabilitation services that result in gainful employment. Representing the myriad of diversity that is New Jersey, council members believe that individuals with disabilities are the "untapped resource" to the business community and assert that disability is a natural part of the human experience that in no way diminishes a person's right to fully participate in all aspects of American life. Members of the SRC in New Jersey believe in a public system of vocational rehabilitation that is responsible and accountable to those it serves and to those who fund it; they believe that competitive jobs generate tax revenue and enable all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to spend discretionary income which contributes to the state's economy.

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) and its SRC continue to maintain a strong relationship and partnership on behalf of individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and vision impaired.

The functions of the SRC are to:

- Review, analyze, and advise CBVI regarding performance of its responsibilities of the agency as per the Rehabilitation Act amendments of 2014;
- Assist CBVI with the development of State goals and priorities, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the Vocational Rehabilitation program;
- Advise and assist CBVI with the preparation of the State Plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations required under the Rehabilitation Act amendments of 2014;
- Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with, Vocational Rehabilitation services;
- Prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) on the status of Vocational Rehabilitation programs operated within the State, and to make the report available to the public;
- Coordinate with other councils within the State, including the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC);
- Establish successful working relationships between CBVI, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and Centers for Independent Living within the State; and
- Perform other functions consistent with the purpose of this title, as the SRC determines to be appropriate.

SRC Recommendations for DVRS:

- The SRC understands that the job of the counselor is unique and requires knowledge of vocational rehabilitation specific to individuals with disabilities. The SRC recommends continued requirement of the New Jersey DVRS counselor position to include a master's degree in vocational rehabilitation or a closely related field as per current civil service description.
- The SRC recommends that the DVRS continue to educate the community and policy makers as to the services, successes and outcomes of the state public vocational rehabilitation program, including the return on investment from using vocational rehabilitation services.
- The SRC recognizes that the DVRS program is affected by state funding cuts. The SRC recommends that the DVRS identifies and advocates strategies to ensure that state matching funds will be consistently available for future fiscal years and that there is funding for maintenance of effort.
- The SRC recognizes that jobseekers with disabilities sometimes require innovative approaches to enhance their chance to garner gainful integrated employment. The SRC recommends that the DVRS pursue strategies such as using paid internships for DVRS consumers and increase the use of on-the-job training (OJT) opportunities for qualified DVRS jobseekers as appropriate.
- The SRC further recommends that the DVRS develop strategies that will enhance opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities currently participating in segregated employment programs who, through informed choice, identify the desire to move into integrated employment.

- The SRC recognizes that public satisfaction for DVRS services is critical and recommends that DVRS establish yearly public forums throughout the state that focus on specific topics based on the goals established by the comprehensive statewide needs assessment.

SRC Recommendations for CBVI

- The combined state plan must be relevant for all Workforce partners. The state plan needs to detail points of congruence and differences, with the goal of achieving the outcome of competitive, integrated employment.
- The Disability subcommittee of the WIOA Blueprint Team developed an accessibility checklist and training protocols for the One-Stop Career Centers. The SRCs should be given the opportunity to review those documents and make recommendations for improvement. In the absence of this opportunity, the accessibility checklist should be relied upon strongly in helping these facilities provide an accessible service environment.
- Training related to better serving individuals with disabilities in the workforce system should also include subject matter experts that are part of a Technical Assistance Unit who can provide coaching to front line staff on disability specific issues, including blindness and vision impairment. Training must be linked with ongoing coaching.
- As do all workforce programs, CBVI and DVRS shall target jobs that are above minimum wage. While continuing to operate programs that provide a supported work environment for those who require such assistance, in keeping with the requirements of Section 511 of WIOA, New Jersey's goal is for people to transition to integrated settings where people earn at or above a minimum wage.
- Emphasize the blindness specific issues, such as computer and print access issues at One-Stop Career Centers. Develop capacity to understand specific needs of various communities that will be using the One-Stop Career Centers or other aspects of the Workforce Development system.
- Points of alignment with the broader workforce development system through inter-agency cooperative agreements to define relationships. This should also include the involvement of local school districts that should be involved in the transition to adult outcomes, including post-secondary education and employment.
- Evaluation for training providers via the consumer report card, the SRC would like to review the document and align the training evaluation at the VR agency.
- The SRC would like to emphasize that the Commission is uniquely situated to provide high-quality VR services to blind and vision-impaired consumers, and the Commission has data that verifies that VR agencies that focus on blind and vision-impaired customers enjoy quantifiable measures that prove that these consumers achieve significantly better outcomes in terms of job placement, wages, length of employment, training competencies, and the like.

SRC Input and Recommendations Regarding FFY 2015 State Plan Goals and Priorities

- Administrative staff presented to the SRC membership the proposed goals and priorities, state strategies, and Town Hall comments for the FFY 2015 State Plans for review and comment. The SRC supported the agencies initiatives and priorities.
- One of the continuing initiatives is for the SRC and CBVI to expand outreach efforts to further educate agencies and the general public about blindness and vision impairment. The SRC membership also recommended that the agency perform additional public awareness forums to educate New Jerseyans about Commission services.
- Based on comments from the public forums, the SRC will form an ad-hoc committee to assist the Commission with the State Plan connected to assistive technology training.
- The SRC also praised CBVI for maintaining communication with consumers, understanding their needs, developing initiatives to address their needs and open up employment opportunities.

(2) the Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and

(3) the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.

- DVRS accepts the recommendation to maintain the requirement of a VR counselor to include a master's degree in vocational rehabilitation or a closely related field as per current civil service description.
- DVRS accepts the recommendation to educate the community and policy makers as to the services, successes and outcomes of the public VR program and will implement marketing strategies to educate the public about its services.
- DVRS accepts the recommendation to identify new sources of state match in order to be able to draw down the total federal allotment and ensure maintenance of effort is funded.
- DVRS accepts the recommendation to develop processes that will encourage the use of paid internships for DVRS consumers and increase the use of on-the-job training opportunities for qualified DVRS jobseekers.
- DVRS accepts the recommendation to enhance opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities currently participating in segregated employment programs who, through informed choice, identify the desire to move into integrated employment.
- DVRS accepts the recommendation to establish yearly public forums throughout the state that will focus on specific topics based on the goals established by the comprehensive statewide needs assessment and looks forward to further suggestions from the SRC for any additional topic areas.

DVRS approves of all recommendations from the SRC.

- CBVI accepts the recommendation and makes its top priority to seek competitive, integrated employment outcomes for all consumers its serves. The agency will continue to work collaboratively with all core partners in the Workforce Development system and other partners to achieve this goal.

- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will facilitate for the SRC membership to review and provide feedback on improving the accessibility checklist and training protocols for One-Stop Career Centers
- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will assist in developing the capacity of a Technical Assistance Unit within the Workforce Development system to train and coach front line staff on disability specific issues, including blindness and vision impairment.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation to target jobs for consumers with disabilities that are above minimum wage and to assist consumers in supported work environments to transition to integrated settings with competitive wages.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will assist One-Stop Career Centers with issues related to improving computer and print access for individuals with vision impairments and to develop the capacity of staff in the One-Stop Career Centers to understand the specific needs of the blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind communities.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will seek to develop new inter-agency cooperative agreements to support transition for youth to adult outcomes, including an emphasis on post-secondary education and employment.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will work with the SRC membership to develop protocols for evaluating CBVI training vendors that are in alignment with State Law and the provisions of the Combined State Plan.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will continue to provide high-quality VR services to blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers to promote positive employment outcomes for the consumers its serves.

CBVI approves of all recommendations of the SRC.

(b) Request for Waiver of Statewideness. When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

(1) a local public agency will provide the non-Federal share of costs associated with the services to be provided in accordance with the waiver request;

(2) the designated State unit will approve each proposed service before it is put into effect; and

(3) requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

DVRS requests a waiver of statewideness in order to develop third-party cooperative agreements with local education agencies (LEAs), public higher education agencies, and county human services agencies. These agreements between DVRS and local public agencies are designed to increase the availability and quality of VR services leading to employment outcomes. In geographic areas where a cooperative agreement is not available, individuals can apply for VR services at any local DVRS office.

Cooperative agreements will include the following required federal assurances:

- Local funds used as match are certified as non-federal monies. The non-federal share of funds are made available by the local public agencies to DVRS and are either paid through a cash match contribution or reported as certified expenditures of redirected agency staff time to provide a unique pattern of VR services exclusively to DVRS applicants/consumers. Each cooperative agreement identifies the type and amount of match to be provided by the local public agency.
- The types of VR services provided to DVRS applicants/consumers by the local public agency or associated vendor are identified by the VR counselor.
- Prior written approval is issued by DVRS to the local public agency or associated CRP, which designates the specific type of VR services to be provided to DVRS applicants/ consumers.
- The VR services provided are only for DVRS applicants/consumers and are new services that have a VR focus or existing services that have been modified, adapted, expanded, or reconfigured to have a VR focus; and, that are not customary services the local public agency is legally mandated to provide. The services included in each cooperative agreement are based on the local needs of DVRS applicants/consumers and the local public agency.
- Program expenses for cooperative agreement services are under the administrative supervision of DVRS through the cooperative agreement.
- Each cooperative program and DVRS District establishes a mutual referral system for individuals to apply for VR services.
- All State Plan requirements will apply to all services provided to DVRS applicants/consumers under the cooperative agreement.

(c) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System. Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

(1) Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;

(2) State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;

(3) Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture;

(4) Noneducational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and

(5) State use contracting programs.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) believes that collaboration with stakeholders is essential to assisting people with disabilities to successfully become employed. Such an ongoing effort maximizes resources and addresses the quality of life issues that can impact the ability of a person with a disability to obtain and maintain employment.

The DVRS is part of Workforce Development within LWD and is a strong partner with the One-Stop Career Center Workforce Investment System throughout the state. The agency also enjoys a cooperative relationship with state and community-based agencies to collaborate on programs that will promote the empowerment and economic independence of individuals with disabilities in an effort to encourage employment. The agency arranges memoranda of understanding (MOUs) for the purpose of carrying out activities that require a formalized response or protocol in the delivery of services. Since the Governor has declared through Executive Order, that New Jersey become the 14th Employment First state, the DVRS is reexamining all of the current MOUs in order to ensure policy aligns with the intent of Employment First.

Employment First: What Will Be Different?

2013 **2016**

(2013)

- Many individuals with significant developmental disabilities (DD) don't come through the doors of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS.)
- There are low expectations of employment for Individuals with significant developmental disabilities (DD)
- Transition students with DD and adults in sheltered workshops do not have a clear path to DVRS, state partners & employment
- DD individuals have limited opportunities in the workforce to make commensurate wages
- Individuals with DD have a high rate of unemployment as well as being underemployed
- DVRS currently provides services to approximately 2,500 individuals with developmental disabilities

(2016)

- More individuals with significant developmental disabilities (DD) will have greater access to become DVRS consumers
- DVRS staff, vendors, and state partners will have the expectation that employment is the first and preferred option for adult activity for those with DD
- DD consumers including transition students and persons in workshops will have increased opportunities for a smooth transition into employment via a defined process established by DVRS and state partners
- DD consumers will be provided with programs and services that offer job targeted skill development, education and training
- DD individuals will have increased opportunities to become DVRS consumers, obtain job skills, and obtain competitive employment that matches their interests, skills & capabilities
- Through a leverage of services with DDD, DVRS will serve an increased amount of DD individuals

Figure 40

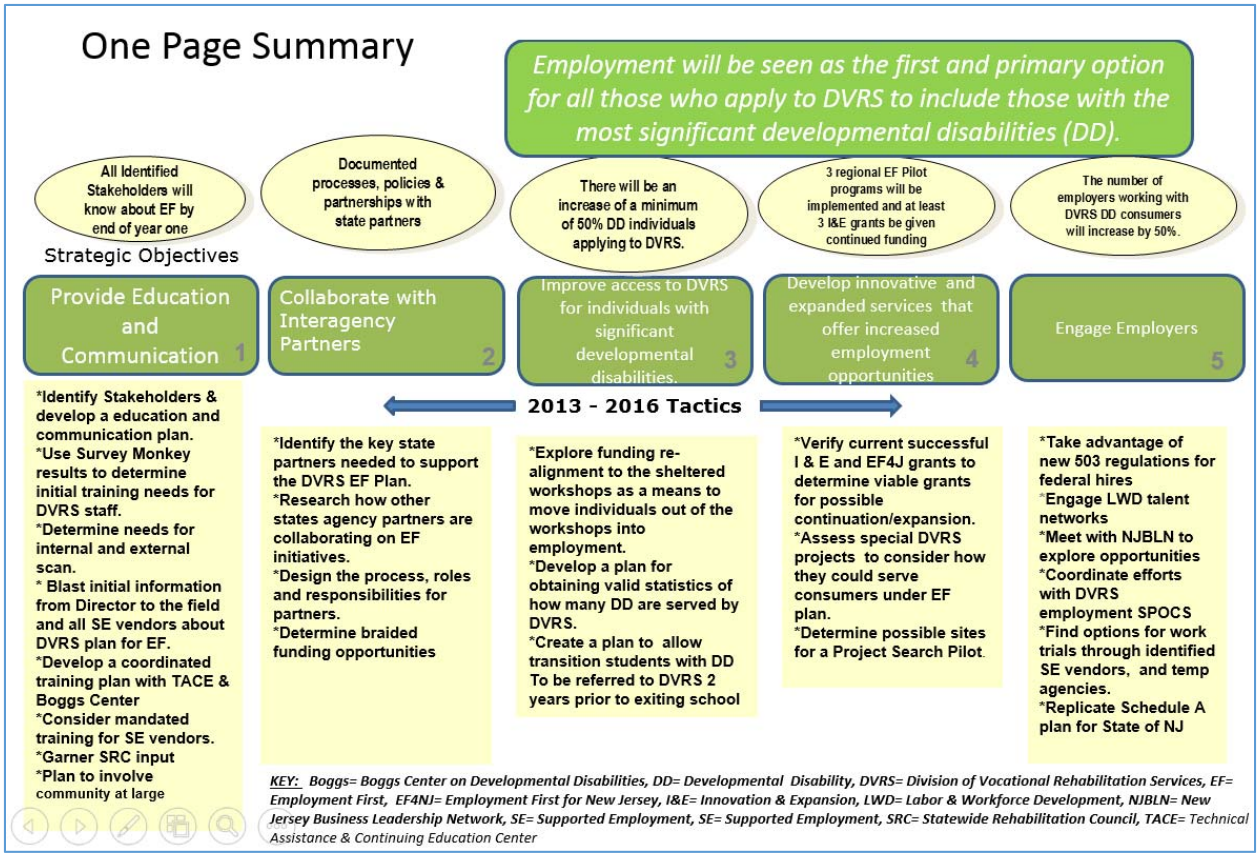


Figure 41

MOUs that have been revised include the following:

- The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) – DVRS and CBVI entered into a formal MOU with DDD in FFY 2015. The MOU outlines the process for DDD consumers who are interested in competitive integrated employment to access VR services.

MOUs that will be revised/developed include the following:

- Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) – DVRS and CBVI will develop an MOU with OSEP to coordinate efforts for students with disabilities to ensure that all students in transition have the opportunity to receive pre-employment transition services.
- Department of Children and Families (DCF) – DVRS and CBVI will reach out to DCF to develop an MOU relating to students with disabilities that are under their system of care. This includes students with intellectual and developmental disabilities under the age of 21 as well as students with disabilities with significant and pervasive psychiatric and behavioral health needs who are being served by DCF.
- Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS), DHS – DVRS and CBVI will establish an MOU with DMAHS, the lead agency administering Medicaid Waivers.

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI)

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI or Commission) is the primary agency responsible for delivering high-quality services to consumers who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind. Consistent with the requirements of WIOA, CBVI is committed through its array of programming to helping its consumers to secure integrated, competitive employment. In pursuit of this general objective, CBVI administers both a comprehensive, residential training program and itinerant programs that focus on blindness-specific pre-employment training, including development of communications skills, orientation and mobility, nonvisual independent living techniques, and adjustment to blindness training.

CBVI subscribes to the Employment First principles adopted by Governor Christie, and believes that these principles should be accomplished in the context of long-term career development. CBVI is committed to working with all WIOA partners, including One-Stop Career Centers, to provide technical assistance that will help guarantee that general employment focused services are provided in accessible forms to consumers who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind.

CBVI has developed a Strategic Plan that will govern the agency's forward momentum during the next three to five years. This Strategic Plan focuses on six distinct areas for improvement or change. The five relevant focus areas of the Strategic Plan as they relate to the Combined State Plan include:

1. Development of an agency-wide service delivery redesign;
2. Adoption of significant blindness education program reforms that will lead ultimately to helping consumers achieve integrated, competitive employment;
3. Promotion of new and innovative VR and Employment programs that will strengthen core VR functions;
4. Cultivation of improved internal and external communications among agency staff and among the broader blindness, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind communities; and,
5. Facilitation of improved external partnerships and resources to assist the agency in achieving its goals and objectives.

The size of the population served by the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired as well as the complexity of services required by consumers who are blind, deaf-blind, or vision impaired necessitates that the agency develops cooperative relationships with organizations and service providers that facilitate and enhance the ability to deliver targeted, high quality services. The Commission does not carry out programs by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture. In addition, the Commission does not utilize any State Use programs. The Commission has cooperative agreements and/or strong working relationships with the following agencies and organizations which are not required partners of the Statewide Workforce Investment System:

- Cooperative agreements/partnerships with other divisions within the Designated State Agency (DSA):
    - Division of Aging Services: services to support senior citizens in the community.

- Division of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing: equipment distribution program for individuals who are deaf and hard-of-hearing; sign language interpreter referral program; field services to connect with community services.
- Division of Developmental Disabilities: Supported Employment services coordination including Extended Services and a full range of support services to assist individuals with developmental disabilities integrate into their communities, including assistance with supported, community-based housing.
- Division of Disability Services: Personal assistance/care services to individuals who are disabled, and information and referral services on a wide range of services. In FFY 2012, the Commission partnered with this agency to provide fiscal intermediary services through a contract with a community provider for consumers of the Support Service Provider-New Jersey program.
- Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services - Full range of mental health and addiction recovery services offered in the community and training on these services to staff at the agency.

- Cooperative agreements/partnerships with other departments within the State of New Jersey:
  - Department of Education, Office of Special Education: Technical assistance with implementation of education and transition services under IDEA, and contact system to provide itinerant education services to children who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind via the Local Educational Agencies in New Jersey. CBVI provides comprehensive educational services to children that are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind.
  - Department of Children and Families: protection services for vulnerable children and families.
  - Department of Health: coordination of early intervention services and the Diabetic Eye Disease Detection Program.
  - New Jersey Transit-Accessible Transportation Services: training on accessible transportation resources.
  - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services: General agency serving individual with disabilities except those who are blind, visually impaired or deaf-blind)
  - Talking Book and Braille Center: Computer/Closed Circuit Television loaner program

- Additional cooperative agreement:
  - The College of New Jersey: partnerships to offer the Work Skills Prep program, a two week residential summer assessment and training program for youth 16 – 21 with multiple disabilities; the Bonner College Prep program which is a four week residential summer program in cooperation with the Bonner Institute for Civic and Community Engagement to prepare high school students with vision loss for college; the Support Service Providers programs, developed a network of trained service providers to provide communication and travel supports to adults who are deaf-blind, and the NJ Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program to distribute

telecommunication and internet access equipment to individuals who are deaf-blind and meet FCC eligibility requirements.

CBVI will focus significantly on developing Pre-Employment Transition Services for transition-aged youth. Because CBVI provides, in addition to standard VR services, a program of Blindness Education for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind residents of New Jersey, the Commission is well equipped to deliver high-quality transition programs. The existing transition programs that will be further developed and refined during the next Combined State Plan cycle include the following:

- Student Hands-on Alternatives Re-Enforcement Project (SHARP), a four-week summer program for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind learners in grades 1-8, focusing on delivering of blindness-specific skills of independence that cannot or do not get provided during the conventional academic year;
- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE), a year-round program targeted to high school-aged blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers that focuses on development of blindness-specific skills of independence, mentorship from blind and vision-impaired role models, and an employment or internship opportunity in a competitive, integrated setting;
- Life 101, a two-week summer program for Freshman and Sophomores in high school to focus on acquisition of core blindness-specific skills of independence, provided in a residential environment at the Commission's Joseph Kohn Training Center;
- The Bonner Scholar college Prep Program, dedicated to providing students likely to seek post-secondary education with the necessary skills to function successfully as blind or vision-impaired students;
- Work Skills Prep, a two-week summer program for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind students, possessing additional complex disabilities, that delivers employment-focused soft skills and employment opportunities.

CBVI will continue to provide professional staff with developmental instruction that will enhance the delivery of VR services. Specifically, CBVI has and will continue to provide its staff with instruction in Customized Employment practices, the use of labor market information in career planning, leadership development programs, and other VR-specific opportunities and courses, as they are made available.

CBVI is the designated State Licensing Agency to administer the Federal Randolph-Sheppard program, an entrepreneurial program for qualified, legally blind candidates, who are interested in operating and managing businesses on Federal, State, and municipal properties.

CBVI is developing a Business Relations Unit to strengthen the relationships with employers as a secondary customer of the VR program. The members of the unit will work with employers throughout the state to assist in addressing their need for qualified candidates to fill critical vacancies in their workforce and provide education on disability-related topics.

CBVI administers a comprehensive Assistive Technology program to help blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers secure employment and to simply live independently in a twenty-first century world. These services are provided to consumers of all ages, from educational students through a program specifically targeting the Older Blind population, defined in Federal law as fifty-five and older. These services may be provided on an individual basis or in classroom-type settings.

CBVI administers an Independent Living and Independent Living—Older Blind program for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers, age fifty-five and over, who are not interested in, or able to, engage in work, where instruction in blindness skills are delivered via its itinerant teaching staff, lessons in assistive technology are provided both individually and in a classroom environment in cooperating public libraries throughout the state of New Jersey, and a new, state-wide peer support group network dedicated to assisting this constituency with adjustment to blindness, styled the Assistive Support Program for Individual Renewal, and Education (ASPIRE) has recently been established.

Federal VR Grant Split

In order to provide the most appropriate, effective and cost/beneficial services to individuals with disabilities in New Jersey, the Executive Director of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Department of Human Services, and the Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Department of Labor, pledge the cooperation of their staffs to the development of working relationships which will ensure open channels of communication and thus will serve the best interests of the individual client, and individuals or groups of persons in need of vocational rehabilitation and/or Independent Living Services.

This cooperation between agencies led to a MOU that outlines the documented agreement, indicating an 80/20 split of the Federal VR grant between the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) and the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The breakdown of the ratio was determined with the idea in mind that delivering high-quality vocational rehabilitation services to blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers is more expensive on average than delivering similar services to persons with other disabilities. Further rationale for the ratio is as follows:

- CBVI administers a year-round, residential program to provide blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers with training in pre-employment blindness skills, e.g. Orientation and Mobility; Braille or other low-vision communication strategies; assistive technology instruction; skills of independent living (techniques for independently managing in the home, including cooking, dressing, cleaning, money management, etc.); and classes on Adjusting to Blindness or Vision Loss.
- Similarly, these same services are offered to some consumers in their homes, where they are unable or unwilling to invest an extended period, on average approximately twenty-four weeks, in CBVI's intensive residential program.
- Additionally, some consumers are sent out-of-state for blindness-specific, pre-employment training, where CBVI does not offer the particular instruction needed for a given consumer's employment objective.

- Due to the nature of the disability, a disproportionate number of blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers require substantial amounts of post-secondary education in order to qualify for the types of jobs where blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind consumers have traditionally been most successful and accepted within the labor market.
- The cost of assistive technology that enables blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers to function effectively remains disproportionately high, as compared to unmodified technology used by non-disabled or non-blind consumers of vocational rehabilitation.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

The DDD serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, who meet the functional criteria of having a developmental disability, are eligible for and maintain Medicaid eligibility, and are at least 18 years of age at the time of application and 21 years of age to receive services. Conditions generally considered developmental disabilities include intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, spina bifida, and autism. Part of DDD's implementation of the Employment First Initiative includes an annual discussion with individuals served, family members, and Support Coordinators providing care management services to identify each individual's current employment status and identify how to assist the individual in reaching his/her employment outcomes. In addition, an employment-related outcome is required within the Individualized Service Plan (ISP) of every individual served through DDD. When an individual is not pursuing employment, a statement explaining why the individual is not pursuing employment at that time is included in the ISP. When an individual is in need of employment services to assist him/her in obtaining and/or maintaining employment, he/she must seek those services through DVRS initially. DDD provides other needed services while the eligibility determination is being made with DVRS or in addition to the employment services provided through DVRS. Once an eligibility determination is made with DVRS, DDD is able to provide employment services not available through DVRS, as well as the other services that are available through DDD. Because the DDD has transferred all of their children services to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF), the DVRS will be reaching out to the DCF to develop an MOU for the purpose of supporting students in transition who will need DVRS services in order to access employment.

The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education

In order to define the most appropriate resource to cover expenses such as interpreter services, personal care attendants and other accessibility areas while an individual with a disability participates in a school program, the division has agreements with all four-year state colleges and all county colleges in New Jersey. These MOUs have been in place for many years and will be updated in program year 2016.

The Division of Wage and Hour Compliance

In conjunction with community-based rehabilitation programs, the DVRS maintains an MOU with the CBVI, the DDD, and the Division of Wage and Hour, which outlines the criteria for an employment relationship under New Jersey Wage and Hour Law in such a way that vocational rehabilitation activities may take place in community settings without undue restriction.

Consequently, situational assessments and similar "on-the-job" work experience may take place without violating employment law.

Agrability

The southern part of New Jersey works with Agrability to ensure that farmers who have become disabled have the opportunity for rehabilitation services. There is currently no formal agreement with the US Department of Agriculture.

Coordination with Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and Centers for Independent Living

In New Jersey, the DVRS has a positive relationship with the SILC and has supported its growth throughout the years. The DVRS uses Title I innovation and expansion funds to support the operation of the SILC and includes them in all agency activities. A SILC member has a seat on the SRC and the DVRS supports the SILC through its active participation at their meetings and in the preparation of the state plan for independent living (SPIL) and the RSA Section 704 Report.

The state currently has eight federally-funded centers for independent living (CILs). The DVRS expanded the network through the RSA Part B grant and a line item in the state budget to add five CILs to the group. The DVRS has dedicated a program specialist to offer the CILs consultation and technical assistance. The DVRS feels that these centers offer a dynamic that is necessary for individuals with disabilities before, during, and after their employment experience.

The reauthorization of WIOA transferred the Independent Living program to the Administration for Community Living (ACL) from the U.S. Department of Education. The Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILC), along with the IL directors in each state were given the authority to choose the designated state entity (DSE) to administer the state program. The New Jersey SILC required interested agencies to apply. DVRS was chosen to remain the DSE and will continue to administer the IL programs in New Jersey.

The DVRS continues to value the partnership that exists between the DVRS and is working with them to establish a viable pre-employment transition services strategy that will help DVRS provide this service to all students with disabilities.

(d) Coordination with Education Officials. Describe:

(1) The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

(2) Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:

(A) consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;

(B) transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs under Section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

(C) roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;

(D) procedures for outreach to students with disabilities as early as possible during the transition planning process and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) understands the critical relationship that exists among education and employment that in turn affects independence and quality of life. Transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities is a top priority for the DVRS. The Division has had a long-standing formal interagency agreement for transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities. This agreement is with the DVRS, the Office of Special Education Programs and the Office of Career and Technical Education in the New Jersey Department of Education, and the CBVI in the New Jersey Department of Human Services. Since the Governor has declared through Executive Order, that New Jersey become the 14th Employment First state, it is critical that the DVRS reexamine this agreement to ensure policy aligns with the intent of Employment First. The DVRS will identify policy alignment with the SEA to ensure that employment is the first and presumed outcome for students with disabilities.

The DVRS does not have formal agreements with local school districts. The 605 school districts in the state of New Jersey are autonomous. Accordingly, districts provide special education to students with disabilities in unique ways. Some rely on the DVRS counselors to provide consultation when students turn 14; others ensure that students are connected with the DVRS within two years of a student graduating from public education entitlement. However, there remain a number of districts that identify credit requirements for graduation rather than transition services; these districts make no effort to comply with the IDEA requirements to link students prior to graduation. Consequently, it is virtually impossible to pursue LEA agreements with every district. There are 21 counties in New Jersey; the New Jersey Department of Education employs a county superintendent to supervise the LEAs in each county. Upon reauthorization the DVRS will pursue county-based MOUs with each county superintendent for the purposes of clarifying the DVRS role in the transition process for students with disabilities.

The reauthorization of WIOA established new services requirements for the public VR program. Pre-employment transition services (PETS) must be offered to all students with disabilities. This includes students in school who are under the entitlement to special education under the

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), or who receive accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. In New Jersey, transition begins in the school year in which a student turns 14 and ends with graduation. DVRS has identified a program development specialist who will take the lead for PETS planning. Goals will be developed to ensure appropriate services are offered. In order to meet this new requirement DVRS will propose establishing a PETS unit. This unit will coordinate required activities and ensure consistent delivery of PETS services throughout the state.

The DVRS does not have formal agreements with local school districts. The 605 school districts in the state of New Jersey are autonomous. Accordingly, districts provide special education to students with disabilities in unique ways. The new PETS requirement requires DVRS to provide five specific activities to all students with disabilities; at the same time the law is not meant to supplant entitled transition services through IDEA. Procedures will be developed to make sure there is a coordinated strategy with defined roles and responsibilities between LEAs and DVRS. DVRS and CBVI will pursue an MOU with the SEA to identify these roles and responsibilities.

The DVRS counselors are assigned to work directly with individual schools. In addition, all offices have a "lead transition counselor" who serves as the liaison to the DVRS central office on transitioning issues and provides guidance and consultation to the DVRS counselors in their respective offices.

DVRS participates in annual student conferences sponsored by the Office of Special Education Programs. The DVRS transition coordinator and other designated DVRS personnel also participate in inter-agency county-based transition committees and forums as a means to increase awareness of the DVRS services and provide information about the agency.
DVRS will update the "Director's Letter" to describe PETS services. Information about the DVRS guidelines, policies and services in relation to transition and PETS services will be updated in the following:

- Guidelines for School Personnel
- Guidelines for students in transition
- What is Pre-employment Transition Services?
- DVRS Myths & Facts

In addition to DVRS, coordination with education officials also exists with CBVI. CBVI, since its inception, has assisted school districts in providing education programs that address the unique needs of children with vision impairments, blindness, and deaf-blindness. In 1993 this partnership was formalized with local school districts through provider service agreements. The agreements identify the specific level of services that the Commission will provide for each child in the school district. These services are tiered according to individual student needs and are provided by Commission staff within the Education Service Unit. When students reach the age of fourteen, the Commission's Teachers for the Blind and Visually Impaired refer all these students to one of the six transition counselors who work in the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit, i.e., four transition counselors assigned to the agency's service centers and two Deaf-Blind Specialists. In addition, Commission staff participate in transition fairs developed by Local Educational Agencies (LEA) and

Life After 21 seminars hosted by the Division of Developmental Disabilities as an outreach effort to reach families who may be unfamiliar with CBVI services.

The transition counselors provide information and referral services to the students and their parents/guardians to assist in the transition process from secondary education to adult outcomes. In addition, assessment activities occur to assist in the process to determining eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services. When the student is determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, the transition counselor will begin a process of comprehensive assessment to determine services needs that will inform the development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) around the specific needs of the student as well as specialized techniques and training in career awareness, college admission procedures, jobseeking activities, etc.

The Commission maintains, in conjunction with the DVRS, an Interagency Agreement for Transition from School to Adult Life with the appropriate SEA (Office of Special Education Programs - OSEP). This agreement complies with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.22(b). Under the agreement, the agency provides technical consultations to transition-aged youth and/or their parents/guardians and other members of the IEP team in the form of telephone consultations, face-to-face meetings, and/or attendance at IEP meetings. The IEP shall designate the individuals and agencies responsible for the provision of transition services to be implemented while the student is in school.

Throughout the transition process, contact with the Local Educational Agency (LEA) and the Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired at the agency remains constant. The need for specialized training, specific programs and assistive technology are addressed as part of the IEP and are also developed more fully in the Transition IPE. Technical consultation begun in the earlier grades with the Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired is continued through the transition process, and the transition counselor actively seeks participation in the development of IEPs. The transition counselors also begin evaluative activities at age fourteen that ultimately lead to development of the IPE and continue to play an organizational role with technical consultations and through their active participation in school-to-work activities, task force memberships, career fairs, etc. At various points during the transition process students are evaluated and presented with opportunities to participate in specific programs funded by the Commission, such as:

- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE), a year-round program targeted to high school-aged blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers that focuses on development of blindness-specific skills of independence, mentorship from blind and vision-impaired role models, and an employment or internship opportunity in a competitive, integrated setting;
- Life 101, a two-week summer program for Freshman and Sophomores in high school to focus on acquisition of core blindness-specific skills of independence, provided in a residential environment at the Commission's Joseph Kohn Training Center;
- The Bonner Scholar college Prep Program, dedicated to providing students likely to seek post-secondary education with the necessary skills to function successfully as blind or vision-impaired students;

- Work Skills Prep, a two-week summer program for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind students, possessing additional complex disabilities, that delivers employment-focused soft skills and employment opportunities.

(e) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations. Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

Cooperative agreements (in the broadest sense of the term) with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers are established and maintained in a variety of ways including Notice of Grant Opportunities (NGOs) contracts, program approvals, MOUs, technical assistance workshops and ongoing monitoring.

When funding becomes available for new vocational rehabilitation projects and services, the availability of these funds are posted as an NGO on the Department website and also communicated to providers statewide. The NGO will describe the purpose of the funding, the providers that are eligible to apply for the funding, the necessary programmatic requirements, expected outcomes and time frame for the service provision. A technical assistance workshop is held thereafter to explain and clarify the intent of the NGO. Applications are then reviewed for adherence to the NGO specifications and the funds are awarded accordingly. The awards, in turn, are transitioned into contracts. Each provider is assigned a program planning and development specialist (PPDS) to monitor the expenditures and programmatic results of the contract.

Providers may also have their contract (or cooperative agreement) renewed on an annual basis, depending upon the type of service, when the service was established, or when the service last underwent the NGO process. As the contract's end date comes to a close, the previous year's results are reviewed and the contractual relationship is re-established. The contract specifications are reiterated and any changes or modifications to the contract are incorporated therein.

The DVRS also receives requests from new providers to vend an existing service and enter into a cooperative agreement by which the DVRS purchases services from them. Existing providers may also request to expand their services or the counties that they serve, and thereby modify their cooperative agreement.

Most frequently, the DVRS is approached by a new provider to vend supported employment services. It is important to note that most of the services that a private, nonprofit organization would provide to the DVRS are subject to New Jersey Administrative Code 12:51, "Rules and Regulations Governing Community-Based Rehabilitation Organizations." The purpose of this code is to "define the criteria for operation of a program which is eligible to vend specific service to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and to ensure the provision of quality services to persons with disabilities." This code was last updated in 2007 and is consistent with good practice and applicable federal regulation. Consequently, the DVRS has a process in place to vet new vendors and enter into cooperative agreements or not based on providers' adherence to the N.J.A.C. 12:51. Providers are required to have standard business documentation and structure,

and the credentials, experience, training and organizational capacity necessary to provide the service they wish to vend. They are also required to maintain national accreditation in order to vendor services with the DVRS. Once providers are approved to enter the cooperative relationship with the DVRS as a vendor of services, they receive further information and training from the DVRS' community rehabilitation programs unit, and receive ongoing monitoring and technical assistance from their assigned PPDS. Approved providers that request to vend new services or expand their services to additional counties undergo a similar vetting process, depending on the request, and must demonstrate that they have been providing quality services in the counties in which they are already operating. New Jersey Administrative Code 12:51, "Rules and Regulations Governing Community-Based Rehabilitation Organizations" must be updated to incorporate WIOA. Committees will be formed in 2016 to begin this effort.

There is an agreement with ACCSES New Jersey to have a representative appointed to chair the oversight and review of the state set-aside program to ensure that individuals with disabilities have the right opportunity for industrial competition. The centralized nonprofit agency (CNA) services in New Jersey works directly with the NJ Office of Management and Budget to develop no-bid contracts.

MOUs are another vehicle by which the DVRS enters into cooperative agreements with private non-profit service providers. Most often, these types of MOUs would be with affiliated agencies that provide support services to the DVRS' clients or interface with the DVRS, but are not vendor/providers. For example, a substance abuse treatment center and the DVRS may wish to provide the relationship with additional structure, and delineate the referral process and the various roles and responsibilities when working together. Oftentimes, private nonprofits will request MOUs with the DVRS to fulfill their own accreditation requirements. This type of MOU is distinct from the type of MOU that the DVRS may have with a large public agency.

As for cooperative agreements between private nonprofit organizations and CBVI, the New Jersey CBVI is structured in a manner that facilitates the provision of a full range of services to all age groups, from early childhood to senior populations. The Commission's organizational structure contains distinct units that provide the aforementioned services. Consequently, the Commission has not found it to be necessary to outsource many of its vocational rehabilitation services to private, non-profit providers, as most services are provided within the organizational structure of the Commission. The Commission has several contractual and/or cooperative agreements with vocational rehabilitation service providers and with providers of services that contribute, in some form, to the vocational rehabilitation process. In addition to the providers listed below, the Commission maintains close relationships with many of the Centers for Independent Living.

The agency maintains performance based contracts with the following private, non-profit providers. These contracts are reviewed annually and performance standards are tracked by administrative staff at the agency:

- Community Health Law Project (Advocacy/Legal)
- Pathways to Independence, Crafters Guild (Recreation/Micro-Enterprises)
- Advancing Opportunities (Assistive Technology Evaluation and Training)

- Family Resource Network (Transition program for students with disabilities)
- Center for Vocational Rehabilitation (Community-based work experiences as part of training at the Joseph Kohn Training Center)
- Cumberland County Office on Aging and Disabled (Social/Recreation, Peer Support)
- Family Services of Morris County (Volunteer matching)
- Puerto Rican Association for Human Development (Eye Health Service and Treatment)

The agency also works collaboratively with the following organizations:

- National Federation of the Blind and state affiliates
- American Council of the Blind and state affiliates
- American Association of the Deaf-Blind
- Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (Parent Information and Training Center in New Jersey)
- Vision Loss Alliance of New Jersey
- Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR)
- National Employment Team (NET) - a sub-division within CSAVR
- National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB)
- Deaf-Blind League of New Jersey

(f) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services. Describe the efforts of the designated State agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

Supported employment services, including extended services, are ubiquitous in New Jersey. The DVRS has cooperative agreements in the form of vendor/provider relationships with over 95 individual supported employment service providers. These providers are entirely community-based, or associated with community rehabilitation facilities such as workshops or cognitive rehabilitation programs. All programs receive funding based upon the fee-for-service, billable job coaching hour model.

DVRS is frequently approached by new providers to vend supported employment services and there is a vetting process in place to ensure that these potential new providers are qualified to provide this service. In New Jersey, approval to vend supported employment services requires strict compliance with N.J.A.C. 12:51, and CARF or equivalent accreditation within three years of initial approval. In addition, there must be an identified need for supported employment services in the county or counties in which the new vendor intends to operate. The manager of the local county field office takes part in the vetting process. At the present time, approximately three new providers are interested in vending supported employment services to the DVRS and are in the vetting process.

New Jersey is fortunate to have state-appropriated funding for post-employment services which is referred to as the long-term follow-along (LTFA) program. The LTFA funding of approximately $5.4 million went out under an NGO for the third time in FY 2015, and 71 supported employment programs were given contracts to provide extended services.

Since individual LTFA program budgets are limited, a "restabilization fund" was also approved to handle the service needs of clients in need of additional post-employment supports that exceed individual program budgets. Of course, clients may also apply for Title I post-employment services should their support needs exceed the intent of the restabilization fund.

When the individual in need of LTFA services is eligible for the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), funding is provided through DDD as per the MOU between DVRS, CBVI, and DDD.

The DVRS encourages continuing education and training in regard to the provision of supported employment services. The DVRS works closely with the following supported employment training providers to train the DVRS and supported employment program staff 1) the Boggs Center for Developmental Disabilities and related training, and the 2) the integrated employment institute at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) for supported employment training for staff that work with people diagnosed with psychiatric disabilities.

As for arrangements and cooperative agreements for the provision of supported employment services for CBVI, the New Jersey CBVI is committed to the needs of individuals who may require supported employment services. The Commission contracts for all core supported employment services through a fee-for-service arrangement and maintains a list of approved supported employment providers throughout the state. The Commission currently utilizes the same fee structure and approval process as that which is in place for the DVRS.

A MOU was developed in coordination with the DDD and the DVRS which outlines the protocols and procedures for the collaborative provision of supported employment services to Commission consumers. The MOU defines and delineates the procedures to be followed by the respective agencies in order to ensure maximum effectiveness and delivery of services. The MOU also outlines the roles and responsibilities of each agency as they apply to providing efficient and effective supported employment services.

Extended services are available to individuals who have been determined eligible for services by the DDD. The Commission also provides time-limited job coaching services to consumers needing those services using Title I funds.

(g) Coordination with Employers. Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

(1) VR services; and

The reauthorization of WIOA identified that businesses and employers that hire individuals with disabilities are a dual customer of the public VR program. In order to meet the needs of the business community in New Jersey, DVRS has gotten permission to develop a Business outreach unit (BOU). The BOU will consist of a field chief and six program development specialists who will be assigned regionally. Their major responsibilities will be as follows:

- Assist with onboarding activities for businesses interested in hiring qualified candidates with disabilities;
- Take the lead with DVRS-led targeted hiring events through its Schedule A initiative;
- Provide technical assistance/training on disability employment laws to businesses as requested;
- Assist DVRS counselors to pre-screen qualified candidates with disabilities as needed;
- Assist federal contractors in meeting their 503 requirements;
- Support New Jersey's industry sector strategies;
- Develop relationships with New Jersey talent networks;
- Utilize labor market information to increase DVRS counselors' knowledge of local business needs; and
- Coordinate activities with business services representatives in the one-stops;

These BOU will work with employers and the local DVRS offices to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities that will facilitate the provision of VR services.

CBVI is also developing a Business Relations Unit to strengthen the relationships with employers as a secondary customer of the VR program and to coordinate efforts with the larger employment engagement developed for the Workforce Development system in New Jersey. The members of the unit will work with employers throughout the state to assist in addressing their need for qualified candidates to fill critical vacancies in their workforce and provide education on disability-related topics.

(2) transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

The provision of transition is an entitled service under IDEA for students with disabilities. Pre-employment transition services is a new provision under WIOA and must be made available to all students with disabilities regardless of VR status. The DVRS will develop a PETS unit to ensure that services are made available to students with disabilities in New Jersey. Additionally, New Jersey is actively engaged in establishing Project SEARCH in four counties. The BOU will be working in these counties with the businesses to establish opportunities for career exploration for students participating in Project SEARCH.

New Jersey is also an Employment First state, and DVRS has identified goals to increase the number of individuals with significant ID/DD to avail themselves to DVRS services that result in an integrated competitive employment outcome.

CBVI has dedicated staff to provide pre-employment transition services to students and youth with disabilities. In addition, CBVI provides comprehensive programs to promote skill acquisition for students with the goal of facilitating movement to positive adult outcomes including obtaining and maintaining employment in competitive, integrated settings. At various points during the transition process students and youth with disabilities are evaluated and presented with opportunities to participate in specific programs funded by the Commission, such as:

- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE), a year-round program targeted to high school-aged blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers that focuses on development of blindness-specific skills of independence, mentorship from blind and vision-impaired role models, and an employment or internship opportunity in a competitive, integrated setting;
- Life 101, a two-week summer program for Freshman and Sophomores in high school to focus on acquisition of core blindness-specific skills of independence, provided in a residential environment at the Commission's Joseph Kohn Training Center;
- The Bonner Scholar college Prep Program, dedicated to providing students likely to seek post-secondary education with the necessary skills to function successfully as blind or vision-impaired students;
- Work Skills Prep, a two-week summer program for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind students, possessing additional complex disabilities, that delivers employment-focused soft skills and employment opportunities.

CBVI will work to develop all pre-employment transitions services across the five principle areas outlined and authorized under WIOA.

In October 2010, LWD secured grant funding from USDOL for a youth-centered Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). DVRS was identified as the lead division to increase the capacity of pilot Workforce Development Board areas to serve youth with disabilities (ages 16 – 26), in particular youth offender populations and returning veteran youth. This funding also includes ability to promote universal design in One-Stop Career Centers throughout the entire state.

(h) Interagency Cooperation. Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

(1) the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;

(2) the State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and

(3) the State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

DVRS and CBVI will establish an MOU with the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS) within the New Jersey Department of Human Services, the lead agency administering Medicaid Waivers. DMAHS serves more than 1,000,000 people with a staff of over 500 people

who work both in Trenton and in Medical Assistance Customer Centers (MACCs) throughout the state.

A revised 5 year MOU was executed on July 1, 2015 by DVRS, CBVI, and the Division of Developmental Disabilities within the New Jersey Department of Human Services with the objective to define the roles and responsibilities of State agencies primarily involved in assisting individuals with disabilities in finding and maintaining competitive integrated employment and will assist the State agencies to operate in an efficient and successful manner to improve employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities by operating consistently across agencies ensuring quality service provision. The agreement is in alignment with the New Jersey's Employment First initiative proclaimed by Governor Christie on April 19, 2012.

For the past three years the DVRS has had SE provided to DVRS consumers with significant psychiatric disabilities by 22 vendors through a contractual agreement with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). This agreement formally ended October 1, 2014; vendors that were providing services through DMHAS were been notified and encouraged to apply to the DVRS to become SE vendors through the fee-for-service model.

(i) Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development. Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

(1) Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

(A) Qualified Personnel Needs. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

(i) the number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

(ii) the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

(iii) projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

The DVRS maintains a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) that establishes and supports a highly qualified staff dedicated to offering vocational rehabilitation services to eligible individuals with disabilities.

In keeping with the mission of the agency the CSPD focuses on the following areas:

- Pre-service training;
- Recruitment of qualified personnel;
- Staff development and training needs of current employees;
- Continuing education and lifelong learning; and
- Retention of qualified DVRS personnel

Guidelines have been provided by the Workforce Investment Act, Title IV; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and the New Jersey Civil Service Commission (CSC) hiring policies and terms of employment. Further guidance is expected when the regulations to WIOA are promulgated.

The DVRS works in collaboration with the DSA's training unit to maintain files on the in-service training records and changes in the credentials of all agency employees. The agency's staff development and training coordinator also maintains records of training and offers the CRC credit approval for all of the training programs created and/or sponsored by the agency.

Qualified Personnel Needs:
The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) routinely publishes an employee roster, which is reviewed against budget information to determine the most up-to-date number of employees actively serving the agency. A recent analysis of the agency's HR needs and available budget has revealed that it can function with a total of 298 staff members which will ensure that there are 140 counselors and adequate supervisory, management and administrative support.

The agency currently serves approximately 33,000 individuals with an average caseload level of slightly more than 235. Caseloads that become "vacant" due to a staff member leaving are being maintained by a supervising rehabilitation counselor who is providing services to ensure case success. Presently, DVRS has 20 supervising rehabilitation counselors that maintain a "vacant" caseload of 150 on average. Some offices have multiple vacant caseloads, which the supervising rehabilitation counselor covers. The anticipated level set at 140 counselor positions would result in reduced caseload size.

Each DVRS counselor is evaluated annually and the achievement of the graduate credential is monitored. All DVRS counselors meet or are in an approved plan to meet the CSPD standards. Most DVRS counselors have a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a closely related field. All staff members are made aware of trainings, online degree programs and continuing education courses that will enable them to reach the CSPD standard. Counselors who do not have a Master's Degree are not eligible for promotion.

The agency has been experiencing a 4 percent increase in the number of people that come for services on an annual basis. The number of position allocations is not expected to rise at the same pace of people applying for services.

- Senior executive staff – 85 percent over 55
- Management/Supervision – 45 percent over 55

- Counseling staff – 27 percent over 55

Factoring the anticipated succession of the lower levels into higher positions leaves the DVRS with the task of replacing well over half the counseling staff within the next five years.

Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
Director	1	0	1
Assistant Director	2	0	2
Chief	5	1	3
Manager	14	1	5
Administrative Analyst 1	1	0	0
Program Planning & Development Specialist 1	13	6	5
Supervising Rehabilitation Counselor	20	0	8
Administrative analyst 2	2	0	0
Counselors	140	0	0

Figure 42

As for CBVI, a member of the administrative staff overseeing the Vocational Rehabilitation Program at CBVI is responsible for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on the qualified personnel needs for the agency. The information is gathered in collaboration with the Human Resources, Fiscal, and Training units at the agency.

The following staff members are those that are 1.0 FTE, in the capacity of administration or provision of vocational rehabilitation services. The agency divides the state into two service regions, Northern and Southern and maintains four Service Centers which include locations in Newark, Freehold, Cherry Hill, and Hammonton serving all twenty-one counties in the state. The agency uses an itinerant model of service provision to meet the needs of the consumers it serves. A separate Deaf-Blind Services Unit also provides services from staff located in the Service Centers to consumers with dual sensory impairments. The Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC) is a residential training center also serving consumers statewide who wish to participate in an intensive course of training during a twenty week period. Referrals to JKTC are made by counselors from the Service Centers and/or the Deaf-Blind Services unit. The agency serves approximately 3,000 consumers seeking employment who are blind, vision impaired, or deaf-blind on an annual basis. The agency provides services throughout the lifespan, from birth to senior services, allowing for a seamless transition between service units. The agency serves approximately 9,000 New Jerseyans who are blind, vision impaired, or deaf-blind on an annual basis. In addition, the agency provides eye screening services to targeted populations that are traditionally underserved and provides that service to approximately 40,000 New Jerseyans annually.

Administrative Staff (Agency-wide)		
Job Title	**Individuals Served**	**Number Of Positions**
Chief of Program Administration	3,000	1
Supervising Community Program Specialists (Director of Joseph Kohn Training Center) (Manager of Business Enterprises New Jersey)	100 60	2
Assistant Supervisor of Educational Services (JKTC)	100	1
Principle Community Program Specialist (JKTC)	100	1
TOTAL: 5	---	---

Figure 43

Supervising Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor		
Job Title	**Individuals Served**	**Number Of Positions**
Northern Service Region	1,600	2
Southern Service Region	1,400	2
TOTAL: 4	---	---

Figure 44

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors I & II		
Job Title	**Individuals Served**	**Number Of Positions**
Executive Unit	3,000	1
Northern Service Region	1,600	13
Southern Service Region	1,400	12
JKTC	100	1

Deaf-Blind Services	150	2
TOTAL: 29	---	---

Figure 45

NJ-CBVI provides vocational rehabilitation services to approximately 3,000 individuals annually, via four service centers, Deaf-Blind Services, and the Joseph Kohn Training Center. Approximately 90% of the individuals that NJ-CBVI serves are individuals with a significant disability.

NJ-CBVI will be developing a Business Relations Unit and also a Welcome and Evaluation Team which will require four additional Vocational Rehabilitation counselors to be hired. CBVI does not expect to need any additional personnel for each of the categories below beyond filling the projected vacancies listed.

Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
Supervising Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	4	1	2
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	29	2	5

Figure 46

(B) Personnel Development. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

(i) a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

(ii) the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

(iii) the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

DVRS and CBVI negotiated with administrators at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) School of Health Related Professions to develop a means to assist in meeting the CSPD standards for the state. The results of the collaborative efforts were the development of a state standard in keeping with the national competency movement and federal mandates, and a masters-level program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling within the School for Health-Related Professions (SHRP). On July 1, 2013, as part of a restructuring program of state university in New Jersey, UMDNJ was merged into the Rutgers University higher education system. The program commenced in June of 1999 at two sites, which accommodates staff in Northern and

Southern parts of the state (Scotch Plains, N.J. and Stratford, N.J.) This is the sole graduate program devoted to training rehabilitation counselors and in addition to being CORE approved it is also CACREP accredited. All of the Rutgers graduates are eligible for national certification upon graduation.

Guidelines have been provided by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the New Jersey Civil Service Commission on hiring policies and terms of employment. Projections were made based on the current number of employees in regard to their age, length of service, education and availability of training resources.

A staff person from the administrative teams of both DVRS and CBVI are members of the advisory board for the Rehabilitation Counseling program. That staff person stays in contact with key university staff throughout the year to continue the collaborative working relationship. That staff person also monitors staff professional development in conjunction with the agency's training unit.

Rutgers University – FFY 2014-2015

Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
Rutgers (Masters of Rehab Counseling)	95	6	23	14
Rutgers (Undergraduate degrees)	78	0	17	27
Rutgers (Post-Masters Cert - Rehab Counseling)	0	0	0	0

Figure 47

(2) Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel. Describe, updating on an annual basis, the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, based on the data collection and analysis system described in paragraph (a) of this subsection and that provides for the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

DVRS continues to recruit highly qualified candidates with master's degrees in vocational rehabilitation counseling or closely related field for the counselor I position. DVRS is currently allowed to have 140 counselors statewide, and keeps an ongoing list of qualified candidates. DVRS only hires candidates with master's degrees for this position. The division supports its staff through a number of continuing education opportunities, and provides in-house training on a regular basis. The New Jersey Rehabilitation Association, the Garden State Employment and

Training Association, and the Association for Persons Supporting Employment First each sponsor continuing education credits with their respective yearly conferences, and DVRS supports a significant number of counselors for these conferences yearly. DVRS predicts a need to hire staff specifically for the coordination of pre-employment transition services and plans to submit this request in 2016.

CBVI continues its coordination with post-secondary programs that offer graduate degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling as a source of qualified personnel. The program of study offered at Rutgers University is the only CORE accredited program in Rehabilitation Counseling in New Jersey and its staff actively recruits students from Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York. Rutgers recruitment efforts benefit the agency by increasing the pool of qualified candidates who meet the CSPD standard. The agency will continue its cooperative efforts with Rutgers University, to use as a viable source for addressing future staffing needs. An agency administrative staff person is an active member of the Advisory Council. The agency has expanded its recruitment efforts by forwarding all open-competitive job postings for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor positions to the seven (7) CORE accredited universities in Pennsylvania and New York with the goal of increasing the pool of qualified candidates for future job vacancies.

(3) Personnel Standards. Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are appropriately and adequately trained and prepared, including:

(A) standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services; and

Each DVRS counselor is evaluated annually and the achievement of the graduate credential is monitored. In New Jersey, DVRS counselors are still required to meet the highest CSPD standards. Currently all but two DVRS counselors without the Master's Degree are participating in an approved training plan. The two counselors no longer perform the non-delegable functions of a rehabilitation counselor. Counselors who do not meet the CSPD standards are not eligible for promotion. The agency anticipates that those who are not presently in a program will be of retirement age by 2018. All counselors are made aware of trainings, online degree programs and continuing education courses.

CBVI continues to be committed to a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) to ensure that highly qualified individuals provide services to agency consumers. The CSPD standard for the agency is based upon the degree requirements of the national certification, CRC (Certified Rehabilitation Counselor). The standard requires a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to have graduated from an accredited college or university with a Master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling; or have a current and valid CRC regardless of degree; or possess the education and experience as outlined in categories A through R promulgated by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC).

Components of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development - National Certification:
The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, mandates that states develop and implement strategies for the hiring or retraining of personnel to meet standards or qualifications based on the highest requirements in the state for the counseling profession. The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the general VR agency in New Jersey, negotiated with administrators at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) School of Health Related Professions to develop a means to assist in meeting the CSPD standards. The results of the collaborative efforts were the development of a state standard in keeping with the national competency movement and federal mandates, and a masters-level program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling. As part of the curriculum, all students complete 60 credits of course work and Practicum and Internship experience to practice and integrate counseling skills learned during course work. The program commenced in June of 1999 at two sites (Scotch Plains and Stratford), which accommodate staff in the Northern and Southern parts of the state. Courses are also offered as well in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for staff at the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The program has been accredited by CORE (Council on Rehabilitation Education) and CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) meeting national standards for quality education in rehabilitation and counseling education and all graduates from the program qualify for credentialing as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (the national certification). On July 1, 2013, UMDNJ merged into Rutgers University. The School for Health-Related Professions and the Rehabilitation Counseling program remains intact. All degrees/certifications are issued by Rutgers University. Rutgers is the only institution of higher learning in the state to offer graduate degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling.

In FFY 2015, the agency completed a five year initiative funded by an In-service Training grant from the US Department of Education. The initiative was designed to increase the number of staff who are eligible for national certification, i.e., CRC credentials. CBVI offered an incentive for Vocational Rehabilitation personnel to obtain their Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a CRC credential by funding all phases of the educational or credentialing process. Counselors were responsible for completing the application, and the agency paid all associated fees. During project period of FFY 2011-2015, twelve staff at the agency obtained their Master's degree from Rutgers University and fourteen staff applied for CRCC testing and eligibility determination. 89% of all staff within Vocational Rehabilitation services at CBVI meet or in plan to meet the CSPD standard.

Master's Program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling:
CBVI will continue to financially support staff participating in the Master's Program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling at Rutgers University as a primary CSPD activity, as the agency is firmly committed to the priority of ensuring qualified staff are serving consumers with disabilities.
There are presently thirty-seven (37) full time vocational rehabilitation counseling staff members at the agency in a three title series, (Supervising Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor II, and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor I). Currently, twenty-five (25) staff members meet the CSPD Standard, a sixty-eight percent (69%) rate of compliance. Eight (8) additional staff members are currently in plan to achieve compliance. Staff that meets the CSPD

or is actively participating in a plan of professional development is 89% of total staff in the title series mentioned above. There are currently four (4) staff members that are currently not under plan to achieve compliance with CSPD standards. Those staff members will not be permitted to perform non-delegable work functions until they develop with administration a defined plan to obtain the necessary education and/or certification to be in compliance with CSPD standards for the agency. The Commission will continue to annually review staff credentials to access the level of progress in procuring the education to meet the standards of the national certification, i.e., CRC.

(B) the establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The minimum qualification for a DVRS Counselor I position requires a Master's Degree in vocational rehabilitation or a closely related field as outlined by CSC. There are no exceptions or substitutions.

The DVRS has been trying to get a paid internship program in place for Master's level students interested in working at a DVRS office. To date, this has not happened but negotiations continue.

(4) Staff Development. Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

(A) a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, and

(B) procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

The DVRS continues to work closely with The CBVI and will continue joint training participation when feasible. Joint efforts will enable both agencies to provide the most effective and cost efficient training to staff through shared resources.

Enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of the DVRS employees

The Rehabilitation Act recognizes the need for an ongoing and progressive in-service training program to upgrade the skills, increase the knowledge and maximize the performance of personnel employed by the DVRS who provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities.

The DVRS takes pride in the high quality of staff development at all levels that is maintained in the in-service training program. Each year the program unit performs a training needs assessment that reflects a number of areas, such as:

- Priorities outlined in the current state plan;

- Staff development issues culled from individual development plans as a part of the performance evaluation system;
- Polling managers and supervisors; and
- Scanning the environment for issues related to current legislation, trends and advances in the practice of vocational rehabilitation

The program unit staff members reach out to a number of areas to meet the needs for training programs that will be pertinent to the staff, useful to the practice of vocational rehabilitation and offer opportunities to enhance lifelong learning. The following entities are employed in the execution of the in-service training program:

- The New Jersey Civil Service Commission Human Resources Development Institute (HRDI);
- The LWD Office of Training and Staff Development (OTSD);
- The Association of Persons in Supported Employment (APSE);
- The National Rehabilitation Association (NRA);
- The Council of State Administrators in Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR);
- Rutgers University;
- The Garden State Employment and Training Association (GSETA); and
- The NJ Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Ensure that qualified rehabilitation personnel serve the individuals with disabilities who participate in the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Action Steps:

- Continue to collaborate with the Rutgers University in support of the certificate of advanced graduate studies (CAGS) programs to enhance the ability for individuals with Master's Degrees in affiliated areas to become certified;
- Continue to supplement the funding of the tuition refund program;
- Continue the DVRS' involvement with a distance learning programs with schools throughout the country.
- Encourage involvement with Thomas Edison College under the LWD tuition refund program; and
- Maintain training offerings that grant continuing education units (CEUs)

The DVRS has upgraded the skills and education of the majority of the counseling staff. Of the current 140 positions that are filled, 97 percent of the counseling staff members have earned a Master's Degree. Four individuals who do not possess the desired educational credential are enrolled in programs through an RSA grant or LWD tuition refund. The remaining two employees have an improvement plan spelled out in their performance assessment review (PAR) as part of their individual development plan (IDP). Information regarding career development, continuing education and Master's Degree in VR programs is sent to management and staff throughout the year. Those that choose not to earn their Master's Degree are not afforded independent status and cases will be subject to supervisory review and approval.

Enable the DVRS counselors to obtain and maintain the CRC and/or the New Jersey License for Rehabilitation Counselor (LRC)

Action Steps:

- Continue to offer credits for all DVRS sponsored programs;
- Offer opportunities to attend approved programs;
- Offer a study guide for eligible candidates to take the CRC exam;
- Establish a match between CRC supervisors and candidates for mentoring; and
- Offer up-to-date information on application procedures for LRC.
    - Fifty percent of the agency's professional staff holds a CRC or state licensure while 90 percent are eligible.
- Expand outreach to individuals with disabilities who are from traditionally underserved minority backgrounds as identified in the Act by offering opportunities to employees of similar backgrounds;
- Expand promotional opportunities for paraprofessional and support staff;
- Emphasize career track in collaboration with the LWD career development counselor;
- Promote the tuition refund program in collaboration with Thomas Edison State College;
- Collaborate with appropriate agencies to increase awareness of cultural diversity;
- Recruit through an information program to clients attending college;
- Continue a relationship with the nation's network of historical Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in order to expand the agency's recruitment efforts;
- Provide information on career opportunities to community college liaisons;
- Expand outreach efforts to target diverse community/faith-based organizations; and
- Provide information on the field of rehabilitation counseling as a career at the state's Hispanic/Latino outreach center.

Retention of Qualified VR Personnel

An analysis of the DVRS personnel records reveals that there are a significant number of employees with over 20 years' experience. In addition, these staff members are nearing an age where they will be considering retirement within the next five years. Therefore, plans must be made to maintain a management structure as well as the staffing patterns to operate a full service DVRS agency. In all likelihood, there will not be an expansion of the positions dedicated to the program so projections will be based on the current levels.

Prepare staff to assume new roles as a part of the succession plan

Action Steps:

- Continue to offer training opportunities for advanced degrees at all levels;
- Offer a mentoring program to groom new management and counseling staff; and,
- Expand support of the certified public management program.

Operating within the CSC guidelines, the LWD continues to develop staff to expand their knowledge base to assume increased responsibility on the job. The DVRS has partnered with the RSA and the TACE in an initiative to promote succession planning.

Evaluate the progress of these training efforts to ensure improved services to individuals with disabilities

Action Steps:

- Staff will meet established standards for qualified vocational rehabilitation personnel;

- Future SRC consumer satisfaction surveys will reflect improved level of counselor competency;
- Internal DVRS practices, such as the performance assessment review (PAR), will address educational achievement in the developmental plans; and
- A recognition program will be continued for those achieving the Master's Degree in rehabilitation counseling

In addition to the need to employ qualified personnel, the agency recognizes the need for service providers with whom it does business to employ qualified vocational rehabilitation personnel. Through collaborative efforts, New Jersey hope to assure that appropriate graduate-level training programs will be available within the state of New Jersey to community rehabilitation program personnel, as well as to the DVRS staff. The grant received by the Rutgers from the USDOE will enable the Rutgers to offer stipends to students from community rehabilitation programs.

An analysis of the collected evaluations reveals that all agency-sponsored training sessions were well received, averaging a rating of average or better. This indicates that the program selection and content met state agency needs and participant interest.

Tuition Reimbursement

In the past, the CBVI encouraged employees to participate in the tuition reimbursement program which provides a means for employees to pursue formal academic training to improve job skills and work performance and to further career development. Courses must be job related and are generally pursued on the employees' own time. The Commission reimbursed for up to six credits per semester, at the state college or university rate, whichever rate is higher. Due to budgetary constraints, tuition reimbursement has been suspended indefinitely.

In each of the regional offices professional staff that focus on development of skills of independence are assigned to serve exclusively in the VR unit, including personnel from the Visual Rehabilitation professions. These staff will promote greater competency for consumers in essential "blindness skills" through the provision of comprehensive services that promote independence, i.e., Orientation & Mobility Instructors, Home Instructors and Eye Health Nurses.
The agency employs two staff to oversee training and professional development of all staff, including a Training Coordinator. The agency maintains policies and procedures for staff development activities and utilizes a variety of methods to ensure staff have opportunities for professional development. The agency utilizes the TACE- Region 2 at the State University of New York – Buffalo, the NJ Department of Personnel-Human Resource Development Institute (HRDI), and agency created trainings to provide professional development.

New Jersey Department of Personnel

The New Jersey Department of Personnel's Human Resource Development Institute (HRDI), offers courses on an ongoing basis to agency staff to assist them in achieving personal and organizational goals and needs. Employees are encouraged to attend courses pertinent to their job duties and responsibilities. Succession planning in the agency is limited by civil service rules and unionization

of the workforce. Staff are encouraged and supported in pursuing career path skill development through HRDI's trainings in leadership, supervisory skills and managerial topics.

Agency Sponsored - In-Service Training

In-Service training provides staff the opportunity to upgrade professional knowledge and skills, and to keep current in changes in the field of vocational rehabilitation and the workforce environment. The Commission has developed in-house subject matter experts. These staff provide training and consultation to other agency staff in areas of their expertise, such as assistive technology, independent living skills, education issues, deaf-blindness, and medical aspects of blindness.

The Commission encourages staff to attend training, seminars, and workshops appropriate to their job duties and responsibilities. In addition, if limited staff is approved to attend a conference, the agency utilizes a train-the-trainer model so that staff in attendance can share information with their colleagues.

(5) Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs. Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

The DVRS has been consistent with the Act in meeting the requirements of offering appropriate communication solutions to those individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing. All of the current rehabilitation counselors for the Deaf are certified through a test known as the Sign Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI). In the event that counselors wish to enhance or improve their skills in American Sign Language (ASL), the DVRS will utilize Title I funds to further classes in ASL. The agency also invites counselors and rehabilitation aides to participate in ASL training programs, which are typically offered at the community college level. Deaf Language specialists are available in every local office to meet the needs of individuals who use ASL.

The DVRS usually draws the bi-lingual counselor from a pool of individuals of Latino heritage who also possess the necessary credentials in addition to speaking fluent Spanish. Once again, DVRS encourages opportunities for other staff members to take courses that will facilitate their communication in conversational Spanish to expand the agency's ability to serve this population of people with disabilities. DVRS recently hired many counselors with multi language ability such as Slavic languages including Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian to be employed in an office where clients need this communication.

The DVRS makes every effort to serve individuals from underserved minority populations; the DVRS assessed the demographics of the state and deployed staff where there is the greatest need. Currently there are 26 different languages spoken within the 18 local offices. DVRS also accommodates a person's language by an informal interpreter or the AT&T Language Line and their coordinated community-based or faith-based organization that can best serve them.

The CBVI employs vocational rehabilitation staff members who are bilingual; utilizing several civil service titles with variants that require staff to have bilingual abilities in Spanish and English or American Sign Language and English (Deaf-Language Specialist and Deaf-Blind Specialist). Spanish has been identified as the most frequently used language in New Jersey, second only to English. Many of the agency's staff also have bilingual abilities including staff in the Prevention Unit, Technological Support Services, and Independent Living Skills Unit. The State of New Jersey has a large influx of immigrants from all over the world and it is estimated that over 50 languages and dialects are spoken in the state. The agency utilizes interpreter services from various community based agencies on a fee-for-service basis to help increase language access. Each regional office maintains a list of agencies that provide translation services for a wide range of languages. If translation services are unavailable, then CBVI makes every reasonable effort to gain assistance from family members or other members of that community to facilitate effective communication. Collaborative relationships have also been developed with community agencies such as the Puerto Rican Association for Human Development to foster greater access to the Hispanic/Latino communities.

(6) Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Coordination with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The DVRS maintains an ongoing relationship with the NJ Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in an effort to share information and ensure that the staff of the DVRS is aware of the IDEA.

The staff development activities include:

- Four training sessions per year for the DVRS lead transition counselors. All of the DVRS counselors are responsible for maintaining a relationship to the school districts within their local area; however, these lead counselors are responsible for acting as a resource to school personnel. The approximately 600 public school districts are diverse throughout the state, so these training sessions are essential to maintain a roster of promising practices for the agency.
- The DVRS has a seat on the State Special Education Advisory Council (SSEAC) and OSEP has one on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The information gathered at the meetings is shared when appropriate.
- In their ongoing relationship the DVRS relies on the independent living community to establish and maintain linkages with students in transition by helping them to seek strategies for self-advocacy and empowerment. The DVRS supports the Transition Times that is published by the SILC to promote IL as a part of the transition process.

The CBVI works collaboratively with the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) to provide quality services to New Jersey's students with disabilities under the auspices of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). CBVI and NJDOE have an ongoing working

relationship, as outlined in a state level cooperative agreement regarding transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities and a Memorandum of Understanding. The goals of the agreements are to assure that cooperation and collaboration exists in implementing and maintaining a system of VR service delivery to eligible students with disabilities. The Commission developed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in FFY 2009 with the general VR agency, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and the Division of Developmental Disabilities to promote improved service provision for individuals who are eligible for Supported Employment service. The partners in the inter-agency agreement and staff members of Community Rehabilitation Providers, have been providing training collaboratively on the provisions of the new MOU to their agency staff in joint sessions and to Transition personnel at local education agencies (LEA) throughout the state to improve transition from secondary education into adult services. The Commission worked collaboratively with the School of Education at The College of New Jersey to develop additional programs to assist consumers who are transition-aged (16-21 years old). CBVI staff worked with TCNJ administrators to develop a Teacher of the Blind/Visually Impaired program in the School of Education's Department of Special Education. Initially, the program offered courses as continuing education credits but has now been establish as a master's program that prepares teachers for NJ State Licensure as Teachers of the Visually Impaired. This is the only program in New Jersey to prepare teachers to work in this capacity. The Commission wants to prepare the next generation of teachers who will have an impact on transition-aged students served in vocational rehabilitation programs. In addition, CBVI and TCNJ work collaboratively in operating a summer work skills program for transition-aged youth (16-21) who have multiple disabilities. The two week Work Skills Prep program focuses on assessment and instruction of independent living skills that lead to successful employment outcomes.

(j) Statewide Assessment.

(1) Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:

(A) with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

(B) who are minorities;

(C) who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;

(D) who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and

(E) who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.

Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

In FFY 2014 the DVRS embarked on a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) in partnership with the SRC.

Data was collected from the following:

- LWD Labor Market and Demographic Research;
- American Community Survey –
  - Work experience by disability status;
  - Employment status by disability status;
  - Median earnings by disability status;
  - Poverty status by disability status;
  - Receipt of food stamps/SNAP by disability status;
  - Sex by disability status;
  - Sex by age by cognitive difficulty;
  - Sex by hearing difficulty;
- Cornell University Disability Status Report for New Jersey;
- DVRS staff survey;
- DVRS consumer satisfaction survey;
- NJDOE Office of Special Education Programs graduation data;
- Public forums held March 5, March 12, March 19, and March 26;
- Stakeholder meeting with families in Special Olympics March 8;
- Stakeholder meetings with ACCSES NJ members held January 2014;
- Stakeholder meetings with APSE members held November 2013;
- Stakeholder meeting with the New Jersey designated parent training information center (Statewide Parent Advocacy Network) held April 1;
- Stakeholder meetings/listening tours of the One-Stop Career Center staff members in May 2014; and
- Stakeholder meetings with the Deaf community held September 28, 2013 and October 12, 2013.

Highlights of the survey results indicated a need to improve services/access to:

- Individuals with the most significant disabilities, in particular individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), aligning the New Jersey Employment First Initiative;
- Individuals with hearing loss; and
- Individuals currently being served in sheltered workshops who, through informed choice, would like to access competitive integrated employment.

Based on the CSNA the DVRS identified the following: Employment services will be easily obtainable for individuals with the most significant disabilities, individuals who are minorities or who are in unserved or underserved populations, and individuals who are served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system, and community rehabilitation programs will support competitive, integrated employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

The DVRS identified key issues pertaining to meeting the intent of Employment First:

- How should DCF (Division of Children & Families, DOE (Dept. of Education) and other state entities be aligned as partners in serving this consumer base?
- State partners may have their own vision of Employment First which may or not be in alignment with DVRS.
- Data Collection is difficult due to federal code restrictions and DVRS's current case management system (WORCS).
- Need for Stakeholder analysis to identify and utilize internal and external partners.
- Identify and engage "the Voice of the Customer."
- Strategic objectives to meet the DVRS Employment First initiative include the following:
- More individuals with significant developmental disabilities (DD) and ASD will have greater access to become DVRS consumers.
- DVRS staff members, vendors, and state partners will have the expectation that employment is the first and preferred option for adult activity for those with DD.
- DD consumers including transition students and persons in workshops will have increased opportunities for a smooth transition into employment via a defined process established by DVRS and state partners.
- DD consumers will be provided with programs and services that offer job targeted skill development, education and training.
- DD individuals will have increased opportunities to become DVRS consumers, obtain job skills, and obtain competitive employment that matches their interests, skills & capabilities.
- Through a leverage of services with DDD, DVRS will serve an increased amount of individuals with DD, including individuals with ASD.

Likewise, the DVRS identified key issues pertaining to improving services to individuals who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing:

- Role of DVRS vs. vendors-Who should do what in assuring highly qualified employment-related services to D/HH consumers. Currently, there is no defined or mutually agreed upon process.
- How should DD/HH (Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing), Interpreter programs at Community Colleges be involved in strategic planning.
- Ensuring knowledge of Deaf culture with counselors.
- Ensuring knowledge of issues for Hard of Hearing with counselors.
- Continue to engage "the Voice of the Customer."
- Role of DVRS Deaf Language Specialists.
- Role of Regional Deaf Centers.
- Need for Communication Specialists.
- Ensuring Video phones work in every local office.

Strategic objectives to improve DVRS access to consumers with hearing loss include the following:

- Every local DVRS office will have a Video Phone system that works well.
- DVRS staff will have the training in Deaf Culture, needs of HH, and cochlear implants and be able to appropriately provide services.

- D/HH consumers will have VR services, including Client Assistance Program, explained in ASL when appropriate.
- All job coaches will be vetted in ASL prior to working with D/HH consumers.
- D/HH individuals will have increased opportunities to become DVRS consumers, obtain job skills, and obtain competitive employment that matches their interests, skills & capabilities.
- Qualified interpreters will accompany D/HH consumers at job interviews rather than job coaches.

The DVRS identified key issues regarding the need to improve community rehabilitation programs within New Jersey:

- Ensuring that DVRS consumers in supported employment have access to qualified employment specialists.
- Defining the role of New Jersey's set-aside programs that employ individuals with DD.
- Transforming the current system of sheltered programs to a system that supports movement into competitive employment for individuals with DD/ASD.
- Fear of family members to allow family members with DD/ASD to become competitively employed.
- Families need information from qualified SSI/SSDI benefits counselors.
- Strategic objectives to improve community rehabilitation programs within the state include the following:
- Increased oversight from DVRS program development specialists will identify individuals currently in extended employment who should have DVRS cases opened;
- Supported employment training resulting in a nationally recognized credential will be required for employment specialists working with DVRS consumers.
- Benefits counseling will be provided to DVRS consumers and families.
- Increased collaboration with local education agencies will increase expectation of families that result in transition students identifying competitive integrated employment as an expectation within the individualized education program (IEP).

Measurable Goals derived from the CSNA are identified in section *"(I) State Goals and Priorities"* later in this section.

A comprehensive assessment of youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services – the DVRS is required to provide pre-employment transition services to all students with disabilities who will benefit from such services. This provision is a new obligation in WIOA and as such, warrants special attention to develop strategies that will meet this requirement. DVRS has identified a program development specialist who is the designated subject matter expert for pre-employment transition, and coordination with the OSEP is necessary to reach all students with disabilities.

DVRS will host public forums in 2016 specifically designed to engage families in the transition process, and will partner with the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network to make sure there is appropriate representation of families with diverse ethnic, racial, and geographic backgrounds.

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) that works specifically with CBVI (the DSU) was actively involved in the development of data collection instruments used in the assessment process and served as an active partner in conducting the assessment activities with the DSU. The assessment team also worked with staff of the Technical Assistance and Continuing Education Center for Region 2 (TACE-Region 2) at the State University of New York at Buffalo, and in consultation with the State Liaison for New Jersey at the Rehabilitation Services Administration, to develop a comprehensive, multi-dimensional work plan for the needs assessment.

Needs assessment activities included the following:

- Data Collection from National Databases
- Stakeholder and Partner interviews
- Agency Staff Surveys
- Surveys of Community Rehabilitation Programs providing Supported Employment/Time Limited Job Coaching
- Focus Group results on Access Technology needs of individuals 55 and older
- A statewide Town Hall meeting, facilitated by members of the State Rehabilitation Council
- Survey of parents/guardians of transition-aged youth, linked with a focus group results of leadership of parents affiliated with stakeholder groups in New Jersey

Data Collection from National Databases

As part of the assessment process, the agency gathered data from sources connected to the United States Census Bureau, specifically data that was originally gathered via the American Community Survey (ACS). The three main data sources used and that were available during the assessment process were the 2011 Disability Status Report for New Jersey published by the Employment and Disability Institute at Cornell University (published 2012), 2013 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium published by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Statistics and Demographics (published November 2013), and the American Foundation for Blind - Prevalence Rates of Visual Loss (updated January 2014), which provided a further breakdown of data points obtained from ACS methodology.

Blindness & Vision Impairment (data sources: AFB Prevalence Rates of Visual Loss (1/2014) and 2011 Disability Status Report for New Jersey)

Recent survey data on overall prevalence rates of vision loss across all age groups was available at the American Foundation for the Blind, (updated January of 2014) and indicates that approximately 167,717 New Jersey residents are blind or vision impaired, a prevalence rate of 1.9% of the general population. This prevalence rate is slightly lower than the national rate of 2.2%. It was observed in the data review that the Black/African American population, regardless of ethnicity, living in New Jersey has a slightly higher rate of vision loss, at 2.9%, and accounts for 20% of the total population in New Jersey with vision impairments, (2011 Disability Status Report for New Jersey). Individuals who identified their ethnicity as Hispanic, all racial groups, had a prevalence rate of vision impairment at 2.6% of the general population, and accounts for up to

25% of the total population in New Jersey with vision impairments (2011 Disability Status Report for New Jersey). For ages 16-64, it is estimated that 86,334 New Jersey residents have vision impairments, a prevalence rate of 1.5% of the base population in the State.

All Disabilities (Data Source: 2013 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium)
The prevalence rate for all types of disabilities across all age groups was 12.3% nationally and 10.2% in New Jersey. Based on the prevalence rates for New Jersey of individuals with a wide range of disabilities, it is estimated that 895,912 New Jersey residents have some level of disability. Of that population aged 18-64, 22.4% have income that is at or below the Federal poverty rate. In addition for those individuals aged 16-64 with disabilities that are engaged in full-time, year round employment is only 19% nationally and slightly higher in New Jersey at 20.8%.

(2) Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and

DVRS will continue to embed Employment First strategies in all of the goals established for the program. DVRS encourages community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) that provide supported employment services and has an established vetting process to ensure consistent application of quality services throughout the state. CRPs are encouraged to take advantage of training that provides continuing education to them to better meet the needs of DVRS consumers.

(3) Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

There are over 600 public school districts in New Jersey, and each district is autonomous. Some districts reach out to DVRS offices on a regular basis, while others provide little to no transition services to students under IDEA. The need for transition career services and pre-employment transition services is great. DVRS will continue to work with the SEA in order to establish a coordinated service delivery system in the state.

DVRS recently posted a notice of funding opportunity to provide PETS in the state, and will continually outreach to LEAs and local businesses to partner with DVRS for the delivery of these services.

(k) Annual Estimates. Describe:

(1) The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services.

(2) The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:

(A) The VR Program;

(B) The Supported Employment Program; and

(C) each priority category, if under an order of selection.

(3) The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and

(4) The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

The annual estimates are broken down into two separate sections, DVRS and CBVI. The following figures are based on DVRS estimates, which are then followed by additional estimates from CBVI.

Of the 5,789,239 individuals of working age (18-64) in New Jersey, 396,635 reported having a disability in 2012. It is estimated that approximately 35,740 individuals will be involved with the DVRS in Program Year 2015 based on a 2% increase. This number represents:

- New applications;
- Active cases in plan status from prior years;
- New cases in plan status; and
- Closures (successful outcomes and those that did not achieve employment).

Of these individuals, it is estimated that 29,236 will receive services provided under Part A of Title I of the Act and/or under Part B of Title VI of the Act. Estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order of selection for services are as follows:

Clients classified as individuals with a most significant disability who meet the following criteria:

- Have a significant physical or mental impairment or combination of impairments which seriously limit two or more functional capacities in terms of employment outcome; and
- Require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.
- Program Year 2016
    - Service Goal Title I: 10,656
    - Outcome Goal Title I: 1,538
    - Service Goal Title VI: 5,993
    - Outcome Goal: Title VI: 870

Supported employment is reserved for those individuals with the most significant disabilities. Time-limited job coaching is available for those individuals in the other categories and priority areas. The DVRS utilizes Title I funding for supported employment services but has only identified 798 as specific to Title VI.

Clients classified as individuals with a significant disability who meet the following criteria:

- Have a significant physical or mental impairment or combination of impairments which seriously limit at least one functional capacity in terms of employment outcome; and
- Require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.
- Program Year 2016
- Service Goal: 4,720
- Outcome Goal: 894

All other eligible clients who qualify for the DVRS meet the following criteria:

- Individuals with a disability who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity;
- Those who have a record of such impairment, or
- Those who are regarded as having such impairment.
- Program Year 2016
- Service Goal: 3,479
- Outcome Goal: 120

In 2015, the DVRS paid the following amounts to 34,344 clients (some clients received multiple services):

- Diagnostic evaluation $6,161,520
- Higher education $5,534,544
- Job readiness $495,569
- Maintenance $56,430
- Other training $1,768,325
- Personal assistance $21,929
- Transportation $281,911
- Vocational training $1,901,615
- All other $3,413,386
- Total Paid: $19,635,229

The DVRS typically budgets $20 million for case services and has averaged between $18 million and $22 million over the past several years. The DVRS intends to review current fee schedule policies, upgrade its current case management system, and develop new innovation and expansion grant opportunities to reduce the reserve amount. In addition, DVRS plans on expending funds for pre-employment transition services in the amount of $7,000,000.

Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to be Served	Average Cost of Services
MSD Title I Priority 1	Title I	$21,285,000	10,656	$1,997
MSD Title VI Priority 1	Title VI	$550,000	5,993	$92
SD Priority 2	Title I	$3,600,000	4,720	$762
All Other Eligible Clients Title 1 Priority 3	Title I	$1,200,000	3,479	$344
Totals		$26,635,000	24,848	$1,071

Figure 48

In addition to the DVRS figures above, CBVI estimates are as follows:

Annual Estimate of Individuals to be Served and Costs of Services

It is estimated that the State of New Jersey has approximately 86,000 individuals who are of working age (16-64) and have a visual disability (based on 2010 US Census data and 2011 Disability

Status Report-NJ, Cornell University). It is estimated that CBVI will serve approximately up to 3,000 of these individuals during FFY 2016.

Of these 3,000 eligible individuals, it is estimated that all will receive services provided under Part B, Title I of the Act and 50 individuals under Part B, Title VI of the Act. Service costs are estimated to be $11,516,748.00 exclusive of amounts for Supported Employment under Title VI and state match under Title I. $128,570.00 is currently allocated for Title VI, Part B services.

The total amount of estimated funds from both Title 1 and Title VI is $11,645,318.00, serving an estimated total of 3,000, for an average cost of services at $3882.00.

(l) State Goals and Priorities. The designated State unit must:

(1) Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

(2) Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs.

(3) Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:

(A) the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;

(B) the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and

(C) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

DVRS Goals and Priorities

The 2015 DVRS State Plan goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the DVRS and the New Jersey SRC. These goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following:

- The FFY 2014 comprehensive statewide needs assessment;
- The public forums held in March 2014 and 2015;
- The performance of New Jersey DVRS standards and indicators; and
- Recommendations from the FY 2010 monitoring report on the vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs in the state of New Jersey.

DVRS is currently working on goals developed from its Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA).

GOAL 1: By September 30, 2017, the number of individuals with DD, including ASD applying for DVRS services will increase by 50%. Strategic objectives to meet this goal include the following:

- Provide education and communication – All identified stakeholders will know about the DVRS Employment First (EF) initiative by the end of year one. Surveys will be used to determine initial training needs for DVRS staff members and CRPs.

- Collaborate with interagency partners – Identify key state partners and research how other states are collaborating on EF initiatives. Design the process, roles and responsibilities for partners.
- Improve DVRS access for individuals with significant disabilities – Work with sheltered workshops to support individuals who wish to move into integrated employment. Develop a plan for obtaining valid statistics of how many individuals with DD are served by the DVRS. Create a plan to prioritize students with DD to be linked to DVRS two years prior to exiting the school.
- Develop innovative and expanded services that offer increased employment opportunities – Verify successful Innovation and Expansion grantees for possible expansion. Determine possible sites for a Project SEARCH Pilot.
- Engage employers – Take advantage of the new 503 regulations. Engage LWD talent networks. Find options for work trials through internships. Replicate the *Schedule A* targeted hiring events throughout the state.

* *UPDATE*: DVRS has successfully engaged with Project SEARCH and will support up to four sites by September 2016.

GOAL 2: By September 30, 2017, there will be an increase in the number of Deaf/HH consumers seeking DVRS services and communication access and services for Deaf/HH will be consistent, reliable, and result in employment. Strategic objectives to meet this goal include the following:

- Provide education and communication – Identify stakeholders from the Deaf/HH community. Encourage participation from the Deaf/HH with the SRC. Develop marketing materials in ASL.
- Collaborate with interagency and community partners – Identify key state partners needed to support the DVRS D/HH goals. Design the process, roles and responsibilities for partners. Determine the skills needed for ASL SE staff. Identify interpreter vs. SE needs for D/HH consumers.
- Improve access to DVRS for D/HH consumers – Install video phones in every office. Develop a plan for obtaining valid statistics of the number of D/HH served by DVRS. Create a plan to allow D/HH transition students to be referred to the regional Deaf Centers two years prior to exiting school. Use the model state plan for the Deaf consistently throughout New Jersey.
- Develop innovative and expanded services that offer increased employment opportunities – Expand services of the regional Deaf Centers. Assess DVRS projects to consider how they could serve D/HH consumers. Determine required training for counselors working with D/HH.
- Engage employers – Take advantage of the new 503 regulations. Engage the LWD talent networks.

* *UPDATE*: Regional DLS are assigned to every local office to provide ASL to DVRS consumers. Training has been identified for counselors working with HH consumers.

GOAL 3: By September 30, 2015, the DVRS will provide training and technical assistance to counselors on SE and SE services, as follows:

- Provide training to staff related to the definition of SE and SE services to include appropriate identification of SE goals on the IPE, coding of SE services on the IPE and the case closure page in the case management system;
- Analyze the decline in the number of individuals who have SE goals on their IPEs and achieve SE to determine the reasons underlying the decline in these respective performance measures and develop strategies to address the reasons identified; and
- Review and analyze the case management settings utilized to identify SE goals and SE services on an IPE and the case closure page and develop a systematic process to ensure accurate coding and reporting.

** UPDATE: Goal 3 has been completed*

GOAL 4: By September 30, 2016, the DVRS will implement quality assurance (QA) processes and conduct the following:

- Training on existing and revised policies and procedures for all staff involved in their implementation;
- Review of service records by staff not functioning as VR counselor supervisors;
- Develop fiscal controls and evaluation methods to ensure that providers are not billing DVRS through multiple contracts;
- Review and refine instrumentation for conducting service record reviews;
- Conduct surveys of transition-age youths who exit the VR program after eligibility is determined, but before their IPEs are developed, to determine the reasons why these individuals are withdrawing from the program; and
- Develop mechanisms to collect and aggregate the results of the preview process and provide results to the training function to inform the design and evaluation of training.

GOAL 5: By September 30, 2015, the DVRS will partner with two additional NJ Talent Networks to identify strategies that will increase access for individuals with disabilities in the targeted industry sectors, increase wage levels for individuals served, and expand relationships with employers throughout the state.

** UPDATE: Goal 5 has been completed*

GOAL 6: By September 30, 2016, DVRS will hold public forums to report on specific topics related to its service delivery and integration with the WIOA system, such as how DVRS is performing at the Employment First goal, and how services are succeeding with the deaf and hard of hearing population.

DVRS is developing a Business Outreach Unit to strengthen the relationships with employers as a dual customer of the VR program. The members of the unit will work with businesses throughout the state to assist in addressing their need for qualified candidates, provide the lead for DVRS with targeted hiring events, help pre-screen candidates as warranted, liaison with other business services representatives throughout the workforce system, provide technical assistance regarding the ADA, and provide education on disability-related topics.
DVRS had identified Pre-Employment Transition Services as a new priority under the WIOA. The Division has partnered with the NJDOE, Office of Special Education Programs to develop strategies that will ensure compliance with this new regulation. In order to reach all students with disabilities DVRS will fund initiatives that provide pre-employment transition services throughout the State.

CBVI Goals and Priorities
The following CBVI goals and priorities were developed based on the consultations with the SRC membership and based on data obtained from the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, including information from a Town Hall meeting, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and targeted surveys.

The SRC has consistently provided the agency's administrative staff with valuable feedback on establishing goals and priorities that reflects the Council's commitment to promote quality employment outcomes for individuals with vision loss. SRC members took an active role in development and implementation of assessment activities performed during the needs assessment in FY 2014. In addition, the Council's Vice Chair, is a member of the Strategic Plan Design Team, as well as representation from the leadership of major constituency groups in New Jersey.

The Strategic Plan Design Team also consists of a diverse representation of staff across the organization that worked to develop strategic initiatives and work plans that form the core of the strategic plan. The agency has completed a multi-year strategic plan for the agency. The project began in February of 2013 and will be finalized by December, 2014. The plan is composed of strategic initiatives that will drive the transformation of the agency. It is anticipated that a final work plan be completed by the December, 2014 timeline. The following are the strategic initiatives connected with vocational rehabilitation services that will drive agency priorities:

GOAL 1: Service Delivery System Redesign:

- CBVI will develop a model of service delivery to ensure the agency's five major programmatic components (Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living, Access Technology, and Eye-Health Services) function more collaboratively and seamlessly in the provision of comprehensive, life-long services to consumers.

GOAL 2: Development of Quality Career and Employment Programs:

- CBVI will develop innovative quality career and employment programs, in response to needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment and connected to meeting performance indicators connected with quality employment outcomes.

GOAL 3: External Partnerships, Resources and Alliances:

- CBVI will focus on growing external partnerships, resources, and alliances to support consumer services and outcomes. This will include development of new community rehabilitation programs to meet the unmet needs of consumers.

GOAL 4: Communications, Public Information, and Community Outreach:

- CBVI will develop improved internal and external communications strategies, public information campaigns, and community outreach efforts to heighten the profile of the agency and to inform the general public about the diverse capabilities of blind and vision-impaired people.

GOAL 5: Human Resources Staff Development:

- CBVI will devote resources and energy to various issues related to human resource staff development.

(m) Order of Selection. Describe:

(1) The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.

(2) The justification for the order.

(3) The service and outcome goals.

(4) The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.

(5) How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities; and

(6) If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

Justification for order of selection

The DVRS entered into an order of selection in 2001 but quickly recovered and was able to serve all categories within several months. Since that time the agency opted to remain in the order of selection in the event that budget constraints limited the ability to hire new staff. DVRS currently has a staffing target of 140 counselors. Due to recent changes in the DDD, every individual served by them is now required to have an employment goal in their support plan. Individuals who are served by DDD and are in need of employment services must come to the DVRS for services to determine eligibility prior to accessing employment services through DDD. The DDD currently serves approximately 25,000 individuals and estimates an additional 600-700 youth coming in yearly, and the local offices are starting to receive the influx of consumers with significant developmental disabilities.

As a result, the DVRS has determined that it is necessary to continue operating under an order of selection for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. With careful fiscal and case management, the agency has been able to provide services to every client found eligible for services in program year 2016. DVRS is concerned that an OOS will be necessary due to 15% allotment for pre-employment transition services. There is now less funding appropriate to consumers who are not students with disabilities.

CBVI is not implementing an Order of Selection.

Description of Priority categories

The DVRS is currently serving all categories in FFY 2014 but projects that an OS will be necessary in FFY 2015. Continuation of the OS is considered to be crucial to this human resource and fiscal management system, but even with diligent application of prudent and reasonable cost containment and intensive counselor recruitment measures, the DVRS may not be able to serve every new client meeting basic eligibility criteria in FFY 2054. The DVRS may again have to limit serving new consumers according to the OS for services, but proportionately serve more in priority one.

The DVRS does not rely solely on a diagnosis as a determination of significant disability, but considers every disability or combination of disabilities evaluated during the assessment, to determine eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs. If the disability, or combination of disabilities, presents impairments that seriously limit at least one functional capacity (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, inter-personal skills, work tolerance, or work skills), in terms of an employment outcome, and if vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple services over an extended period of time; the person will be considered to be significantly disabled.

Priority of categories to receive VR services under the order

Order of Selection Categories

Priority 1: Clients classified as individuals with a most significant disability who meet the following criteria:

- Have a significant physical or mental impairment or combination of impairments which seriously limit two or more functional capacities in terms of employment outcome; and
- Require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

Program Year 2016

- Service Goal: 25,326 (Combined Titles I & VI)
- Outcome Goal: 2,860
- Timeframe: October 1, 2013 to November 30, 2015
- Average case life 26 months

Priority 2: Clients classified as individuals with a significant disability who meet the following criteria:

- Have a significant physical or mental impairment or combination of impairments which seriously limit at least one functional capacity in terms of employment outcome; and
- Require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

Program Year 2016

- Service Goal: 8,760
- Outcome Goal: 1,016
- Timeframe: October 1, 2015 to March 31, 2017
- Average case life 18 months

Priority 3: All other eligible individuals, who do not meet the criteria for Priority Category 1 or Priority Category 2.

- Has at least one limitation in terms of employment in any functional capacity area; and,
- Is not expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time.

Program Year 2016

- Service Goal: 1,752
- Outcome Goal: 182
- Timeframe: October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016
- Average case life 12 months

The Order of Selection shall not preclude:

- Diagnostic services necessary to establish a client's eligibility;
- Post-employment services; and
- Information and referral services.

The DVRS will first serve in the order of selection Priority 1 followed by Priority 2 then Priority 3.

Service and outcome goals and the time within which the goals will be achieved

Program Year 2016 for Priority 1

- Service Goal: 25,326 (Combined Titles I & VI)
- Outcome Goal: 2,860
- Timeframe: October 1, 2014 to November 30, 2016
- Average case life 26 months

Program Year 2015 for Priority 2

- Service Goal: 8,760
- Outcome Goal: 1,016
- Timeframe: October 1, 2015 to March 31, 2017
- Average case life 18 months

Program Year 2015 for priority 3

- Service Goal: 1,752
- Outcome Goal: 182
- Timeframe: October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016
- Average case life 12 months

Priority Category	Number of individuals to be served	Estimated # individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services	Estimated # individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services	Time within which goals are to be achieved	Cost of services
1	25,326	2,860	2,392	26 months	$19,200,000
2	8,760	1,016	560	18 Months	$3,600,000
3	1,752	182	35	12 Months	$1,200,000

Figure 49

(n) Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds.

(1) Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.

Funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act will be used for the provision of services that lead to supported employment. The goal is to meet the needs of individuals with significant disabilities.

(2) Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities, including:

(A) the provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and

(B) how the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities.

Funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act will be used for the provision of services that lead to supported employment. The goal is to meet the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities to attain competitive, integrated employment. Priorities will be given to individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities, who demonstrate a need for intensive supported employment support in order to achieve substantial, gainful employment. These goals align with New Jersey's emphasis on Employment First.

Funds specifically designated for the provision of supported employment to youth with the most significant disabilities have been identified and are being tracked. Training will be conducted for all DVRS counselors that will emphasize that the provision of extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities, under appropriate circumstances, can be provided up to four years. It is critical that this training identifies the non-delegable nature of this new provision in WIOA.

DVRS and CBVI recently entered into a new MOU with DDD. The MOU identifies that resources to expand extended services and supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities will be allocated for youth being served by DDD through individualized budget allocations specific for employment support in competitive, integrated settings. This agreement further supports New Jersey's emphasis on Employment First.

The DVRS has organized the provision of SE through the use of community rehabilitation programs on a fee-for-service basis generally requiring up to 100 hours of intensive job coaching. The DVRS is currently reviewing the provision of SE services to determine that it is being offered to those in the most need and that there is a true collaboration among the three parties; the consumer, the DVRS vocational rehabilitation counselor and the vendor.

In order to support the work that is being done in these cases, the agency has secured state funds to provide long-term follow-along (LTFA) to ensure job retention during any changes related to disability or environment. One reality to consider is that the number of people in LTFA increases every year as individuals secure employment in competitive settings. The DVRS state funds have not been able to keep up with the need. The DVRS updated its MOU with DDD to reflect DDD's commitment to provide the LTFA once a consumer has been rehabilitated through the DVRS. The division also plans to create an MOU with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to be able to transfer LTFA for individuals with serious psychiatric illness to them.

The New Jersey CBVI continues its commitment to the development of an effective, coordinated system of supported employment work opportunities for blind, deaf-blind, and vision impaired consumers throughout New Jersey, and has two distinct goals regarding the distribution of Title VI, Part B funds.

GOAL 1:
CBVI will provide supported employment services for up to fifty (50) individuals via community-based programs on a fee-for service basis on an annual basis to increase employment in competitive, integrated settings for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The agency seeks to increase the percentage of consumers who gain employment via supported employment services as compared to the total number of successful closures.

The agency maintains a list of approved supported employment providers in collaboration with the Division of Developmental Disabilities in the New Jersey Department of Human Services and the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services via a MOU between the three agencies. Title I funds will be utilized if Title VI funds are not sufficient to meet the needs of the consumers for supported employment services.

GOAL 2:
All graduates of the agency's Work Skills Prep program, who are eligible to receive supported employment services and have those services included in their Individualized Plans for Employment, will be provided a job developer/job coach to assist in locating employment opportunities in competitive, integrated settings.

In partnership with The College of New Jersey, CBVI will fund job developers/job coaches to assist eligible graduates of the agency-sponsored Work Skills Prep (WSP) program who are interested in pursuing competitive, integrated employment after graduation from high school. WSP is collaborative project with the Center for Sensory and Complex Disabilities at The College of New Jersey. Students aged 16 – 21, who are still in a secondary school program and have complex

disabilities, participate in a two week residential program. Work Skills Preparation is a vocational oriented program that focuses on activities that will the employment potential of youth in transition from school to adult life and provides a comprehensive assessment report on students' skills, abilities, and interests.

(o) State's Strategies. Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

(1) The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

- Establish appropriate management teams in all local offices; this will provide oversight to the day-to-day services provided to the DVRS customers;
- Determine staffing positions that reflect collaboration with businesses in New Jersey, in conjunction with the LWD Talent Networks.
- Ensure that all counselors have the opportunity for continuing education as appropriate;
- Send information about the DVRS services to the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, New Jersey's parent training information center to be included in all transition workshops throughout New Jersey;
- Partner with other state agencies (i.e. the DDD, the CBVI) to make sure the DVRS services information is distributed as warranted;
- Identify and provide targeted hiring events throughout the state; and
- Analyze client data via dashboard approach for assessment purposes on a monthly basis.

In order to increase the number of DVRS consumers with DD/ASD, the DVRS will apply the following strategies:

- DVRS will identify stakeholders and develop an education and communication plan that promotes Employment First (EF);
- DVRS will research how other states' agency partners are collaborating on EF strategies;
- DVRS will develop a plan for obtaining valid statistics of how many individuals with DD/ASD are served by DVRS;
- DVRS will create a plan to allow transition students with DD/ASD to have open cases two years prior to exiting school; and
- DVRS will determine possible sites for a Project SEARCH pilot.

In addition to the strategies listed for DVRS, the CBVI will continue to expand the consultative role of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) regarding the review and comment on the development, implementation, and revision of agency policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. The SRC meets five times a year as a full council and also additional times in sub-committees to assist the agency in moving forward with developing new initiatives and to improve service provision. The SRC formed sub-committees to explore the expansion of specific service areas, including Information/Access Technology training for individuals 55 and older and improvement initiatives around Transition services. Previous

public forums identified these populations as possibly needing additional services. In addition, assessment activities performed as part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment provided data of unmet needs. In particular, individuals 55 and older may be an underserved population, especially as it relates to access to information technology which has been identified as a core blindness skill. The SRC will continue to evaluate the statewide needs and make recommendations on developing community based programs to begin to address these needs. In addition the SRC Vice-Chair is part of the design team tasked with developing the agency's strategic plan.

The agency will maintain or expand professional/personnel development to ensure service delivery by qualified personnel. In FFY 2014, the agency reassigned a staff person to serve as the Training Coordinator for the agency. The Coordinator has developed protocols for training new counseling staff on the operations of the agency and a comprehensive new staff orientation. The agency will look to expand the training opportunities for all staff to better serve consumers and to ultimately improve and the quantity and quality of employment outcomes. There will also be continued funding, as necessary, of the Master's Program in Rehabilitation Counseling at Rutgers University to ensure that staff is qualified at the highest level as determined by the standards detailed in the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD). The university has also added a post-masters certificate program to also assist staff with a master's degree in a related field, receive the proper education to be eligible for CRC certification. The agency will continue to maintain this relationship also to recruit qualified personnel for future job openings. The agency will remain committed to the comprehensive system of personnel development and is aligned with the precept that individuals with disabilities deserve to receive services from counselors and instructors who are highly skilled in their respective professions as indicated by their levels of education and certification, as well as their clinical performance.

The agency recognizes the importance of assisting wounded warriors to resume or begin a civilian career. To assist in that effort, the agency will continue to explore ways to expand the scope of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Veteran's Administration in order to most effectively utilize the resources of the respective agencies. In cases of dual eligibility, it is anticipated that utilizing the resources of each agency will result in enhanced and expanded service delivery and more successful outcomes. It is hoped that collaborative efforts by Vocation Rehabilitation and Employment staff and the Commission will improve employment outcomes for wounded veterans.

In recognition of Executive Order 13548: Increasing Federal Employment of Individuals with Disabilities, the agency will continue to promote consumer access to Federal employment opportunities. The agency has worked collaboratively with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services for the last three years to develop and participate in an annual Career Fair that focuses on agencies that can participate in Schedule A hiring. The agency will look for additional methods to expand consumer access to these types of jobs.

(2) How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis.

The DVRS posted a Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) July 15, 2012 for its funding from the RSA for Technology. Disability Rights NJ continues as the entity that manages these funds. Another NGO is projected for July 2015 in order to maintain transparency for these funds. A broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process using the following:

- Information and demonstration;
- Community outreach;
- Equipment recycling; and
- Technical consultation.

Assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis through a renewed and expanded contract with Advancing Opportunities using the following methods:

- Allowing the DVRS clients to try out equipment before purchase to determine best match for their specific needs;
- Continuing a pilot program with local offices to focus on organization and project management strategies among professional staff;
- Training staff in the latest equipment and technology;
- Partnering with all One-Stop Career Centers to offer technical assistance on current equipment and future purchases to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities;
- Equipping each local DVRS office with a counselor tool kit for assistive listening devices to encourage people who are deaf, hard of hearing, late deafened, and cochlear implanted to utilize necessary aides; and
- Ensuring that the three regional centers for the Deaf house state-of-the-art technology demonstration areas.

CBVI offers New Jersey residents who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind support to acquire assistive technology that is necessary to gain or retain employment. Assistive technology is defined as any item, piece of equipment, or system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is commonly used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. The agency's Technological Support Services department assists consumers to have direct access to computer equipment and other information technology. The goal of the unit is to minimize barriers to task performance by taking into account the consumers specific needs. Technological Services Specialists (TSS) is responsible for maintaining and staffing five comprehensive and up-to-date Regional Technology Assistance Centers (RTAC) located throughout New Jersey. Each RTAC is stocked with a variety of assistive technology devices and is open to the public by individual or group appointments. Three of these labs are located in CBVI's Service Centers (Newark, Freehold, and Cherry Hill); the fourth is operated in partnership with the NJ State Library Talking Book and Braille Center and is located in Trenton; the fifth is located at the Joseph Kohn Training Center in New Brunswick.

In addition, the regional TSS staff performs technology assessments and skill evaluations for consumers who are seeking employment and require equipment adaptations to assist in carrying out their work and/or tasks in an educational environment. The specialists make recommendations suitable for each consumer's unique situation, such that it would enable the individual to efficiently address his/her professional or academic responsibilities. Following the evaluation, both in the regional offices and at the JKTC, a comprehensive report is completed by the TSS, which includes recommendations for equipment, software, integration and/or training. Recommended training is time limited and goals are specifically linked to tasks and learning objectives via vocational training or on the job. The report details the number of training hours anticipated for the consumer to reach proficiency in the needed skill sets. Training services are provided by a service provider under contract with the Commission serving the Northern, Central, and Southern regions of the State. Training is provided one-on-one with consumers in their home, at training locations or work-site. The contracted agency provides periodic progress reports and a final report when training is completed.

The TSS staff installs, sets up, and configures recommended equipment for consumers on-site and provides brief instruction on proper utilization of assistive technology. TSS works with outside agencies, businesses, and institutions to evaluate work environments with respect to accessibility for vision impaired employees. The specialists also suggest appropriate solutions to outside agencies that would make these workplaces and the software applications they use more compatible with assistive technology.

TSS staff members at the Joseph Kohn Training Center conduct an initial skills assessment to determine the appropriate assistive computer software and training goals suitable to the consumers' needs. Training is then provided to strengthen the necessary skills and technological proficiency that facilitates the opportunity to succeed in a work or educational environment. The TSS staff also provide technical support, evaluation, and training during CBVI summer pre-vocational programs for transition-age consumers, such as Life 101.

The Adaptive Technology Loan Program is a CBVI funded project, managed on a day to day basis by the Talking Book and Braille Center. The loaner program is intended to provide computer access for VR consumers receiving assistive technology training as they move toward job readiness. Equipment available for loan includes desktop PCs, laptops, adaptive software, printers, scanners, and CCTVs. There are also a small number of MacBook's and handheld digital magnifiers for loan on a limited basis. Laptops are only available for students enrolled in remedial college courses.

(3) The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

Outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program are as follows:

- Offering universal access for all agency services and programs;
- Maintaining a level of cultural competence among staff;
- Offering all publications in Spanish;
- Placing bi-lingual counseling staff at local offices demonstrating the most need;
- Utilizing the AT & T language line when needed;
- Providing Deaf language specialists that cover all local offices;
- Providing counselors who work with HH customers with additional training specific to this population;
- Partnering with community-based organizations, including faith-based entities, to facilitate communication with individuals who speak other languages;
- Developing information about DVRS in ASL; and
- Partnering with the NJDOE to include information about the DVRS in its Parents Rights in Special Education (PRISE) document that is published in 12 languages.

For a number of years, the CBVI has operated the Project Prevention program, which was recently rebranded to the name, Project BEST (Better Eye-Health Service and Treatment), which is an eye screening and eye health program that conducts eye screenings in regions of the state that have large populations of economically disadvantaged and minority populations. In addition, screenings are conducted in regions of the state that have significant migrant worker populations. The Commission has consistently received referrals from traditionally unserved and underserved populations for services as a result of these outreach initiatives. The agency also has an ongoing working relationship with the Puerto Rican Association for Human Development (PRAHD) to better reach the Spanish speaking population.

The agency entered into a MOU with the Division of Developmental Disabilities in the New Jersey Department of Human Services and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services to improve the provision of supported employment services through the three agencies. Greater communication with the Division of Developmental Disabilities has helped to identify additional individuals with the most significant disabilities who may benefit from supported employment services to gain employment in integrated settings. The agency continues its collaborations with the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities to expand cross training opportunities with community rehabilitation providers who provide supported employment services and agency staff. The agency also participants annually in the New Jersey Association for Person in Supported Employment statewide conference to present on agency services as an outreach effort to additional communities that serve or advocate on behalf of individuals with the most significant disabilities and those that are unserved or underserved.

(4) The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services).

DVRS assigned a lead transition counselor to each office. Responsibilities include:

- Coordinate all the transition activities throughout the catchment area.

- Support transition fairs
- Provide training on a local county-wide basis

Additionally, each counselor is assigned to specific public high schools. They provide technical assistance to the schools in the following ways:

- Attend individualized education program (IEP) meetings
- Provide TA to the schools as warranted
- Meet with individual schools
- Confer with parents
- Referral to benefits counseling when appropriate

DVRS also supports the IL centers to provide transition services to students on a fee-for-service basis throughout the state.

CBVI, since its inception, has assisted school districts in providing appropriate education programs that address the unique needs of children who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind. The agency employs over fifty Teachers of the Visually Impaired, to provide itinerant based services to children throughout the state. In 1993 this partnership was formalized with local school districts through provider service agreements. The agreements identify the specific services that the Commission will provide for each child in the school district. These services are tailored according to individual student needs and are provided by Commission staff within the Education Service Unit. When students reach the age of fourteen, the Commission's Teachers of the Visually Impaired refer all these students to one of the six transition counselors who work in the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit, i.e., four transition counselors assigned to the agency's service centers and two Deaf-Blind Specialists. In addition, Commission staff participate in transition fairs developed by Local Educational Agencies (LEA) and "Planning for Adult Life" seminars hosted by the Division of Developmental Disabilities within the New Jersey Department of Human Services as an outreach effort to reach families who may be unfamiliar with CBVI services.

Planning for Adult Life is a statewide project funded by the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to assist young adults (between the ages of 16-21) with developmental disabilities and their families in charting a life course for adulthood (www.planningforadultlife.org). It offers a variety of resources including Informational sessions, webinars, and resource guides/materials that address the following core areas:

- Postsecondary Education/Employment
- Housing
- Legal/Financial Planning
- Entitlement Programs and Eligibility
- Self-Direction
- Health/Behavioral Health
- Building/Maintaining Community Ties and Friendships
- Planning/Visioning a Life Course

The transition counselors at the agency provide information and referral services to the students and their parents/guardians to assist in the transition process from secondary education to adult outcomes. In addition, assessment activities occur to assist in the process to determining eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services. Pre-employment transition services will be provided to all students who are blind, vision impaired, or deaf-blind, regardless of whether an application for services has been submitted. When the student does apply for services and is determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, the transition counselor will begin a process of comprehensive assessment to determine services needs that will inform the development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) around the specific needs of the student as well as specialized techniques and training in career awareness, college admission procedures, jobseeking activities, and related activities that will prepare for the successful transition into appropriate post-secondary training and educational opportunities that lead to competitive, integrated employment.

The Commission maintains, in conjunction with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), an Interagency Agreement for Transition from School to Adult Life with the appropriate SEA (Office of Special Education Programs - OSEP). Both agencies will be working to develop a new Interagency Agreement to encompass new components related to transition and pre-employment transition services provision within the amendments of the Rehabilitation Act under WIOA.

Throughout the transition process, contact with the Local Educational Agency (LEA) and the Teacher of Visually Impaired at the agency remain constant. The need for specialized training, specific programs and assistive technology are addressed as part of the IEP and are also developed more fully in the Transition IPE. Technical consultation begun in the earlier grades with the Teacher of the Visually Impaired is continued through the transition process, and the transition counselor actively seeks participation in the development of IEPs. The transition counselors also begin evaluative activities at age fourteen that ultimately lead to development of the IPE and continue to play an organizational role with technical consultations and through their active participation in school-to-work activities, task force memberships, career fairs, etc. At various points during the transition process students are evaluated and presented with opportunities to participate in specific programs funded by the Commission, such as summer programs in conjunction with The College of New Jersey (Work Skills Prep for students 16- 21 years old and still in high school) and Bonner Summer Fellows (College Prep Experience for high school juniors and seniors).

On a state level, the Executive Director of CBVI is a member of the State Special Education Advisory Council convened by the NJ Department of Education, with the goal of promoting additional collaboration between programs under IDEIA and WIOA to promote successful transition to adult outcomes for students with disabilities.

(5) If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State.

- DVRS will work with sheltered workshops to assist individuals to obtain competitive employment;
- DVRS will identify staff members in all local offices who will coordinate the provision of pre-employment transition services in partnership with LEAs.
- DVRS will develop partnerships with schools to provide technical assistance to students with DD/ASD that will identify community-based integrated work opportunities prior to exiting school; and
- DVRS will encourage and provide TA to CRPs who wish to become an employment network.

In 2014, a new statewide contract was awarded to Advancing Opportunities to provide Information/Access Technology training to consumers on a fee-for-service basis. One statewide provider of these services has increased the level of consistency of service provision for all regions of the state.

The CBVI expanded the role of Center for Vocational Rehabilitation to assist in providing work experience opportunities in the community surrounding the agency's training center. As part of the curriculum restructuring at the Joseph Kohn Training Center, the sixteen week program was expanded to twenty weeks to incorporate a four week community work experience component. The number of local businesses participating in the program has increased, and the program is well received by consumers. The agency expanded the number of staff in the contract to 3 FTE, in order to allow for expansion of business partners and proper supports for consumers while they are involved in their work experiences.

The CBVI recently developed a new program that targets youth, 14-21 years old. The year-round program serves transition-aged youth eligible for vocational rehabilitation services emphasizing employment development, mentoring by employed blind/vision impaired adults, and experiential learning experiences to promote independence.

(6) Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

WIOA requires states to establish performance accountability measures that apply across the core programs to assess the effectiveness of states and local areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by those programs. DVRS is involved in workgroups at LWD that will establish metrics to comply with the accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA. DVRS is committed to improving its performance as per these new requirements.

Additionally, DVRS is has established goals for improvement based on the 2010 RSA monitoring visit. These include the following:

- Establishing a business outreach unit designed to meet the needs of businesses in New Jersey;
    - Implementing Project SEARCH;
    - Providing opportunity for targeted hiring events at a regular basis;

    - Coordinating opportunities with business services representatives;
- Creating a pre-employment transition unit in each local office aimed at meeting the needs of transition students with disabilities throughout the state;
    - Establishing relationships with all LEAs;
    - Managing a partnership with the CILs to deliver PETS;
    - Tracking the delivery of PETS in local offices.

(7) Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

The DVRS is housed in New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD). In August 2010 LWD reorganized its structure to include the DVRS within the workforce development system. This provides a solid foundation to work with the state's workforce investment system. The DVRS is a core participant in the One-Stop Career Center system and maintains an active presence in the eighteen local WDBs as well as the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), New Jersey's State WDB. The SETC has established relationships with both DVRS and CBVI State Rehabilitation Councils, as described in prior sections. Local WDBs sponsor local disability issues committees and the DVRS local managers have a designated seat on these local disability committees. Additional strategies include the following:

- Participation in all LWD efforts to coordinate services to all customers;
- Participation with LWD Labor Planning and Analysis committees that identify 7 key industry sectors. They include:
    - Transportation, Logistics and Distribution;
    - Life Sciences (Pharmaceuticals, Biotechnology, Medical Devices);
    - Technology/Entrepreneurship;
    - Financial Services;
    - Advanced Manufacturing;
    - Health Care; and
    - Hospitality

The first four industries have been identified as priority industries for economic development efforts in New Jersey. These seven industries account for more than half of all private sector jobs in New Jersey and nearly two-thirds of all private sector wages paid in the state. The DVRS participation in these efforts will ensure LWD support for an inclusive, diverse workforce, including individuals with significant disabilities who qualify for Title VI funds.

The DVRS is housed in LWD as part of workforce development. This provides a solid foundation to work with the state's workforce investment system. The DVRS is a core participant in the One-Stop Career Center system and maintains an active presence in the eighteen local WDBs as well as the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), New Jersey's State WDB. The DVRS local offices are now located within the OSCCs in 16 catchment areas throughout the state.

The LWD has established four priorities for the next three years:

1. Reemployment – What steps can LWD take to decrease the amount of time that people receive UI?
2. Opportunity – How can LWD assist more people to move from government benefits (SSI, SSDI, GA, and TANF) to work?
3. Alignment – How can LWD increase the number of people who have an industry recognized, post-secondary credential?
4. Accountability – What data and information about program performance would help us to improve services?

The DVRS, as part of workforce development, provided input to these priorities to ensure that other components of the statewide workforce investment system can appropriately assist individuals with disabilities who access general services.

The DVRS continues to partner with the Talent Networks established by LWD that provide linkages to the seven key industries sectors that account for more than half of all private sector jobs in New Jersey and nearly two-thirds of all private sector wages paid in the state. The DVRS participation in these efforts ensures LWD support for an inclusive, diverse workforce, including individuals with significant disabilities who qualify for Title VI funds.

Additionally, the CBVI remains committed to providing training and technical assistance to staff members from the other components of the statewide workforce investment system. Commission staff members have provided training/consultation to staff at One-Stop Career Centers throughout the state on issues related to ways to foster proper access for individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and vision impaired. The agency is available to provide further assistance in these areas to foster greater access for individuals with vision loss.

(8) How the agency's strategies will be used to:

(A) achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment;

(B) support innovation and expansion activities; and

(C) overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

DVRS is committed to establishing Employment First initiatives throughout the state. Strategies include establishing Project SEARCH and developing targeted hiring events for qualified candidates with disabilities. The business outreach unit will lead these efforts. Additionally, DVRS identified goals to improve services to Deaf/hard of hearing consumers. Strategies to reach these goals include establishing regional Deaf language specialist positions throughout the state, improving the direct access for Deaf consumers via video phones in the offices, updating the DVRS hearing aid policy that includes best practices regarding individuals with cochlear implants, and working with the three Deaf centers to increase outreach to this population. DVRS also plans to

contract with the Boggs Center, New Jersey's Center of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities, to provide technical assistance for the following:

- TA to designated institutes of higher education in order to establish programs for youth with ID/DD that will provide industry-recognized credentials and a Career Pathways approach for their skill development; and
- TA to designated sheltered workshop staff for training in Customized Employment and Person-Centered Planning.

Strategies to reach all transition students with disabilities are significant as well. They include establishing a PETS unit to coordinate activities with LEAs and CILs as well as developing an MOU with the SEA to help DVRS achieve the requirement of providing PETS to all students with disabilities in transition. DVRS also posted a notice of funding for PETS activities to work with vendors to reach this goal.

Innovation and expansion (I & E) activities are developed throughout the year to promote model demonstrations and best practices for the VR program. Current I & E programs include JEVS-hireAbility for employment services to DVRS consumers with the most significant disabilities. DVRS plans to post an NGO for I & E in 2016.

Innovation and expansion funds are also used to provide AT and employment services to DVRS consumers who are Deaf/HH. These centers employ staff members fluent in ASL to ensure effective communication with Deaf consumers who use sign language as their native language.

Strategies to overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the state Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the state Supported Employment Services Program include the following:

- Updating the extended employment guidelines;
- Standardizing vendor reporting forms;
- Monitoring required vendor accreditation and staff development;
- Meeting with the APSE board;
- Continuing the liaison meetings with ACCSES-NJ;
- Outreaching to the DDD to provide employment services to individuals affected by deinstitutionalization;
- Encouraging CRPs to become employment networks; and
- Participating as a lead member to implement the Employment First initiative in the state.

The DVRS plans to work with the CRPs to develop integrated employment strategies for individuals with disabilities who currently attend sheltered workshop programs who, through informed choice, choose to access competitive employment. DVRS implemented reporting requirements in 2016 that identify extended workers who currently make above minimum wage in order to provide counseling, including benefits counseling, and encouragement for them to pursue competitive, integrated employment.

Additionally, the CBVI will develop a model of service delivery to ensure the agency's five major programmatic components (Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living, Access Technology, and Eye-Health Services) function more collaboratively and seamlessly in the provision of comprehensive, life-long services to consumers.

- Obtaining and reviewing agency consumer satisfaction information and other constituent feedback, including the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, gathered formally or otherwise, as a prerequisite to developing and informing the appearance of a new Service Delivery System Redesign model;
- Fashioning interdisciplinary team approaches across all program components in an effort to avoid the need for consumers to be subject to duplicate service-related questions or processes and in recognition of the fact that consumer needs regularly involve more than one programmatic component of agency services in order to be comprehensive and effective;
- Developing quality management and continuous improvement strategies to ensure consistency and timeliness of excellent services for all consumers, collection of valid and verifiable data related to all program deliverables, establishment and refining of a centralized filing system for correspondence and other agency records not currently captured in the Fully Accessible Client Tracking System (FACTS), and creation of all other agency-wide systems resulting in a robust and accountable blindness service agency;
- Considering methods for enhancing customized, person-centered approaches in service delivery, recognizing the individual talents and interests of each consumer;
- Enhancing the quality and availability of blindness-specific, priority services, e.g. Braille instruction, assistive technology training, orientation and mobility instruction, daily living skills orientation, and vision-loss adjustment services.

CBVI will develop innovative quality career and employment programs, in response to needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment.

- Maintain the EDGE program (Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement) a year-round program for transition-aged youth (14-21) eligible for vocational rehabilitation services emphasizing employment development, mentoring by employed blind/vision impaired adults, and experiential learning experiences to promote independence.
- Establish a Business Relations Unit, charged with educating employers about blindness and catering to the unique needs of business as a secondary customer of CBVI services, in alignment with provisions in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- Redesigning and strengthening the Randolph-Sheppard program in New Jersey (Business Enterprises New Jersey – BENJ)
- Develop competencies for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Supervisors in utilizing evidence-based practices, including incorporating motivational interviewing techniques and customized employment methodologies into the counseling relationship to increase employment outcomes.
- Expand vocational exploration, experiential programs, and other career planning opportunities for consumers.

CBVI will focus on growing external partnerships, resources, and alliances to support consumer services and outcomes.

- Analyzing current Memoranda of Understanding for elements that promote CBVI's mission and examining these same documents for aspects that do not contribute to the credit of CBVI's program;
- Developing a protocol for assessing the value of needed partnerships;
- Identifying target organizations for formal agency agreements, e.g. Workforce development agencies, Independent Living Councils and Independent Living Centers, Social services providers, Housing authorities;
- Recommending strategies for securing broader resource services for consumers (e.g. social services, legal aid) in an effort to facilitate social stability while the consumer seeks employment.

CBVI will develop improved internal and external communications strategies, public information campaigns, and community outreach efforts to heighten the profile of the agency and to inform the general public about the diverse capabilities of blind and vision-impaired people.

- Adopt aggressive or more affirmative outreach measures to identify and recruit those who need CBVI services, especially those who are underserved, unserved, or those with the most significant disabilities.
- Devoting professional attention and resources to creating new agency branding and public image approaches;
- Developing strategies to promote qualified consumers directly to employers via the creation of a Business Liaison Unit, charged with educating employers about blindness and catering to the unique needs of business as a secondary customer of CBVI services;
- Expanding internal communications methods, e.g. newsletters, brochures, Website content and resource enhancements, as a means of fostering a more engaged, deliberative, interactive, and invested professional workforce and vibrant agency culture;
- Crafting engagement strategies for various public partners, including advocacy organizations, allied agencies, providers, non-profit agencies, and the like, thereby enhancing CBVI's ability to leverage external resources in pursuit of its goals and mission.

CBVI will devote resources and energy to various issues related to human resource staff development. Measures consistent with this initiative may include:

- Recruiting qualified staff to fill the agency-specific positions, particularly direct blindness services-related roles, and strictly adhering to the guidance in the Comprehensive System for Personnel Development (CSPD), ensuring that vocational rehabilitation counselors comply with the Federal guidelines for this profession;
- Adopting strategic measures for agency-wide succession planning that is in compliance with regulations of the NJ Civil Service Commission and related union contracts;
- Creating systems and resources for development of staff skills, e.g. in-service trainings, webinars, in-person conference participation;
- Developing a matrix for a staff accountability system, e.g. writing clear job descriptions and expanding the performance review process;

- Taking steps to fully maximize all staff resources for optimum program benefit.

(p) Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals. Describe:

(1) An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

(A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

(B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

The New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) goals and priorities of FY 2015 were a continuation of goals identified in FFY 2012. Progress toward their achievement is as follows:

Goal 1: Accuracy of Data. Goal 1: By October 31, 2014, data reported by the DVRS will be valid. The DVRS will develop a baseline to determine the validity of information given.
DVRS has used an AWARE data case management system for a full year; counselors still need more training in order to make sure all required parts of the system are filled in appropriately. Additional training has been identified and DVRS plans to have three regional training to cover it.

Goal 2: Performance Indicator 1.1. The number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the 2014-2015 federal year will increase compared to the number of individuals who exit the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during 2010-2011 performance period.
DVRS met goal 2 for FFY 2013 and FFY 2014. In FFY 2015 DVRS did not achieve this goal. 15% of the federal funds were moved into PETS, and students will not have employment outcomes for many years. This shift in emphasis led to the decline in employment outcomes.

Goal 3: Performance Indicator 1.5. The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the program in competitive, self or blind enterprise program (BEP) employment during the 2014-2015 federal year will increase compared to the average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment during the 2013-2014 performance period.

The DVRS did not meet this goal for FFY 2013, 2014, or 2015. In New Jersey the average wage is one of the highest in the nation. Many highly paid and wealthy residents of NJ earn their wages out of state (in NYC and Philadelphia) so the wage base in NJ, is actually lower than statistics would indicate.

The DVRS embraced the President's emphasis on federal hiring of persons with disabilities. For the sixth year, a specific "Schedule A" hiring event took place in southern New Jersey. The DVRS expanded this activity to northern New Jersey in the summer of 2015. The DVRS has also engaged in industry sector strategies identified by LWD that involve working with targeted private industries that hire the most workers in New Jersey. To date the DVRS has worked with the

financial services industry and the transportation, logistics and distribution industry. Many of these industries have federal contracts and are subject to the Section 503 regulations promulgated in March 2014. The DVRS will continue to identify strategies that will improve indicator 1.5.

Goal 4: By October 1, 2014, the DVRS will have resolved all the compliance findings and corrective actions stemming from the Fiscal Year 2010 monitoring report on the Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent Living Programs in the State of New Jersey so that Federal funding is not withheld.
The DVRS has resolved all findings.

The CBVI goals and priorities of FY 2013 are listed below.

CBVI Goal 1: Quality Management Initiative
In order to ensure timely and consistent quality VR services for its consumers, CBVI will develop a new comprehensive quality assurance system, which will include improved case review protocols for supervisors, a new quality assurances case review system, and the establishment of clear performance metrics for VR staff. All three components of the project will be completed by February 2013 and implemented during FFY 2013. CBVI will develop baseline data from the QA assessments performed in 2013 and develop plans to improve service provision in the Regional Offices.
Update: CBVI completed the Quality Assurance system on schedule in February 2013. Key components of the system were also slated to be incorporated into the agency's digital case management system called FACTS (Libera System 7) in order to facilitate a seamless and fully accessible means of performing case reviews. These components included a dashboard for performance metrics, a database query for key indicators of timeliness of service provision and consumer engagement, and a case review form to ensure compliance with Section 107 standards under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Those systems are still not totally operational in the FACTS system and they are still under development and refinement.

CBVI Goal 2: Work Skills Prep: Post-Graduation Follow Along
CBVI will improve employment outcomes for its consumers who attended the Work Skills Prep program and graduated from their secondary school program from the current success rate of 22.22% to 30% of all those who exit the VR program. This goal is scheduled to be completed by 9/30/2013. This is a one year pilot project. If successful, the agency will look to expand the strategies to continue to improve employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Update: The job developer hired for this position was able to achieve three additional closures of Work Skills graduates, but unfortunately found other employment before the end of the project year. A new job developer was hired, and began to work with counselors in the services centers and consumers around job development activities. The program has experienced another setback; as the new job developer was diverted to another project. The agency had decided to redesign the program and will roll out the new program in FFY 2016.

CBVI Goal 3: LEAD: Leadership Education Advocacy Determination Heightened Independence in Progress

The organization under contract with CBVI to administer the LEAD program, will develop a new curriculum for the program to incorporate more employment readiness activities and community work experiences for transition-aged youth participating in the program by June 30, 2013 and implement the new curriculum by September, 2013. The new curriculum will benefit up to seventy high school students with vision loss who participate in the program with the ultimate goal of improving employment outcomes for this cohort.

Update: The agency decided to end the LEAD program on September 30, 2013. The agency was interested in pursuing a new direction to address the needs of transition-aged youth that would allow for greater emphasis on employment readiness activities. The existing program structure within the LEAD program was not conducive to this program element. The agency developed a new model and implemented the new program called EDGE (Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement) in FFY 2015 to better serve this population.

(2) An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

(A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

(B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

The DVRS goal for SE was to serve a greater number of individuals. Targeted disability groups in FFY 2013 state plan included the following:

- Individuals with serious psychiatric illness;
- Individuals with developmental disabilities;
- Individuals who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing;
- Individuals on the autism spectrum; and
- Individuals with traumatic brain injury.

To achieve this goal, the DVRS did the following:

- Worked with the DSA fiscal and the Division of Information Technology (DIT) to ensure separate tracking was established to differentiate individuals served with Title VI funds;
- Offered SE training opportunities and strategies for staff members of providers;
- Provided technical assistance to the SE providers in regard to work flow, referrals and staffing; and
- Continued expanding the list of qualified providers, as appropriate.

The DVRS was successful in achieving all goals set forth for SE.

The New Jersey CBVI continues its commitment to the development of an effective, coordinated system of supported employment work opportunities for blind, deaf-blind and visually impaired consumers throughout New Jersey.

The Commission allocated Title VI, Part B funds to fund the Center for Vocational Rehabilitation (CVR) to provide contracted services for supported employment to the Agency's central region, as well as to community based providers on a fee-for-service pay structure.

CBVI Goal 1: Work with the Center for Vocational Rehabilitation (CVR) to provide supported employment services to fifteen (15) agency consumers during FFY 2013.
Update: The agency referred eleven (11) participants to CVR for supported employment services up until March 31, 2013. On April 1st, 2013, the contract was converted from a cost-related structure to a fee-for-service arrangement. The contract was moved to a fee-for-services structure to allow a greater level of choice for consumers.

CBVI Goal 2: Provide supported employment services up to 15 individuals via CRP's on a fee-for-service basis for FFY 2013.
Update: The agency served sixteen (16) consumers in FFY 2013, achieving its goal. Overall, CBVI realized an overall improvement in the percentage of cases served via supported employment that achieved an employment outcome. 5.36% of Employment Outcomes in FFY 2013 were individuals who received Supported Employment services. This is an upward trend as compared to FFY 2011 – 4.20% and FFY 2012 – 4.58%. The agency is encouraged by this increase and hopes to continue this trend. The Commission also utilizes Title I funds to provide supported employment services on a fee for service basis.

(3) The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

Federal Program Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators
WIOA removed the specific standards and performance indicators for title IV. Performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA will be the evaluation tool used by DVRS once they are implemented in LWD.

The six primary indicators for performance are:

1. The percentage of participants, who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
2. The percentage of participants, who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
3. Median earnings of participants, who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
4. The percentage of participants who obtained a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program. A participant who has obtained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is only included in this measure if the participant is

also employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized post-secondary credential within 1 year from program exit;
5. The percentage of participants who during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.
6. Effectiveness in serving employers, based on indicators developed as required by sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(iv) of WIOA.

Additional indicators for title IV include six primary indicators for the youth/student program:

1. Percentage of participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program;
2. Percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
3. Median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
4. The percentage of participants who obtained a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation or up to 1 year after exit. A participant who has obtained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is only included in this measure if the participant is also employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized post-secondary credential within 1 year from program exit;
5. The percentage of participants who during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress towards such a credential or employment;
6. Effectiveness in serving employers, based on indicators developed as required by sec. 116(b)(2)(iv) of WIOA.

Using performance data under WIA the DVRS passed four of the six standards and indicators for FFY 2015.

The data below reflects the CBVI's compliance with the standards and indicators. The Commission met or exceeded the required performance levels in five of the six indicators for Standard 1, also meeting the standard for two of the three primary indicators. In addition, the agency met the performance indicator for Standard 2, thereby exceeding the required performance level for both standards.

Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes
Indicator 1.1: Difference in the Number of Individuals with Employment Outcomes
Target: Equal or exceed the previous reporting period

- Number of Employment Outcomes for FY 2014: 611

- Number of Employment Outcomes for FY 2015: 627

CBVI passed this indicator

Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Individuals Receiving Services Who Had Employment Outcomes after Exiting VR Services
Target: 68.9%
Agency Performance: 68.9%
CBVI passed this indicator

Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Individuals with Employment Outcomes Who Were Competitively Employed with Earnings Equivalent to At Least the Minimum Wage
Target: 35.40%
Agency Performance: 94.90%
CBVI passed this indicator

Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Individuals with Competitive Employment Outcomes Who Had Significant Disabilities
Target: 89%
Agency Performance: 91.30%

Indicator 1.5 (Primary): Measures the income ratio of those individuals who are closed as competitively employed to the State average hourly wage.
Target: .59
Agency Performance: .53
CBVI did not pass this indicator

- The Commission did not pass this indicator. The standard is 0.59 and the Commission's score was 0.53. The high average hourly state wage for New Jersey, has proved challenging for the agency to pass Indicator 1.5. The agency will continue to outreach to large employers to continue to expand the scope of employment opportunities for consumers, especially jobs that offer wages commensurate with the average hourly wage for the state. The Commission has also been working to expand internship or work experience opportunities for high school and college students in order to develop career paths to higher paying jobs.

Indicator 1.6: This indicator represents the increase or decrease in the percentage of individuals who achieved competitive employment who had their own income as a primary source of support at closure compared to the percentage who had their own income as a primary support source when they applied for VR services.
Target: 30.4%
Agency Performance: 31.3%
CBVI passed this indicator

Standard 2.1: This indicator measures the ratio of the minority population served by the VR program compared to the ratio of the non-minority population served by the VR program.

Target: .8
Agency Performance: 1.05
CBVI passed this indicator

(4) How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized.

I&E funds were provided via an NGO to the following CRP:

1. JEVS Hirability – Business outreach and employment support to DVRS consumers with significant disabilities.

I & E funds were also used to provide services in three regional Deaf centers. These centers provide employment services to individuals who use ASL as their native language. The centers also house assistive technology for individuals with any degree of hearing loss.

Funding continues to be used for the SRC and the SILC activities for FY 2016.

Additionally, I&E funds were utilized by CBVI in several ways:

The Work Experience Program at the Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC) was expanded to provide a four-week community based work experience for all participants of the Joseph Kohn Training Center's (JKTC) full program through the development of work opportunities within the local community of New Brunswick through job development activities and time-limited job coaching services on-the-job. This expanded the training program from a sixteen to twenty week program. In addition, the program was expanded to provide additional job developers who found additional work locations in the New Brunswick community to provide diverse experiences for consumers. The program has been well received by consumers of the agency.

The agency also developed a new summer program for secondary students aged 14-16 called Life 101. The program is a day program, and students attend the Joseph Kohn Training Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays for each thematic curriculum topic. Two of the thematic topics also require attendance on a Friday as well. The program focuses on four major life areas: Career Preparation, Skills of Independence, College Preparation, and Access/Information Technology. Agency staff provided the instruction for all areas of this program. Therefore, this was an internal program that did not require an external contract or significant additional funding to provide this service. The program was run again this summer, and it is expected to expand in FFY 2015.

(q) Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services. Include the following:

(1) The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

(2) The timing of transition to extended services.

Supported employment means competitive work in integrated work Supported employment means competitive work in integrated work settings in which individuals are working and earning at least minimum wage. Individuals with the most significant disabilities can benefit from these services when:

- Competitive employment has not traditionally occurred;
- Competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and
- As a result of the nature and severity of their disability need intensive supported employment services in order to perform such work.

New Jersey became the 14th state to embrace the concept of Employment First (EF) in April of 2012. EF is a framework that is centered on the premise that all citizens are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life. This initiative identified that competitive employment in an integrated setting is the preferred first choice for every individual seeking employment in New Jersey. This effort shifts assumptions about whether individuals with certain categories of disabilities can to work to one of determining the supports and services necessary so that these individuals will be successful in competitive employment. The DVRS adheres to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. An individual with a disability must want and qualify for the services.

Counselors in all the offices received training on trial work experiences (TWE) in the spring of 2014. CRPs were also given access to the same training. TWE will be utilized when the DVRS counselor needs clear and convincing evidence regarding whether an individual with a disability will benefit from VR services.

The DVRS has consistently encouraged the development of programs that meet the needs of a wide variety of individuals with the most significant disabilities based on either geographic and/or disability driven needs. Traditional community rehabilitation programs and programs for SE without traditional facility-based operations are available throughout the state.

All of the vendors are required to follow the same criteria in their service delivery:

- Referral;
- Assessment;
- Job development;
- Job Placement;
- Intensive coaching; and
- Follow-along.

Supported employment continues to be a valuable service and has opened doors to individuals with disabilities who are now expected to work in a competitive setting. The DVRS is currently assessing the need for more intense post-employment services for individuals with the most complex disabilities; training will commence in the fall to instruct counselors on the proper way to identify DVRS consumers in need of this service.

For transition students with disabilities, in particular students with the most significant disabilities, counselors will coordinate the IPE in order to ensure that students can move from PETS services to extended services when appropriate. Care will be taken to make sure students do not lose funding upon the end of IDEA entitlement.

LTFA is provided to consumers through the use of state funds to provide less intense ongoing support. It is estimated that the DVRS, through its provision of LTFA, is helping to maintain 3,388 individuals with disabilities on the job. This does not only have a significant social impact on their lives, but it demonstrates that people with disabilities can be contributors to their community. The DVRS provides extensive on-the-job services or job coaching for individuals for up to 18 months but evaluates each case and the person's need on an individual basis. In the pre-IPE meeting that includes the counselor, the CRP vendor and the client, a determination is made whether extended services will be required. As the case progresses the counselor makes sure that the CRP vendor will be available to provide long-term follow-along services.

Under the DVRS EF strategy, long-term SE services will be provided by the DDD and the DMHAS for consumers who qualify for these services after a DVRS consumer is successfully placed in employment. This braiding of funding provides supports to a higher number of consumers. The DVRS continues to partner with the DDD and the DMHAS in order to do this.

DDD – DVRS and CBVI successfully negotiated a new MOU with the DDD in FFY 2015. The DDD recently changed its policy and now requires all individuals who receive DDD services to apply for services with the DVRS as a condition to receiving DDD funding. While the DVRS is very willing to provide services to individuals who qualify and want services, the division will adhere to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in WIOA.

DMHAS – for many years the DVRS and the DMHAS combined resources to fund 22 county-based SE programs specific for individuals with pervasive mental illness. This partnership will conclude September 30, 2014. The SE vendors have been notified and have been given the opportunity to apply to the DVRS to become a vendor with the division. Local office counselors will work with consumers with pervasive mental illness to identify SE providers that meet their needs and will provide the SE on a fee-for-service basis.

The DVRS recognizes that the census of those needing LTFA will grow incrementally as those consumers achieve employment. With that reality in mind and the shortage of state funds, the DVRS has organized several efforts to remedy the situation. These include:

- Identifying DDD and DMHAS consumers in the DVRS case management system to ensure that these consumers are transferred to the appropriate funding stream
- Ensuring that the state-funded program will be monitored to provide the most effective services to this cohort; and
- An examination of cases that may have evolved toward independence and are no longer in need of the service

Additionally, the New Jersey CBVI remains committed to increasing the quality, scope and extent of supported employment services to eligible consumers who are blind, deaf-blind, or vision impaired and also may have additional disabilities. The Commission's Title VI Part B funding is generally inadequate to support the full scope of supported employment services. However, in the absence of Title VI funds, the Commission does use Title I funds to ensure that adequate services are provided.

There are presently an approved cadre of community providers throughout the state who provide supported employment services on a fee for service basis. The Commission continues to make use of time limited job coaching services to address the needs of consumers who are chronically unemployed and those who present with issues of mental health or are otherwise ineligible for services from the DDD. The Commission has traditionally placed approximately between four and five percent of all successful rehabilitations into supported employment.

A MOU regarding supported employment is currently in effect between the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the DDD, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The MOU delineates the procedures and protocols that define the provision of supported employment services within and between these three agencies. An ongoing training program has been developed and delivered to the appropriate staff in the three agencies. The agency has established a working relationship with the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities and developed a full day training for supported employment providers throughout the state, addressing issues of vision loss and supports in the workplace. Training topics include assistive technology, safe travel, and non-visual instructional techniques. It is anticipated that the agency will offer the training through the Boggs Center several times in FFY 2015.

It should be noted that the Commission does not fund extended services. Extended services are provided by the DDD and or other identified sources. The previously mentioned MOU includes a form (F-3) that is completed at the appropriate time, as defined by the IPE and consumer's progress at the work site, which moves an eligible consumer into an extended services status. The transition to Extended Services must occur no later than eighteen (18) months after placement in supported employment, unless a longer period is established in the IPE and only if the individual has made substantial progress toward obtaining the employment goal listed in the IPE.

Vocational Rehabilitation Certifications and Assurances

Certifications

#	Statement of Certification
1.	The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) and New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) are authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act;
2.	As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development and New Jersey Department of Human Services agree to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;
3.	As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agencies agree to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;
4.	The designated State agencies and/or the designated State units have the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;
5.	The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement.
6.	All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.
7.	The Director of LWD Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Executive Director of DHS Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired have the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;

8.	The Director of LWD Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Executive Director of DHS Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired have the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services;
9.	The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

Assurances

#	Statement of Assurance
1.	Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agencies assure it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
2.	Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State units assure it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.
3.	Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan: The designated State agencies or designated State units, as appropriate, assure it will comply with the requirements related to:
	(a) the establishment of the designated State agencies and designated State units, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(b) the establishment of either a State independent commissions or State Rehabilitation Councils, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agencies or designated State units, as applicable (Option A or B must be selected): A. is an independent State commission. B. has established a State Rehabilitation Council
	(c) consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act. the non-Federal share, as described in 34 CFR 361.60.

	(d) the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3).
	(e) the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agencies allow for the local administration of VR funds, (Yes/No)
	(f) the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agencies allow for the shared funding and administration of joint programs, (Yes/No)
	(g) statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Are the designated State agencies requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan.
	(h) the descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(i) all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(j) the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(k) the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(l) the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities.
	(m) The submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.	Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agencies, or designated State units, as appropriate, assures that it will:
	(a) comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(b) impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act.

	(c) provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)
	(d) determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(e) comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(f) comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(g) provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(h) comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual review, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act, as required by section 101(a)(14)of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(i) meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs
	(j) with respect to students with disabilities, the State, (i) has developed and will implement, (A) strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and (B) strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and (ii) has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25)).
5.	Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement: (a) The designated State units assure that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(b) The designated State agencies assure that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.

	(c) The designated state units will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act.
6.	(a) Financial Administration: The designated State agencies assure that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(b) The designated State agencies assure that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.
7.	(a) Provision of Supported Employment Services: The designated State agencies assure that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.
	(b) The designated State agencies assure that: i. the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act ii. an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act , which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

Jobs for Veterans State Grants

(a) How the State intends to provide employment, training and job placement services to veterans and eligible persons under the JVSG;

Over the next several years, LWD anticipates an increasing number of employers will develop formal military veterans' recruitment programs. Several large New Jersey employers have committed to hiring more veterans by setting numerical targets, designing media outreach programs, working closely with One-Stop Career Center staff on posting job orders, organizing hiring events, and dedicating company staff to veterans' recruitment activities. Examples include Home Depot with a goal to increase military and veteran hires by 10% each year for the next five years resulting in the hiring of an additional 55,000 veterans nationwide.

National initiatives are also helping New Jersey successfully place veterans into employment. Prominent among the 160 employer strong "100,000 Jobs Mission" (now increased to 200,000 jobs) with substantial employment openings in New Jersey are JP Morgan Chase, Amazon, Johnson & Johnson, and Merck. JP Morgan Chase, for example, has major back office Wall Street operations in New Jersey as well as banking and finance positions throughout the state and Amazon recently began recruiting for new warehouse facilities in Robbinsville and Avenel that could total 1,000 new jobs over the next year.

Changes enacted under a 2013 state law, the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA), provide a range of incentives to boost development and bring jobs to New Jersey. Announcements in early summer 2014 of tax credit approval through the program for a nuclear equipment manufacturer potentially with up to 1,000 jobs to be created over the next five years and the relocation of the Philadelphia 76ers practice facility and corporate headquarters with 50 new jobs are providing opportunities for urban veterans in the City of Camden to find career employment paying wages that can lead to economic self-sufficiency. One-Stop Career Center staff will be actively working with employers and partners to fill the employer need for qualified and dependable workers.

Veterans interested in federal employment opportunities receive preference based on the conditions of their military service and the presence of a service-connected disability. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and One-Stop Career Center staff will work with veterans to provide them with information on the federal application process and how to locate and apply for federal job opportunities using usajobs.gov.

With the average age of New Jersey's state employee workforce continuing to increase, employment opportunities for veterans will likely occur in significant numbers. Veterans having served during specific time periods are given advantages over non-veterans in hiring and promotion by New Jersey's civil service system. Local government agencies whether operating under the state's civil service system or not, also provide opportunities for veterans to secure career service employment.

Federal contractors and sub-contractors provide another avenue for veterans looking for well-paying jobs leading to economic self-sufficiency. Federal contractors are required to post their job openings with New Jersey's labor exchange system (OnRamp at Jobs4Jersey.com).

LWD will promote the hiring of military service veterans using staff, technology, and state leadership that support the goal of full-employment for military service veterans. One-Stop Career Center and LWD management staff will promote the hiring and retention of military service veterans by direct outreach to employers by Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVER), which New Jersey terms Veterans Business Representatives, and other non-JVSG business outreach staff, continue to organize and promote to employers hiring events such as job fairs and targeted recruitment efforts, and conduct periodic business seminars/presentations to employer membership groups such as NJ Business and Industry Association and chambers of commerce. Technology, including a redesigned Jobs4Jersey.com website with increased functionality and labor exchange matching capabilities, automated mass call telephone messaging system, and ability to blast email announcements to targeted veterans will help LWD create a more efficient and transparent market for employers and jobseekers. State leadership will continue to be an important component for keeping the focus on the hiring of military service veterans through special initiatives such as Governor Chris Christie's Operation: Hire a Jersey Hero conducted in partnership with major employers like Prudential Insurance Company of America and the continued attendance by Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno at veterans themed events throughout the state.

Serving the workforce directed needs of New Jersey's veterans is a responsibility shared by all One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) staff. Effective intake and customer flow procedures, staff training, technical assistance/reinforcement, and monitoring contribute to ensuring that only a subset of eligible veterans identified as having a significant barrier to employment as defined in VPL 03-14 or a veteran aged 18 to 24 as referenced in VPL 04-14 are referred and served by the DVOP. All veterans served by the DVOP will be assessed and have an employability plan that directs the delivery of intensive services.

Veterans participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program are deemed high priority customers. In accordance with Veterans Program Letter (VPL) 01-09, "National Implementation of the Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment and Training Service Partnership Project" and the related Technical Assistance Guide (TAG), LWD has a state level Memorandum of Understanding with the US Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (US DOL/VETS) and the VA/VR&E program that delineates roles and responsibilities for staff in the partner agencies. LWD's primary roles are to provide workforce information to veterans who are entering a VR&E Program and to provide priority job search assistance for those veterans who are completing their VR&E Program. All partner agencies are involved in a quarterly review of VR&E customers and their progress in reaching their career goals. LWD has assigned a VR&E Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) from among the DVOP specialists assigned to the Newark One-Stop Career Center. The staff is out-stationed at the VA/VR&E office at 20 Washington Place in Newark.

DVOP specialists are expected to provide intensive case management services for the VR&E customers which include a comprehensive assessment and individual employment plan based upon the employment plan provided by the VA. The goal is to provide the VR&E veterans with the tools to be successful in the job search such as a robust résumé, career guidance, and job search assistance.

JVSG staff is deployed with clearly delineated distinct duties for the DVOP specialist and LVER. These clearly distinct duties include the delivery of intensive services to targeted veterans by the DVOP specialist and outreach to the employer community and facilitation within the state's employment service delivery system for the LVER. DVOP specialists and LVER provide specialized service that complement and add value to OSCC veterans' services. DVOP specialists and LVER do not duplicate services provided by other OSCC labor exchange staff. In the case of the DVOP specialist, this is ensured by a requirement that the significant barrier/18-24 year old veteran designation be documented for every customer served.

In order to maximize the return on investment that the specialized staff contributes to the OSCC, LWD will work to quickly fill vacancies.

LWD will assign Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) funded staff members to locations where they can best serve veteran populations that have been targeted for specialized services. DVOP specialists and LVERs are assigned geographically based on the concentration of eligible veterans and demographic factors that would suggest a greater need for services such as local unemployment rates, proximity to military bases and high poverty areas, and areas with returning ex-offender populations.

In FFY 2014, LWD reorganized veterans' services to better align and focus JVSG funded staff toward the goal of improving employment and job retention outcomes for New Jersey's jobseeking veterans. This included moving the LVER staff from the Office of Employment Services under the supervision of the Workforce Development manager to the Office of Business Services to be better aligned and coordinated with business outreach staff.

Success in placing veterans into employment requires understanding and appropriately responding to the needs of the business customer. Historically, One-Stop Career Center staff used a labor supply model to refer jobseekers to employers rather than a labor demand model. This model often resulted in employer and jobseeker frustration since employers were disappointed with the matches and jobseekers were not offered employment. Recognizing the inherent conflict of the same staff working on behalf of jobseekers and employers, New Jersey created an Office of Business Services staffed by business representatives serving as advocates for the business customer. Applying the same logic to New Jersey's veterans' programs, LWD will continue working to complete the reorganization and integration of the LVER staff from the Office of Employment Services in the Division of Workforce Field Services to the Office of Business Services in the Division of Workforce Field Services. DVOPs will remain aligned with other staff assisting jobseekers in the Office of Employment Services.

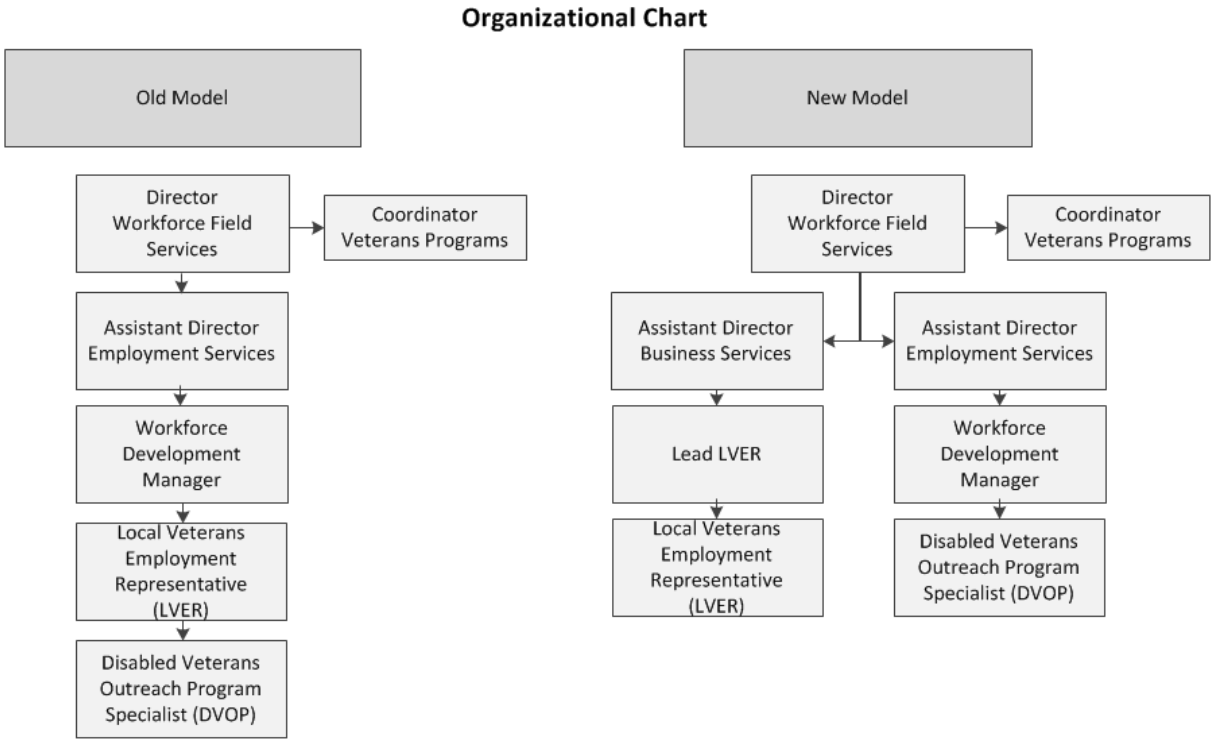


Figure 50

New Jersey has embraced technology tools for targeting veterans for services based on their needs. As an example, unemployment insurance claimants are assigned a probability of exhaustion score upon filing for benefits. The score is determined by the personal characteristics of the claimant by looking primarily at the education and work history. Depending on the score, claimants can be directed to self-service tools, a Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) workshop or more intensive Worker Profiling and Reemployment Service (PROS). Veterans applying for unemployment benefits from this virtual triaging will be directed to services prior to the first visit to the One-Stop Career Center.

The triage staff uses a desk aid listing the significant barriers found in VPL 03-14 and the additional service category found in VPL 04-14. One-Stop Career Center managers and DVOP specialists have received training on the new roles and responsibilities. Customers entering into the One-Stop Career Center are given a preliminary assessment incorporated into the intake or registration form. Intake forms are reviewed by OSCC staff to determine whether the customer should be referred to a DVOP.

Ensuring that every veteran conducts a focused, determined and robust job search has been greatly enhanced by the introduction of Jobs4Jersey.com and the career assessment, résumé writing and job matching power of OnRamp at Jobs4Jersey.com. OnRamp helps veterans to focus their job search, create a detailed online résumé and, through a unique search engine, find job matches through skills matching rather than traditional keyword comparisons.

New Jersey will implement Salesforce, a new business management and accountability system in early 2016. Salesforce will help coordinate services within each region and manage business outreach efforts. All partners will have access to the system to help coordinate service and avoid duplicative work. It will also help tighten the process of job orders by having one representative handle business outreach and efforts to refer clients to these businesses instead of splitting these duties across multiple representatives.

Additionally, the Jersey Job Club aims to create a backbone for service delivery by having both JVSG and RESEA feed into it. Jersey Job Club replaces the Professional Service Group, which as targeted toward higher skilled individuals, expanding services to a larger pool of clients, thus ensuring that a client will receive the same uniform service delivery regardless of their reason for entering a One-Stop Career Center. Jersey Job Club offers three types of service workshops:

- Core workshops – resume writing, interview skills, social media training
- Enrichment workshops – talent networks, industry specific workshops (beneficial for mass hiring efforts)
- Specific workshops based on population

Jersey Job Club efforts help advance career pathways by extending training into companies to skill-up incumbent workers and offer work-based learning and on-the-job training opportunities.

(b) The duties assigned to DVOP specialists and LVER staff by the State; specifically implementing DVOP and LVER duties or roles and responsibilities as outlined in 38 U.S.C. § 4103A and 4104. These duties must be consistent with current guidance;

Serving the workforce directed needs of New Jersey's veterans is a responsibility shared by all One-Stop Career Center staff. Effective intake and customer flow procedures, staff training, technical assistance/reinforcement, and monitoring contribute to ensuring that only a subset of eligible veterans identified as having a significant barrier to employment as defined in VPL 03-14 or a veteran aged 18 to 24 as referenced in VPL 04-14 are referred and served by the DVOP. All veterans served by the DVOP will be assessed and have an employability plan that directs the delivery of intensive services.

The following veterans' customer flow chart was developed to visually communicate to JVSG and non-JVSG staff the process for ensuring that every veteran should not be automatically routed to the DVOP specialist and that the terms DVOP specialist and veterans' representative are not synonymous.

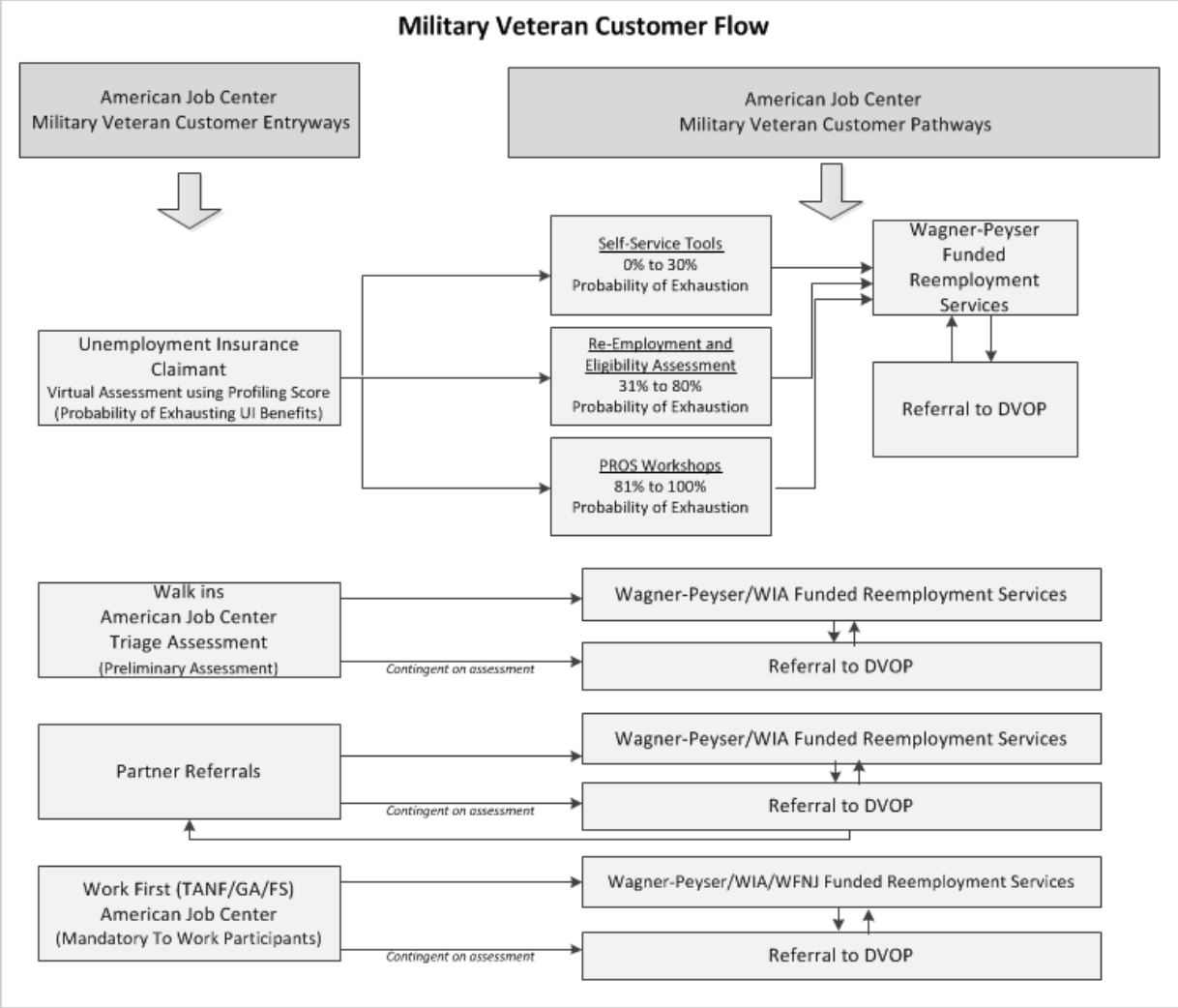


Figure 51

Upon the release of VPL 03-14 and VPL 04-14, LWD created a desk aid that was distributed to all staff and trained OSCC managers on the revised roles and responsibilities for the DVOP specialist and LVER. The training and desk aid explained priority of service, definitions for covered and eligible, and definitions for the six significant barriers contained in VPL 03-14 and the additional DVOP service category contained in VPL 04-14. The desk aid included a checklist for staff use to document the significant barrier and justify referral and services by the DVOP (see below).

Eligible Veteran Name:	AOSOS ID:
Significant Barrier to Employment	If any Apply, Check off and Send Eligible Vet to DVOP for Intensive Services

1	Special Disabled/Disabled	
2	Homeless	
3	Recently Separated Service Member with at least 27 weeks of consecutive unemployment in last 52 weeks	
4	Offender Released in Last 12 Months	
5	Lacks a HS Diploma or GED	
6	Low Income as defined by WIA	
7	Veteran Age 18 - 24	

Figure 52

The desk aid defines a "covered person" as a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. Active service includes full-time duty in the National Guard or Reserve, other than full-time duty for training purposes.

(c) The manner in which DVOP specialists and LVER staff are integrated into the State's employment service delivery system or one-stop delivery system partner network;

JVSG funded staff are fully integrated into New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) system. Veterans entering the system are assigned the level of service that they need to be successful in their employment efforts. On average, 80% of veterans registering with the OSCC can be served through self-service (e.g. OnRamp at Jobs4Jersey.com) and/or non-JVSG staff-assisted (e.g. Jersey Job Club, Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment/Worker Profiling programs, one-on-one job search assistance). The characteristics of this 80% group are very similar to non-veterans served – good employment history, possession of an educational credential, labor demand skills, and desire to work. Similarly, there is a component of the OSCC customer base that has significant barriers to employment including little or no work history, homelessness, alcohol, drug, or legal issues, lack of a high school diploma, low income, and mental or physical problems. If members of this latter group are eligible veterans, they can best be served by the DVOP specialist. By focusing on fewer veterans, but those with the most pronounced barriers, DVOP specialists can provide the time-intensive, quality services that this subset of veterans needs to overcome their barriers and find a job.

DVOP specialists concentrate on the delivery of intensive services to veterans with significant barriers to employment as defined in VPL 03-14 and with the additional category contained in VPL 04-14 using a case management approach. In a fully-integrated environment where resources are leveraged to maximize efficiency and positive outcomes, the DVOP specialist is not personally delivering all of the intensive services but is managing the customer toward employment based on the outcome of an assessment and employment plan. In this environment, the DVOP needs to

ensure that this management is recorded in the LWD AOSOS case management system under the DVOP specialist's account. To help ensure that accountability information is recorded in a consistent manner that reflects the level of effort by the DVOP, LWD is working to create a custom tab in the AOSOS case management system specifically for the DVOP specialist. Management exception reports are also being developed in partnership with LWD's newly created Division of Workforce Research and Analytics. Unlike traditional, after-the-fact, reports that provide summary tabulations, exception reports provide actionable information from individual customer records that can be run on a regular or ad-hoc basis to identify potential mistakes, oversights, or need for customer follow-up.

New Jersey's workforce development system recognized that a one-size fits all approach to labor exchange services was no longer a viable strategy for meeting the needs of jobseekers and employers. Employers in retail trade, for instance, look for customer service skills while an employer in the advanced manufacturing industry may be looking for analytical skills. Informing the workforce system of the particular needs of different industries was the impetus for creating New Jersey's Talent Networks. Originally, New Jersey focused on creating Talent Networks in six strategic industries that employed about half of all New Jersey workers and paid about two-thirds of all New Jersey wages. The six strategic industries include advanced manufacturing, financial services, healthcare, life sciences, technology/entrepreneurship and transportation/logistics/ distribution. A seventh Talent Network was created covering retail, hospitality, and tourism which while not noted for high wages paid, employs a considerable number of workers. The Talent Networks help business focused staff with better understanding the needs of employers, help jobseeker staff with understanding the skills and education jobseekers need to enter the Talent Network industries, inform and assist training providers with developing programs that meet the skills and credential demands of employers, and deliver seminars and networking opportunities for jobseekers. The Talent Networks will be important partners in helping LVERs better understand employer requirements and help LVERs more effectively connect to employers for promoting veterans for employment.

LWD will conduct activities that promote job training and employment opportunities for veterans, working with partner agencies to leverage resources. These activities include Job Fairs, Veterans Information Fairs, Vocational Rehabilitation, WIA/WIOA, Senior Community Service Employment Program (55+), state Workforce Development Partnership programs including Workforce Learning Link and WIOA Title II for low literate veterans, Opportunity4Jersey industry supported training, NJBuild for veterans who are women and/or minorities, Helmets to Hardhats, Troops to Teachers, On-the-Job Training Grants, GI Bill, Tuition Waiver program for state and county college courses, apprenticeship, and Trade Act support and training for workers dislocated due to international competition.

LWD works closely with other agencies such as the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to ensure that all staff serving veterans is aware of the myriad of resources available to veterans. Strategies include providing partner links on web sites and joint participation in informational programs targeted to veterans and veteran service providers. The One-Stop Career Center is a primary point of contact for employers, non-profit agencies, educational and training institutions

and other service providers who are interested in recruiting or serving veterans. These contacts are shared with other OSCC partners to promote linkages at the local level.

Business partnerships will continue to grow in importance as industry assumes a larger role in directing the expenditure of training resources. LWD has used state resources to fund industry informed "bulk" training classes that have resulted in almost 100% placement at a more cost-efficient price point than the individual training account model under WIA. With the reauthorization of WIA as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, LWD anticipates the flexibility to move federal funding towards this successful job-driven employment and training model.

Governor Chris Christie launched Operation: Hire a Jersey Hero in April 2012 with an employer symposium co-sponsored by Prudential Insurance Company at their corporate headquarters in Newark, New Jersey. Panelists at the symposium included staff from LWD, the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, the federal Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, and Prudential. An estimated 100 employers actively interested in hiring New Jersey veterans participated.

Since the launch of Operation: Hire a Jersey Hero, LWD has actively supported dozens of veterans' job fairs in partnership with employers, the American Legion, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, the NJ State Parole Board, media outlets, and other state and local government and non-profit agencies. Most of these job fairs attract anywhere from 50 to 100 veterans and 10 to 20 employers.

Job fairs have become so popular among partner agencies over the last two years that they are occurring at least once a month and in close proximity to each other. While this is encouraging because it shows the level of commitment from partner agencies to help veterans find jobs, the sheer number of job fairs is resulting in diminishing returns as they compete for employers, jobseekers, and agency resources.

Moving forward, LWD and its partners will increase company specific or industry focused efforts and limit traditional job fairs to two, regionally based (northern and southern) mega-events a year. Mega events will be similar to two successful events held in CY 2012 - the Battleship New Jersey Veterans Job Fair in Camden on May 18, 2012 that attracted 350 veterans and 50 employers including Campbell Soup Company, American Water Company, Cooper Hospital, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey and Comcast and the job fair held at the Sun Bank Center in Trenton on September 12, 2012 that attracted 400 veterans and 130 employers. Future job fairs will use color coding, timing, physical separation, and other means to arrange employers by industry and/or occupation to facilitate customer flow/navigation to relevant employers.

A prime example of a company specific recruitment event is the ongoing effort to recruit veterans for job openings at the Port of Newark/Elizabeth. NY Shipping Association has committed to hiring 700 military service veterans and has hired 153 veterans in coordination with New Jersey's One-

Stop Career Center, the American Legion, and other partners since the beginning of CY 2014. Instead of organizing a multi-employer, traditional job fair, interested veterans can be pre-screened by One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) staff to see if they meet the minimum requirements demanded by the employer, OSCC staff can conduct invitation only job fairs for the employer, and can help jobseekers navigate pre-employment requirements like in the case of the port jobs, the acquisition of a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC card) from the TSA. Unlike, traditional events where successful employment outcomes are often anecdotal, events coordinated for single employers, present a better opportunity for measuring return on investment through hiring feedback from the employer.

OnRamp at Jobs4Jersey.com has more than 300,000 registered users as of July 2014. LWD has devoted considerable resources over the nearly three years since this site launched in August 2011 by promoting the value of this service to jobseekers and employers. Promotion has included bus wraps, direct mailings to UI claimants, novelty items, public service announcements, radio, TV, social media, and newsprint publicity, through workshops and Rapid Response meetings, and endorsements by library associations and other partners. OnRamp gives jobseekers the tools to focus their job search, create a robust résumé, and automatically receive leads based on compatibility with more than 100,000 current New Jersey job openings posted by employers. OnRamp is housed on the Jobs4Jersey website which promotes employment and training opportunities available through the OSCC.

LWD has a state level Memorandum of Understanding with the US Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (US DOL/VETS) and the VA/VR&E program that delineates roles and responsibilities for staff in the partner agencies. LWD's primary roles are to provide workforce information to veterans who are entering a VR&E Program and to provide priority job search assistance for those veterans who are completing their VR&E Program. All partner agencies are involved in a quarterly review of VR&E customers and their progress in reaching their career goals. LWD has assigned a VR&E Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) from among the DVOP specialists assigned to the Newark One-Stop Career Center. The staff is out-stationed at the VA/VR&E office at 20 Washington Place in Newark.

DVOP specialists are expected to provide intensive case management services for the VR&E customers which include a comprehensive assessment and individual employment plan based upon the employment plan provided by the VA. The goal is to provide the VR&E veterans with the tools to be successful in the job search such as a robust résumé, career guidance, and job search assistance.

DVOP specialists will provide weekly job search services including job matching and referrals. In addition, DVOPs will engage business outreach staff to place customers by communicating characteristics of the veterans' population such as a general sense of their skills, education, experience, and career aspirations. LVERs and non-JVSG business outreach staff will use this information to more effectively communicate the value of the labor pool to employers.

DVOP specialists are out-stationed at facilities where there are veterans that might benefit from intensive services, including the East Orange Campus of the VA New Jersey Health Care System at 385 Tremont Street in East Orange and at the Joint Base Fort Dix-Maguire-Lakehurst in Wrightstown.

Outreach activities to identify and assist veterans in need of intensive services have fostered relationships with the Lyons Campus of the VA New Jersey Health Care System in Lyons, Fort Monmouth Shelter in Freehold, NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs at multiple locations, Lunch Break in Red Bank (homeless veterans), MOCEANS (homeless, low income, and educationally deficient veterans) in Long Branch, and the Veterans Transitional Housing Program (Veterans Haven) in Winslow.

Outreach and out-stationing efforts are designed to engage and provide intensive services to disabled veterans and/or veterans with significant barriers to employment, especially homeless veterans and the other categories defined in VPL 03-14 and VPL 04-14. In order to maximize services to those veterans, LWD actively works with the following types of organizations and services:

- Veteran Service Organizations: An organization whose charter and purpose is to provide goodwill to veteran members and to serve the needs of veterans and the community at large.
- VA Outpatient Clinics: Clinics that offers comprehensive primary care and behavioral health services.
- Faith-Based Organizations: Organizations that typically delivers a variety of services to the public.
- Homeless Shelters: Shelters that are temporary residences for homeless people. Usually located in urban neighborhoods, they are similar to emergency shelters.
- Community-Based Organizations: An organization that is representative of a community or significant segments of a community and provides educational or related services to individuals in the community.
- Veteran Service Officers: An employee of the state/county who is tasked with ensuring that veterans within the state and county receive their entitled benefits.
- Supportive Service Organizations: Organizations part of a coordinated system of services designed to help maintain the independence of the participant.
- One-Stop Career Center Personnel: Qualified professionals who can assist with obtaining employment or the training needed to meet the demands of New Jersey's workforce.
- NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation: OSCC partner agency providing work-directed assistance to veterans with disabilities.
- Workforce Investment Act: OSCC partner agency providing basic and occupational skills training to veterans.
- State and County College Network: partner agencies providing educational credentials and job search assistance to veterans.

- Military Installations: A facility directly owned and operated by or for the military or one of its branches that shelters military equipment and personnel, and facilitates training and operations.

Active referrals of veterans to and from these partner organizations are made based on pre-assessments and the assessment and employability plans developed by the DVOP specialists and other One-Stop Career Center staff. The delivery of intensive services is often managed by the DVOP using a case management approach where the delivery of intensive services to the veterans is shared by the DVOP specialist and others. New Jersey developed the Jersey Job Club to assist jobseekers including veterans with workshops on job search basics, resume writing, interviewing skills, industry specific seminars, using social networking and other 21st century job search tools, and veterans' specific topics. The Jersey Job Clubs are staffed with One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) employees funded under Wagner-Peyser, WIA Dislocated Worker (25% funds), TANF/GA/FS, and smaller miscellaneous funds.

JVSG staff is deployed with clearly delineated distinct duties for the DVOP specialist and LVER. These clearly distinct duties include the delivery of intensive services to targeted veterans by the DVOP specialist and outreach to the employer community and facilitation within the state's employment service delivery system for the LVER. DVOP specialists and LVER provide specialized service that complement and add value to OSCC veterans' services. DVOP specialists and LVER do not duplicate services provided by other OSCC labor exchange staff. In the case of the DVOP specialist, this is ensured by a requirement that the significant barrier/18-24 year old veteran designation be documented for every customer served.

New Jersey created a separate Business Services team in the late 1990s in an effort to better connect employers to the One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) system. OSCCs created on-site business resource centers and staffed them with Business Representatives trained to help employers find qualified and dependable workers, promote federal, state, and local business programs, and help businesses navigate government bureaucracy. The roles and responsibilities of the Business Representatives mirrors those of the LVER as defined in VPL 03-14 to provide employer outreach and facilitation within the state's employment service delivery system. Business Representatives do not work directly with jobseekers leaving that to Employment Services staff under the direction of the OSCC Workforce manager. Business Representatives report to senior Business Representatives who report to the Assistant Director of Business Services in Workforce Field Services.

In accordance with VPL 03-14, LVERs will be assigned duties that promote to employers, employer associations, and business groups the advantages of hiring veterans. LVERs will do this in conjunction and as active members of the business services team. LVERs will advocate for all veterans served by the OSCC with business, industry, and other community-based organizations by participating in appropriate activities such as:

- Planning and participating in job and career fairs
- In conjunction with employers, conducting job searches and workshops, and establishing job search groups

- Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs and businesses or business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs for veterans
- Informing federal contractors of the process to recruit qualified veterans
- Promoting credentialing and licensing opportunities for veterans
- Coordinating and participating with other business outreach efforts

LVERs are also responsible for facilitating employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans in New Jersey under the OSCC service delivery systems. VETS defines this facilitation duty as the act of capacity building within the state's employment service delivery system to ensure easier access to the appropriate employment and training services for jobseeking veterans. LVERs will play an important role in assisting with the development of the service delivery strategies for veterans in their assigned OSCC, as well as educating all OSCC partner staff with current employment initiatives and programs for veterans.

In the FY 2014 Annual Plan Modification request, LWD proposed moving the LVERs from Employment Services to Business Services. Restructuring of LVERs as an active part of the Business Services team will benefit OSCC customers, the veteran jobseekers and employers. In addition, this will allow LWD to serve veterans more effectively and efficiently by requiring LVER staff to focus on their primary role, which is employer outreach on behalf of veterans without the distraction of other assigned duties overwhelming the primary business outreach role of the LVER.

As the LVER reorganization moves forward, LWD anticipates more job order development successes as DVOP specialists and LVERs define their roles and responsibilities along guidance supplied in VPL 07-10. LWD will concentrate LVER staff efforts on targeted job development services for veterans especially veterans determined to be job ready after receipt of intensive services from a DVOP specialist. These measures will assist LWD in enhancing existing processes and oversight to ensure DVOP specialists provide intensive services for veterans with employment barriers, including homeless veterans, veterans with disabilities, and the other service categories listed in VPL 03-14 and VPL 04-14.

(d) The Incentive Award program implemented using the 1% grant allocation set aside for this purpose, as applicable;

Due to civil service restrictions, LWD will not be requesting 1% funding for performance incentive awards.

(e) The populations of veterans to be served, including any additional populations designated by the Secretary as eligible for services, and any additional populations specifically targeted by the State Workforce Agency for services from one-stop delivery system partners (e.g., Native American veterans; veterans in remote rural counties or parishes);

Covered persons must be given priority of service which means they go to the front of the line for all One-Stop services including employment, training, and placement services. In some limited cases, a spouse of a veteran can be classified as a covered person and must be given priority of

service. Only covered persons who are also defined as "eligible" can be served or should be referred to the DVOP.

An eligible veteran meets one or more of the following:

- served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days and was discharged or released with other than a dishonorable discharge
- was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability
- was a member of a reserve component under an order to active duty pursuant to section 12301(a), (d), or (g), 12302, or 12304 of title 10, served on active duty during a period of war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is authorized and was discharged or released from such duty with other than a dishonorable discharge
- was discharged or released from active duty by reason of a sole survivorship discharge

Special disabled/disabled are those eligible veterans who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs or who were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.

Veterans participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program are deemed high priority customers. In accordance with Veterans Program Letter (VPL) 01-09, "National Implementation of the Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment and Training Service Partnership Project" and the related Technical Assistance Guide (TAG), LWD has a state level Memorandum of Understanding with the US Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (US DOL/VETS) and the VA/VR&E program that delineates roles and responsibilities for staff in the partner agencies. LWD's primary roles are to provide workforce information to veterans who are entering a VR&E Program and to provide priority job search assistance for those veterans who are completing their VR&E Program. All partner agencies are involved in a quarterly review of VR&E customers and their progress in reaching their career goals. LWD has assigned a VR&E Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) from among the DVOP specialists assigned to the Newark One-Stop Career Center. The staff is out-stationed at the VA/VR&E office at 20 Washington Place in Newark.

Although New Jersey recognizes three American Indian tribes - Ramapough Lenape Indian Nation, Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribe, and the Powhatan Renape Tribe, there are no designated tribal lands or individuals living on tribal lands.

(f) How the State implements and monitors the administration of priority of service to covered persons;

Covered persons must be given priority of service which means they go to the front of the line for all One-Stop services including employment, training, and placement services. In some limited cases, a spouse of a veteran can be classified as a covered person and must be given priority of service. Only covered persons who are also defined as "eligible" can be served or should be referred to the DVOP.

An eligible veteran meets one or more of the following:

- served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days and was discharged or released with other than a dishonorable discharge
- was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability
- was a member of a reserve component under an order to active duty pursuant to section 12301(a), (d), or (g), 12302, or 12304 of title 10, served on active duty during a period of war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is authorized and was discharged or released from such duty with other than a dishonorable discharge
- was discharged or released from active duty by reason of a sole survivorship discharge

New Jersey provides all veterans with priority of service across all services and job training programs available through the One-Stop Career Center system. LWD requires that all staff members provide priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses while DVOP specialists and LVERs focus their efforts on serving veterans most in need of their services including disabled veterans and the targeted veteran populations identified in VPL 03-14 and VPL 04-14. Local areas must ensure that veterans and eligible spouses are served first and that this protocol is addressed in customer flow processes.

Priority of Service strategies include:

(1) Signage – LWD recognizes that appropriate signage will play a pivotal role if priority of service is to be implemented successfully. As such, LWD will design, publish, and distribute high quality signage to be used at all OSCCs and affiliate service sites throughout the state.

(2) Improvement of Self-Service Resources and Electronic Strategies – In an effort to improve access by and information for veterans, LWD is re-designing Jobs4Jersey.com to make it easier for veterans to navigate and find the information that they need to be successful in their job search.

(3) Outreach - LWD uses one-page information sheets to promote the services available to veterans at the OSCC and references that veterans receive priority of service including going to the front of the line for training, employment counseling, job search assistance, public access, and workshops.

(4) Application of Priority of Service – Federal regulations specifically state that all program activities (including those obtained through Requests for Proposals, solicitation for grant awards, sub-grants, contracts, sub-contracts, and Memoranda of Understanding) issued or executed by qualified job training program operations, must be administered in compliance with priority of service. As a result of this regulation, LWD will add language to its own contract documents to ensure awareness of priority of service requirements with state level grantees. Military service veterans will also go to the front of the line for all training related grants funded by state or federal resources including WIOA, WorkFirst, and WorkFirst On-the-Job Training, New Jersey's Tuition Waiver Program, and state funded training such as that provided under Opportunity4Jersey.

(5) Customer Flow – OSCC staff is required to provide priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses and to serve these customers first.

(6) Technical Assistance and Compliance Monitoring – Ensuring that OSCC partners are familiar with the requirements for priority of service and that priority of service is uniformly administered requires comprehensive guidance, technical assistance by the veterans program coordinator, and compliance monitoring by the LWD Office of Research and Information. Compliance monitors use tools jointly developed with program staff that include checking OSCC signage, customer flow plans, and staff understanding of priority of service.

(7) The above strategies should help guarantee the following:

a. Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans will be made aware of their entitlement to priority of service and will be identified at the point of entry
b. Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans will be given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service by discovering the full array of employment, training, and placement services available to them

Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans will be made aware of any applicable eligibility requirements specific to USDOL funded programs. Veterans receive priority of service in all USDOL and state funded employment and training programs and have first access to employment opportunities. In addition, many veterans have earned substantial educational benefits as a result of their military service. These benefits will provide veterans with the ability to pursue the educational and training credentials that will allow them to successfully compete for both current and emerging employment opportunities.

Often employers are willing to hire veterans that possess most of the qualities they desire in an ideal employee if the hire can in some way be incentivized. LVERs have been using the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, VOW, Federal Bonding Program, and on-the-job training (OJT) grants to help seal the connection between veterans and employers. New Jersey's state-funded Workforce Development Partnership Program has helped employers through the Opportunities4Jersey on-the-job training program defray some of the extraordinary costs involved in training new workers by paying up to 50% of new hires salary for up to six months.

(g) How the State provides or intends to provide and measure, through both the DVOP and one-stop delivery system partner staff: (1) job and job training individualized career services, (2) employment placement services, and (3) job-driven training and subsequent placement service program for eligible veterans and eligible persons;

Critical to ensuring that veterans' services are consistent with state and federal guidelines, LWD has empowered a Veterans Program Coordinator to provide technical assistance, performance monitoring, program coordination, and program planning. Exceeding annual negotiated performance standards serve as the primary measure of program success. The coordinator will work in conjunction with the LWD Office of Research and Information staff using the VETS 200 and ETA 9002 reports, management reports, desk audits, self-assessments, on-site validation visits and discussions/feedback from partner agencies to assess program success.

The LWD Monitoring and Compliance unit in the Office of Research and Information conducts regular programmatic audits using a monitoring tool developed with input from the Veterans Program Coordinator. All aspects of the veterans program are monitored including JVSG and non-JVSG services delivered to veterans from priority of service to service delivery by JVSG funded staff to ensure consistency with VPL 03-14, VPL 04-14, NJ DVOP Procedures Handbook, and other state and federal guidance.

As the LVER reorganization moves forward, LWD anticipates more job order development successes as DVOP specialists and LVERs define their roles and responsibilities along guidance supplied in VPL 07-10. LWD will concentrate LVER staff efforts on targeted job development services for veterans especially veterans determined to be job ready after receipt of intensive services from a DVOP specialist. These measures will assist LWD in enhancing the existing processes and oversight to ensure DVOP specialists provide intensive services for veterans with employment barriers, including homeless veterans, veterans with disabilities, and the other service categories listed in VPL 03-14 and VPL 04-14.

Over the next several years, LWD anticipates an increasing number of employers will develop formal military veterans' recruitment programs. Several large New Jersey employers have committed to hiring more veterans by setting numerical targets, designing media outreach programs, working closely with One-Stop Career Center staff on posting job orders, organizing hiring events, and dedicating company staff to veterans' recruitment activities. Examples include Home Depot with a goal to increase military and veteran hires by 10% each year over a course of five years resulting in the hiring of an additional 55,000 veterans nationwide.

(h) The hire date along with mandatory training completion dates for all DVOP specialists and LVER staff;

DVOP SPECIALISTS				
Office Name and Address (By County)	**Grant Funded Staff Name**	**Date Appointed to Current Position**	**Date Completed Case Management/ Intensive Services Training**	**Date Completed Employment Specialist (VS) Training**
Atlantic County One-Stop Career Center - Pleasantville 2 South Main Street Pleasantville, NJ 08232	Richard Schaeffer	6/24/2013	2/4/2014	4/1/2014
	Johnnie Ball 609-813-3907	12/16/2013	7/29/2014	8/5/2014
Bergen County One-Stop Career Center 60 State Street, 2nd Floor Hackensack, NJ 07601	Jennifer Castellanos 201-329-9600 x5655	4/21/2014	3/9/2012	6/24/2014
Burlington County One-Stop Career Center 795 Woodlane Road Westampton, NJ 08060-6100	Henry Bass 609-518-3917	5/29/2007	10/16/2007	4/22/2008
	Dimitri Cromwell	1/11/2016		

Camden County One-Stop Career Center **2600 Mt. Ephriam Avenue** **Camden, NJ 08104**	Geoffrey Taylor 856-614-3186	2/23/2015		
	Jason Newman 856-614-3150	11/2/2015		
Cape May County One-Stop Career Center **3810 New Jersey Avenue** **Wildwood, NJ 08260-0210**	Jacqueline Blaydes 609-729-0997	8/2/2010	7/12/2011	4/24/2012
Cumberland County One-Stop Career Center **275 N. Delsea Drive, 2nd Floor** **Vineland, NJ 08360-8067**	Angel Gutierrez 856-696-8371	9/24/2012	4/9/2013	4/16/2013
Essex County One-Stop Career Center - East Orange **50 South Clinton Street, 2nd floor** **East Orange, NJ 07017**	Vacant			
VA Hospital **385 Tremont Avenue** **East Orange, NJ 07017**	Jason Sutton 973-395-5839	7/25/2011	2/7/2012	6/19/2012
Gloucester County One-Stop Career Center **215 Crown Point Road** **Thorofare, NJ 08086**	Edwin Morgan 856-384-3700	12/5/2011	12/4/1995	3/27/2012
Hudson County One-Stop Career Center - Jersey City **438 Summit Avenue** **Jersey City, NJ 07306-3175**	Vacant			
Mercer County One-Stop Career Center **26 Yard Avenue, 1st Floor** **Trenton, NJ 08625-0954**	Lois Bunch 609-292-3059	6/21/2004	9/28/2004	9/27/2005
	Lester Shelly 609-292-0656	9/13/2010	7/26/2011	4/24/2012
Middlesex County One-Stop Career Center - New Brunswick **550 Jersey Avenue** **New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1392**	Grisselle Aviles 732-937-6228	4/2/2012	6/12/2012	2/26/2013
	Ava Washington 732-937-6200	11/2/2015		
Middlesex County One-Stop Career Center - Perth Amboy **161 New Brunswick Avenue** **Perth Amboy, NJ 08861-4193**	Ingrid Macias 732-293-5016	4/7/2014	7/29/2014	8/5/2014
Monmouth County One-Stop Career Center - Neptune **60 Taylor Avenue** **Neptune, NJ 07753-4844**	Victor Alvarado 732- 775-1566 x165	2/27/2006	5/16/2006	8/22/2006
Morris County One-Stop Career Center - Randolph **13 Emery Avenue** **Randolph, NJ 07869**	Jennifer Tanforan 1-862-397-5600	8/29/2005	1/24/2006	6/6/2006
	Mark Ortega 1-862-397-5600	2/23/2015		

Newark One-Stop Career Center - Newark **990 Broad Street** **Newark, NJ 07102**	Peter Cullen 973-297-3211	3/29/1983	2/26/1990	7/13/1998
	Nelly David 973-648-6252	11/18/2013	7/29/2014	
VA Regional Office **20 Washington Place** **Newark, NJ 07102**	Thomas Cole 973-648-3706	9/13/2010	5/3/2011	8/2/2011
Ocean County One-Stop Career Center **1027 Hooper Avenue** **Toms River, NJ 08753-8392**	Rekishia Beans 732-286-5616	11/16/2015		
Passaic County One-Stop Career Center- Passaic **25 Howe Avenue** **Passaic, NJ 07055-4007**	Angelica Rivera-Lindo 973-916-2646	9/20/2004	3/8/2005	7/29/2008
Passaic County One-Stop Career Center - Paterson **200 Memorial Drive** **Paterson, NJ 07505**	Wendel Green 973-340-3400	6/17/2000	11/28/2000	4/9/2002
Salem County One-Stop Career Center **174 E. Broadway** **Salem, NJ 08079**	Latoya Hopewell 856-935-7007	6/19/2010	4/12/2011	7/19/2011
Somerset County One-Stop Career Center **75 Veterans Memorial Drive, Ste. 102** **Somerville, NJ 08876-2950**	Louis Scibelli 908-575-3230	8/23/2004	11/16/2004	4/5/2005
Sussex County One-Stop Career Center - Newton **Sussex County Mall, Route 206 North** **Newton, NJ 07860-1818**	Vacant			
Union County One-Stop Career Center - Elizabeth **921 Elizabeth Avenue** **Elizabeth, NJ 07201**	Laurence Carter 908-965-3939	6/9/2008	1/27/2009	3/31/2009
Union County One-Stop Career Center - Plainfield **200 W. 2nd Street, 2nd Floor** **Plainfield, NJ 07060-1595**	Jean Carter 908-412-7980	10/7/2013	6/17/2014	7/8/2014
Warren County One-Stop Career Center - Phillipsburg **75 South Main Street** **Phillipsburg, NJ 08865**	Michael Vicari 908-859-0400	7/1/2013	6/3/2014	8/12/2014

Figure 53

LVER STAFF				
Office Name and Address (By County)	**Grant Funded Staff Name**	**Date Appointed to Current Position**	**Date Completed Case Management/ Intensive Services Training**	**Date Completed Employment Specialist (VS) Training**
Trenton Central Office **PO BOX 055, 7th Floor** **John Fitch Plaza** **Trenton, NJ 08625-0055**	Wayne Smith 609-777-3105	5/2/2015	N/A	N/A
Essex County One-Stop Career Center (Lead LVER) **50 South Clinton Street** **East Orange, NJ 07018-3120**	Joe Siegel 609-358-3673	5/30/2015		
Gloucester County One-Stop Career Center **215 Crown Point Road** **Thorofare, NJ 08086**	Ricky Ohara 609-358-3662	9/20/2014		
Essex County One-Stop Career Center (Northern Region) **50 South Clinton Street** **East Orange, NJ 07018-3120**	Vacant			
Morris County One-Stop Career Center - Randolph (Northwest Region) **13 Emery Avenue** **Randolph, NJ 07869**	John Lehnert 609-358-3660	9/20/2014	12/4/1995	3/18/2008
Somerset County One-Stop Career Center - Somerville (Central Region) **75 Veterans Memorial Drive** **Suite 102** **Somerville, NJ 08876-2950**	Veronica Jones 609-358-3739	1/10/2015	7/22/2008	8/4/2009
Ocean County One-Stop Career Center **1027 Hooper Avenue** **Toms River, NJ 08753-8392**	Stanley Sinicki 609-358-3675	1/10/2015	12/4/2007	3/11/2008

Figure 54

(i) Such additional information as the Secretary may require.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) anticipates a positive employment outlook for military service veterans over the next several years as trends suggest a continuing improvement in general economic conditions, more employers finding value in actively recruiting and hiring returning service members, state administered employment and training efforts continuing to meet the needs of the labor market, business attraction incentives receiving greater employer acceptance, and state efforts to facilitate connections continuing to make it

easier for employers and jobseekers to find each other. These factors will also improve employee retention as companies improve profitability, receive better prepared workers, employ retention incentives such as tax credits, and find better matches due to better labor exchange technology.

Many firms are seeking qualified and dependable veterans, and many have stepped up, such as Home Depot and JPMorgan Chase, to hire a large number of veterans. To assist these businesses, the State has a lead person, a main point of contact, with the employer to support their needs statewide

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistic's Current Population Survey for the first quarter of 2014, there were 364,000 veterans residing in New Jersey. Of those, 140,000 were in the labor force, 132,000 were employed, and 8,000 were unemployed for an unemployment rate of 5.8%. The national unemployment rate for veterans during the first quarter of 2014 was 6.0%. New Jersey's first quarter veterans' unemployment rate was down from an average of 10.8% in 2013.

DVOP specialists (203-500), LVERs (202-500), Lead LVER (202-500), and Veteran Program Coordinator (202-500) staff charge directly to the grant using separate project codes to record their time in the e*cats electronic timekeeping system. Leave time is charged in the e*cats system using separate codes for vacation, sick, administrative, and leave without pay.

Costs will be assigned to a particular program based on whether the cost is associated with a DVOP or LVER. This applies to personnel as well as non-personal services costs such as equipment, travel, and training. Indirect costs and mixed costs would be applied proportionally to the direct costs for each program. An example of mixed costs would be when training is provided to both LVERs and DVOPs and the total cost allocated proportionally based on attendance between the two cost categories.

All staff are budgeted as fulltime under the grant application. The budget Information for FY 2015 was as follows: the PS + PB to Total ratio is 79.91% for DVOP and 79.93% for LVER.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

(a) Economic Projections and Impact

(1) Discuss long-term projections for jobs in industries and occupations in the State that may provide employment opportunities for older workers. (20 CFR 641.302(d))(May alternatively be discussed in the economic analysis section of strategic plan.)

New Jersey has a richly diverse population, proximity to major metropolitan areas and a history of invention and innovation that continues to grow. New Jersey's commitment to investment, collaboration and talent development supports growth in key industry clusters that drive economic expansion. New Jersey is committed to helping older workers obtain employment and self-sufficiency. The chart below projects industries in NJ that may provide potential employment opportunities for older workers.

New Jersey Workers by Industry Sector			
	Total Workers	**Workers Age 55 and Over**	**Percent Age 55 and Over**
All Industries	2,887,310	710,607	24.6%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1,301	405	31.1%
Manufacturing	230,644	71,142	30.8%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	50,404	14,752	29.3%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	7,446	2,131	28.6%
Utilities	13,581	3,746	27.6%
Educational Services	67,343	18,404	27.3%
Wholesale Trade	200,502	54,495	27.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	133,328	36,178	27.1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	484,155	127,120	26.3%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	111,465	28,871	25.9%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	206,027	50,519	24.5%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	261,553	61,606	23.6%

Management of Companies and Enterprises	78,473	18,176	23.2%
Construction	118,373	27,180	23.0%
Finance and Insurance	168,185	38,326	22.8%
Retail Trade	397,544	88,784	22.3%
Information	71,281	15,268	21.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	45,460	8,892	19.6%
Accommodation and Food Services	240,249	44,616	18.6%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau – Local Employment Dynamics Quarterly Workforce Indicators, average of Q4, 2014 (most recent data) + 3 prior quarters (Private Ownership). Prepared by New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information, December 2015			

Figure 55

LWD will target employers in the following industries to increase training and unsubsidized employment opportunities for seniors:

Health Care Industry

- Contributed over $30 billion to New Jersey's Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2012, or roughly 7 percent of all state output;
- Added 186,300 new jobs (from 1990 through 2013) while all other industries combined had a net gain of only 113,400;
- Added jobs in the state every year (from 1990 through 2013) and increased its share of jobholding from 7.5 percent in 1990 to 11.6 percent in 2013;
- Projected from 2013 through 2022 to add more than 88,600 jobs, an annual increase of 2.0 percent; and
- Paid more than $23.3 billion in total wages in 2013, or about 12.2 percent of all wages paid statewide.

Leisure, Hospitality and Retail (LHR)

- Contributed $44.7 billion (or 9.8%) to the state's Real Gross Domestic Product in 2013
- Generated more than $40 billion in tourism demand in 2013;
- Totaled 796,788 in 2013, or 24.6 percent of the state's private sector workers.
- Paid (via employer wages) nearly $22 billion in wages during 2013, or 11.5 percent of the state total. The average annual wage paid in 2013 was $27,516.
- Concentrated in three counties: Bergen, Monmouth and Middlesex. Atlantic County ranks fourth for LHR employment due to the presence of the casino hotel industry.
  Note: LWD SCSEP serves Monmouth, Middlesex and Atlantic Counties.

* Source: LWD Office of Research Information 2015

(2) Discuss how the long-term job projections discussed in the economic analysis section of strategic plan relate to the types of unsubsidized jobs for which SCSEP participants will be trained and the types of skill training to be provided. (20 CFR 641.302(d))

The SCSEP program will partner with Talent Networks which have been established to focus on the specific needs of key industries in order to connect employers, jobseekers, the One-Stop Career Centers (OSCC) and educational institutions to help jobseekers develop relevant skills that lead to job opportunities and enable employers to find qualified employees.

Through partnerships with Talent Networks, participants will have greater access to the training and educational opportunities that lead to jobs of the future. The mission of each Talent Network is to:

- Support the efforts of the workforce development system and educational institutions;
- Prepare workers for opportunities in key industry sectors;
- Serve as the primary workforce contact for the industry sector; and
- Encourage networking between jobseekers, employers and training providers.

SCSEP program staff will continue to work with host agencies to develop community service assignments that provide participants with on-the-job training and skill development to increase their opportunities to achieve unsubsidized employment. Though many participants possess work skills, often they lack literacy and computer skills which are necessary in New Jersey's highly competitive job market. New Jersey is committed to expanding participant training opportunities that will assist them with becoming self-sufficient.

(3) Discuss current and projected employment opportunities in the State (such as by providing information available under §15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491-2) by occupation), and the types of skills possessed by eligible individuals. (20 CFR 641.325(c))

LWD will work with One-Stop Career Centers to expand training services to ensure participants are enrolled in learning links, and obtain employability and computer skills. Through partnerships with community colleges and libraries participants will have access to a wealth of training within their local communities. This will encourage participants to advance their skills and increase their opportunities for employment.

Figure 56 below reflects projected employment opportunities in NJ through 2022.

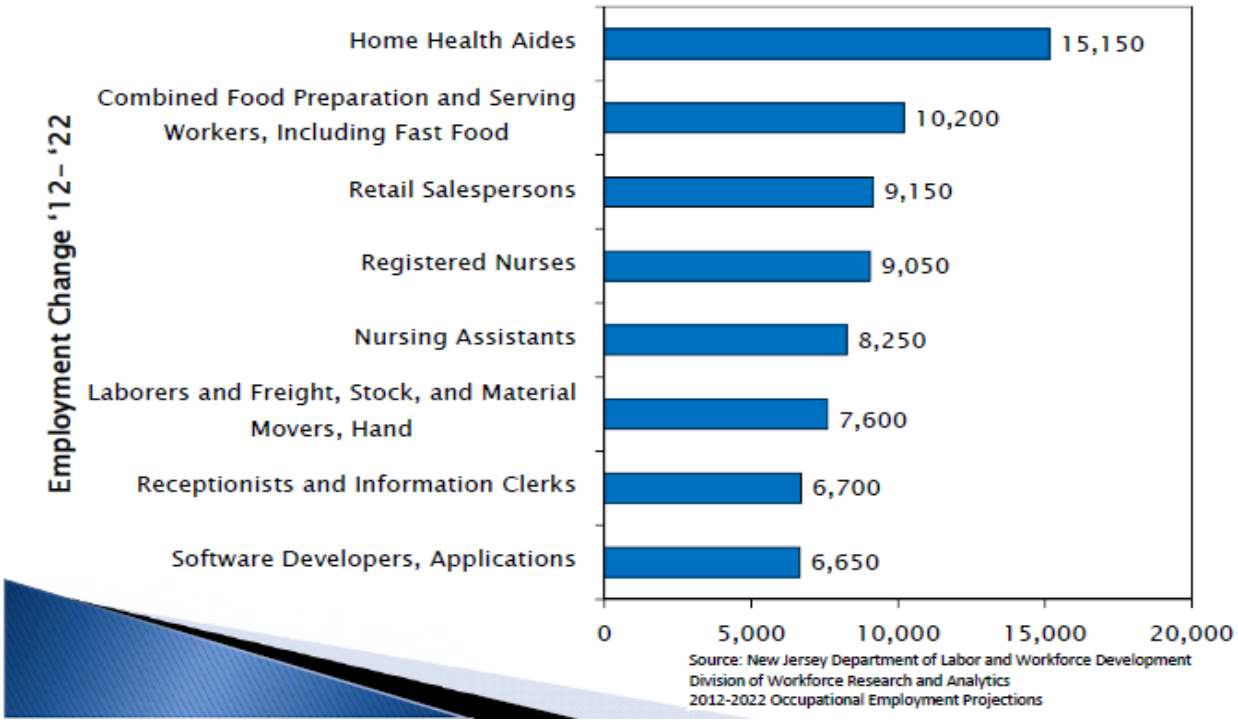


Figure 56

(b) Service Delivery and Coordination

(1) A description of actions to coordinate SCSEP with other programs. This may alternatively be discussed in the State strategies section of the strategic plan, but regardless of placement in document, must include:

(A) Planned actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with WIOA title I programs, including plans for using the WIOA one-stop delivery system and its partners to serve individuals aged 55 and older. (20 CFR 641.302(g), 641.325(e))

The SCSEP program is managed by New Jersey's Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) Division of Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity. This Division is directly responsible for providing seamless and comprehensive services to jobseekers and employers. For over ten years, SCSEP/Workforce 55+ has been integrated into the One-Stop Career Center System. This integration provides older workers with job placement assistance, vocational counseling, career exploration, job search instruction and, basic educational skills, occupational and skills training and a wealth of supportive services.

(B) Planned actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with the activities being carried out in the State under the other titles of the Older Americans Act (OAA). (20 CFR 641.302(h))

SCSEP has a strong working relationship with other programs authorized by the Older Americans Act (OAA) operating in New Jersey. The Program Manager works with various state and local agencies such as NJ Division of Human Services Offices of Aging and NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services to coordinate services that support not only employment, but also health,

wellness, and independence for seniors. Referrals are made to all appropriate services to assist participants as needed.

As New Jersey's senior population continues to grow, LWD continues to develop strategies to keep pace with workforce needs through planning, advocacy, public awareness, and collaboration with other organizations focused on the well-being of older New Jersey workers. The state recognized the need for reliable older workers in the workforce and continues to collaborate with other key organizations to expand opportunities for employment and self-sufficiency.

(C) Planned actions to coordinate SCSEP with other private and public entities and programs that provide services to older Americans, such as community and faith-based organizations, transportation programs, and programs for those with special needs or disabilities. (20 CFR 641.302(i))

The SCSEP program is currently working with host sites to leverage resources that will ensure successful outcomes for participants that foster individual economic self-sufficiency, and expanding training opportunities in community service activities. The state will also provide a wide range of programs and services to participants, spanning multiple divisions and departments. Funds for the Older Americans Act are leveraged with state general funds, and other programs and services located within the Division of Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity.

(D) Planned actions to coordinate SCSEP with other labor market and job training initiatives. (20 CFR 641.302(j))

SCSEP coordinate with other programs, initiatives and entities within LWD in an ongoing effort to train and increase employment opportunities for participants. Specifically, program staff will work with the Office of Research Information (ORI) to obtain labor market information which targets occupational and employment growth trends in New Jersey. Additionally, the program will work with Talent Networks, Business Services and Customized Training to strengthen and develop partnerships with the business community.

(E) Actions to ensure that SCSEP is an active partner in the one-stop delivery system and the steps the State will take to encourage and improve coordination with the one-stop delivery system. (20 CFR 641.335)

The SCSEP Program/WorkForce 55+ has been integrated in the One-Stop system for over ten years which has resulted in participants receiving training, supportive services and employment. The Program Manager and staff will work with the One-Stop system to increase:

- Participant referrals to literacy labs, training, job clubs and supportive services are via One-Stop counselors;
- Access to basic skills training via county colleges and libraries;
- Senior access to occupational training via Talent Networks;
- Employment opportunities for participants via linkages with Business Service job fairs and job orders; and

- Referrals to supportive services such as housing, medical services, and safety services, are via county Offices of Aging.

(F) Efforts to work with local economic development offices in rural locations.

LWD's SCSEP program is integrated with Business Services, Talent Networks and Customized Training, which link One-Stop programs and the business community. The Business Representatives (which are located statewide in every county) work closely with economic development partners in both urban and rural areas, Chambers of Commerce, and other business associations to promote LWD programs. Thus, Business Representative help market the SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ program to the business community in rural locations.

(2) The State's long-term strategy for engaging employers to develop and promote opportunities for the placement of SCSEP participants in unsubsidized employment. (20 CFR 641.302(e)) (May alternatively be discussed in the State strategies section of strategic plan.)

To increase the unsubsidized employment rate, SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ will strengthen its relationship with LWD Business Services and Talent Networks. In turn, LWD Business Services Representatives will actively solicit job openings for older workers and market the SCSEP program to employers. High demand, high growth industries that provide suitable employment for older workers will be profiled and targeted. Additionally, labor market data will assist with outreach to key industries that will hire participants. LWD Business Services Representatives and Talent Networks will work with program staff, economic development partners, Chambers of Commerce and business associations to promote and increase unsubsidized job opportunities for participants.

(3) The State's long-term strategy for serving minority older individuals under SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (c))

In New Jersey, SCSEP collaborates with One-Stop Career Centers, community-based and faith-based organizations to assist in outreach and provide services to populations that are most in need or at risk. This population includes minorities who are low-income older workers. SCSEP staff continually analyzes participant demographics to identify populations that may be under-served or under-represented. During PY 2013, 71.3% of those served by SCSEP were minorities, while the percent of minorities overall in New Jersey's population was 48.8%. The percent of SCSEP minorities served, compared to the overall minority population in NJ was 146.1%.

In an effort to provide ongoing outreach to low-income minorities, SCSEP staff will continue to partner with various community-based and faith-based organizations such as: Puerto Rican Community for Progress, Hispanic Family Centers and Family Success Centers. These organizations provide assistance with outreach to minority, older worker populations. SCSEP staff will analyze statistics from individual minority populations to identify areas that may be under-served or under-represented. Additionally, the program's marketing materials and LWD's website has been revised to encourage enrollment of minority participants.

(4) A list of community services that are needed and the places where these services are most needed. Specifically, the plan must address the needs and location of those individuals most in need of community services and the groups working to meet their needs. (20 CFR 641.330)

In New Jersey statewide, seniors must deal with the high cost of living, economic insecurity and often health issues. The community services that seniors need are listed in Figure 57 below:

COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS
Quality Healthcare & Supportive Services (such as long-term care, prescription drug programs, rehabilitation services, disease prevention education)
Mental Health
Disability Awareness & Treatment
Housing Assistance
Utility Assistance Programs
Transportation
Financial Literacy
Nutritional Education
Food Banks and Farm Fresh Foods
Consumer Fraud & Protection Services (identity theft)
Domestic Abuse Awareness & Prevention Programs
Literary, Occupational and Vocational Training
Job Preparation and Readiness Skills
Computer Skills

Figure 57

The following state agencies that oversee OAA-authorized programs collaborate to provide community programs and services to NJ seniors:

- Department of Health & Senior Service
- Debarment of Human Services, Office of Aging
- Department of Labor& Workforce Development
    - One-Stop Career Centers
    - Vocational Rehabilitation Services
    - Business Services
    - Talent Networks
    - Customized Training
    - Learning Links

(5) The State's long-term strategy to improve SCSEP services, including planned long-term changes to the design of the program within the State, and planned changes in the use of SCSEP grantees and program operators to better achieve the goals of the program. This may include recommendations to the Department as appropriate. (20 CFR 641.302(k))

SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ is successfully integrated into the One-Stop delivery system. Skilled program staff will continue to provide quality services to older workers and employers who have reported high satisfaction with SCSEP participants who have entered employment. LWD's long-term strategy is to continue to partner with workforce development partners, the business community and senior service partners to ensure successful outcomes for older workers and employers alike.

(6) The State's strategy for continuous improvement in the level of performance for SCSEP participants' entry into unsubsidized employment, and to achieve, at a minimum, the levels specified in OAA Section 513(a)(2)(E)(ii). (20 CFR 641.302(f))

SCSEP will collaborate with LWD's workforce development system (Business Services, Talent Networks, Customized Training, Apprenticeship, Office of Research Information, and One-Stop Career Centers) to ensure participants have access to a wealth of programs, services, training, and employment opportunities. This will ensure the program's success in obtaining its unsubsidized employment goal.

(c) Location and Population Served, including Equitable Distribution

(1) A description of the localities and populations for which projects of the type authorized by title V are most needed. (20 CFR 641.325 (d))

Areas of Persistent Unemployment

New Jersey's population will continue to become older and racially and ethnically more diversified from 2012 to 2032. The counties/localities with the greatest need for SCSEP services are:

COUNTY	POPULATION	RATIONALE
Atlantic (Atlantic City),	275,209	Atlantic County has 46,063 age 55+ households (45.5% of all county households). It averaged 9.6% unemployment in 2015. Due to casino closings in Atlantic City, the economy has experienced job loss that impacted many older workers.
Camden (Camden City),	511,038	Camden County has 80,074 age 55+ households (42.8% of all county households).). It averaged 6.5% unemployment in 2015. Camden City within the county experiences higher unemployment.
Cape May	95,344	Cape May has 20,016 age 55+ households (56.3% of all county households). It averaged 11.3% unemployment in 2015. Seniors are negatively impacted by the large number of seasonal – rather than full-time permanent jobs – in the county, and access to public transportation is limited.
Cumberland	157,389	Cumberland County has 22,584 age 55+ households (44.8% of all county households). It averaged 9.1% unemployment in 2015. This is a rural county which lags in basic literacy and ESL skills and has limited access to public transportation.

Essex	795,723	Essex has 108,459 age 55+ households (39.0% of all county households). It averaged 9.1% unemployment in 2015. Seniors are negatively impacted by the county's high cost of living. The City of Newark also has higher unemployment than the county.
Hudson	669,115	Hudson County has 78,583 age 55+ households (39.0% of all county households). It averaged 5.6% unemployment in 2015. Many Seniors are negatively impacted by the county's high cost of living and must compete for employment in a highly skilled job market.

Figure 58

(2) List the cities and counties where the project will be conducted. Include the number of SCSEP authorized positions and indicate where the positions changed from the prior year.

LWD operates the SCSEP/Workforce 55+ Program in 11 out of 21 counties within New Jersey. In Program Year (PY) 2015, the slot distribution was changed in an effort to better serve participants. Per the Equitable Distribution chart below in 2015, SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ relinquished slots in Burlington and Ocean and increased slots in Atlantic and Cumberland. Since the program had a small amount of slots in Burlington and Ocean it was fiscally responsible to relinquish these counties. This streamlined participant access to program services.

County Served	Authorized Positions PY14	Authorized Positions PY15	Difference	Modified Positions PY15
***Atlantic**	25	38	13	
***Burlington**	9	0	-9	
Camden	13	13	0	
Cape May	10	10	0	
***Cumberland**	13	22	9	
Essex	37	37	0	
Gloucester	12	12	0	
Hudson	54	54	0	
Middlesex	19	19	0	
Monmouth	12	12	0	
***Ocean**	13	0	-13	
Sussex	9	9	0	
Union	25	25	0	
TOTAL	251	251	0	

Figure 59

*Counties in which positions changed effective PY 2015.

(3) Describe current slot imbalances and proposed steps to correct inequities to achieve equitable distribution.

Program staff will view SPARQ weekly reports to ensure all county slots are filled. Exits due to durational limit, breaks and employment will be tracked and monitored to ensure equitable distribution is achieved enrollment. In the event over enrollment occurs, staff will increase employer outreach efforts and work with Talent Networks and Business Service Representatives to increase training and employment opportunities for participants. Additionally, OJE funding will be utilized as an incentive for employers to hire participants.

The Program Manager will work closely with SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ staff and the National Grantees to ensure equitable distribution statewide. Focus will be placed on preventing counties from being over-served and under-served. In an effort to provide quality services to participants, NJ grantees will continue to partner, share, and streamline services for participants statewide in an effort to increase access to programs and lower financial costs.

(4) The State's long-term strategy for achieving an equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the State that:

(A) Moves positions from over-served to underserved locations within the State in compliance with 20 CFR 641.365.

New Jersey's long term strategies are:

- Ensure all program slots are filled by monitoring SPARQ intakes and exits;
- Educate One-Stop staff, partners, employers and the public about the value of the SCSEP program and what it can do for seniors and employers alike;
- Partner with Talent Networks, Business Services and Customized Training to increase training and employment opportunities for participants;
- Recruit host agencies that will provide diversified training and employment opportunities for participants; and
- Improve participant Individual Employment Plans (IEPs) by establishing achievable goals that will strengthen their skills and build confidence.

(B) Equitably serves rural and urban areas.

SCSEP will continue to be available to all eligible participants statewide. The state's long term strategy is to continue to make program services and training available to both urban and rural areas of the state through partnerships with One-Stop Career Centers, libraries, county colleges, faith-based and community-based organizations.

(C) Serves individuals afforded priority for service under 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(a), 641.365, 641.520)

The program's selection of participants is based on the priority of service and income eligibility requirements. Pursuant to federal regulations, an eligible individual shall have priority for the community service employment and other authorized activities provided under the Older American Act Amendments of 2006, Title V – Older Americans Community Service Employment Program.

In selecting eligible individuals for SCSEP participation priority will be given to individuals who have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Are 60 years of age or older
- Have a disability
- Have limited English proficiency or low literacy skills
- Reside in a rural area
- Are veterans (or, in some cases, spouses of veterans)
- Have low employment prospects
- Have failed to find employment after using services provided through the One-Stop delivery system
- Are homeless or are at risk of homelessness

(5) The ratio of eligible individuals in each service area to the total eligible population in the State. (20 CFR 641.325(a))

The United States Census Bureau estimates that the population of New Jersey was 8,958,013 on July 1, 2015, a 1.89% increase since the 2010 United States Census.[6] As of the 2010 census, there were 8,791,894 people residing in the state. The table below shows the percentage of citizens age 55 and older in each area compared to the number of citizens age 55 and older statewide.

County	Total Population	Age 55 and Older	Percent of Statewide Age 55 and Older
Atlantic	275,209	81,510	0.9
Camden	511,038	139,087	1.6
Cape May	95,344	38,395	0.4
Cumberland	157,389	39,881	1.0
Essex	795,723	191,925	2.1
Gloucester	290,951	80,061	0.9
Hudson	669,115	141,578	1.6
Middlesex	836,297	215,669	2.4
Monmouth	629,279	189,403	2.1
Sussex	144,909	44,267	0.5
Union	552,939	139,984	1.6
Source: NJLWD, Office of Research and Information Estimates as of July 1, 2014			

Figure 60

(6) The relative distribution of eligible individuals who:

(A) Reside in urban and rural areas within the State

(B) Have the greatest economic need

(C) Are minorities

(D) Are limited English proficient.

(E) Have the greatest social need. (20 CFR 641.325(b))

New Jersey counties which have, the greatest economic need, minority populations, limited English proficiency and the greatest social needs are:

- Cumberland
- Hudson
- Essex
- Atlantic
- Camden

(7) A description of the steps taken to avoid disruptions to the greatest extent possible, when positions are redistributed, as provided in 20 CFR 641.365; when new Census or other reliable data become available; or when there is over-enrollment for any other reason. (20 CFR 641.325(i), 641.302(b))

Program staff will take the following steps to avoid disruption when positions are redistributed (resulting in the transfer of participants) by:

- Providing participant informational sessions in which grantees will explain the transfer process, answer questions/concerns and confirm there will be no disruption of services. Field staff who will be responsible for servicing participants will be present and will confirm their role to provide on-going assistance.
- Participants will be scheduled individually and given an extensive program overview and fill out intake/payroll paperwork. The payroll process will be fully explained to participants to ensure there is not disruption in payroll or services. Participants will be advised that they will remain at their host sites and assured that no immediate changes will occur.
- Participant files will be exchanged among grantees to ensure the continuation of supportive services, training and goals as identified in participant IEPs. Additionally, participants will be informed of grantee supportive services, and their durational limit.

Over enrollment is only considered when it is determined that there is a significant amount of unobligated program funds that can be moved to the participant wages and fringe category of the budget to pay for the additional enrollment of participants. The additional enrollments are distributed in accordance with Equitable Distribution and the percent of the older workers in the counties.

(d) SCSEP Operations

(1) Administrative: describe the organizational structure of the project and how subprojects will be managed, including:

(A) identification of the key staff, including the primary responsibilities and the amount of time assigned to the SCSEP grant;

The SCSEP program is located within the LWD Division of Workforce Grant and Program Management, under the supervision of the Executive Director of Workforce Development and Economic Opportunities and the Chief of Employment and Training. Effective July 1, 2015 LWD's SCSEP staff now consist of the following positions which are 100% to the implementation of the grant/program:

Program Manager

- Responsible for the management of the SCSEP Program and coordination of older worker services throughout the One-Stop Career Center system;
- Leads in developing the state SCSEP plan and ensures coordinated collaboration of stakeholders involved in enhancing the quality of life for seniors;
- Monitors the program's budget and performance goals;
- Coordinates and reports the equitable distribution of New Jersey's 1,636 older worker positions funded by the USDOL and administered by state and national SCSEP grantees;
- Develops programmatic work plans and interprets federal regulations and the impact on older worker policy and issues;
- Oversees the activities of all program support and field staff;
- Develops staff and participant training materials; and
- Reviews and analyzes laws and regulations pertinent to the SCSEP, such as the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the Re-authorized Older Americans Act, 20 CFR Part 641, Senior Community Service Employment Program Final Rule, Economic Stimulus Legislation, H.R.1.

Regional Employment Coordinator Supervisor

- Assists the program manager in the daily management of the SCSEP Program;
- Helps in planning, directing, monitoring and assessing program activities of the central office and/or field operations, does related work as required;
- Supervises field staff by monitoring field schedules, placement rates, and accuracy and timeliness of recurring reports;
- Provides technical assistance in the following areas: conference calls, central office training, regional group trainings, electronic mail, and on-site visits;
- Contributes to planning and writing of yearly SCSEP grant application; and
- Verifies participant income eligibility, recertification, worker's compensation claims and most-in-need factors.

Clerk/Payroll

- Responsible for clerical functions and procedures involving payroll including

but not limited to: participant wage requests, processing of W-4 and direct deposit forms;
- Verifies participant training and host agency hours;
- Assists with maintaining participant files; and
- Tracks program forms such as intakes, and answers program inquiries.

SPARQ Administrator
- Collects and data enters participant intakes, community service assignments, and employer information into the SCSEP data collection and reporting system (SPARQ);
- Logs and distributes mail;
- Verifies participant employment retention; and
- Assist with calculating community service hours.

Regional Employment Coordinator (5 statewide)
- Oversees and provides assistance to participant staff in assigned counties;
- Ensures appropriate procedures for timely development of IEPs, and re-certifications;
- Develops participant employment goals and action plan;
- Refers and documents participant case notes and supportive services;
- Provides recruitment and enrollment of most-in need participants;
- Develops participant IEP's, employment goals and action plan;
- Maintains participant case notes and document supportive services and referrals;
- Schedules counseling appointments for participants as needed;
- Establishes partnerships with host agency supervisors and develop quality host agency assignments;
- Facilitates skills training for participants to increase marketability for transition into unsubsidized employment;
- Maintains partnerships with various agencies for support services referrals;
- Partners with employers to develop unsubsidized employment opportunities for participants;
- Tracks participant durational limit dates and equitable distribution slots;
- Markets program to community and faith-based organizations, state partners and employers; and
- Ensures Community Service, Entered Employment, Employment Retention, Average Earnings, Service Level and Most in Need performance goals are met.

Participant Staff (20 statewide)
- Assists with completion of participant intakes on-line;
- Helps market program to participants, host agencies and employers;
- Develop partnerships with One-Stop Career Center to make appointment for participants for supportive services;
- Answers phones and schedules appointments for Regional Employment

Coordinator.

- Ensures participants are serviced;
- Tracks participant IEP's, Recertification, Training and Referrals to Supportive Services and ensure participant folders contain case notes and referral activity;
- Responsible for maintaining participant file folders; and
- Contacts host agencies and employers and monitors participant performance.

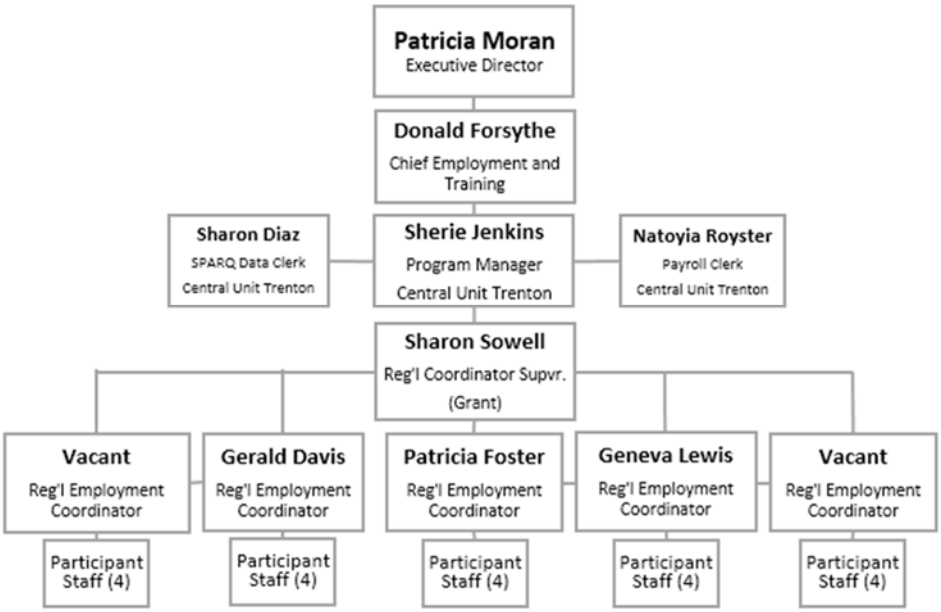


Figure 61

(B) Include an organization chart depicting any subgrantees or local affiliates implementing the grant. Include a table with authorized positions for each subgrantee or affiliate, if applicable;

LWD directly administers the SCSEP program. The program has no sub-grantees.

(C) describe training that will be provided to local staff;

Ongoing training for all program staff is continuously provided. Staff is updated regularly regarding SCSEP program rules, regulations and performance via weekly conference calls and at staff meetings which are held at minimum quarterly. In PY 2015 all program staff received training by the USDOL vendor on regulations, policies, procedures, performance and SPARQ. Additionally, staff has been provided all program rules, regulations, policies, performance measures and SPARQ access for use and reference.

(D) describe how projects will be monitored for program and financial compliance, including audit plans; and

The Program Manager will work with LWD Budget and Accounting to provide oversight and ensure program compliance. The Division of Budget and Accounting will be responsible for the timely submission of the program's quarterly financial reports, grant budget and closeouts. Additionally, the Program Manager will continue to work with LWD's Internal Monitoring and Compliance Unit to conduct data validation and ensure the grant is monitored yearly.

(E) describe how the State will manage its providers and how it will transfer participants if new providers are selected to serve in the State.

Currently, LWD administers the SCSEP/Workforce 55+ program directly, without providers.

(2) Recruitment: describe how grantee will recruit and select of participants will be achieved. The eligibility of participants is described under 20 CFR 641.500 and 641.525.

SCSEP/Workforce 55+ program staff is located in the One-Stop Career Centers work to recruit and select participants in accordance with priority of service. Additionally, program staff partner with community-based and faith-based organization to recruit participants.

In selecting eligible individuals for SCSEP participation priority will be given to individuals who have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Are 60 years of age or older
- Have a disability
- Have limited English proficiency or low literacy skills
- Reside in a rural area
- Are veterans (or, in some cases, spouses of veterans)
- Have low employment prospects
- Have failed to find employment after using services provided through the One-Stop delivery system
- Are homeless or are at risk of homelessness

Recruitment efforts will be ongoing in order to maintain full enrollment throughout the year. New Jersey promotes the SCSEP program with participant recruitment posters and pamphlets, senior citizen newsletters, radio and television interviews, announcements and presentations.

Referrals in the priority of service categories will be accomplished through intensified outreach focused on the targeted populations. SCSEP/Workforce 55+ staff will reach out to One-Stop Career Center staff, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the State Veterans Program, county welfare agencies, local offices on aging and other community and faith-based organizations to recruit participants.

(3) Income Eligibility: describe how participant income will be recertified each year, including where eligibility records will be maintained.

All SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ participant income will be recertified annually in March. Participants are notified 30 days prior to the date of recertification. A recertification package will be completed by the Regional Employment Coordinate with proof of income documentation. The participant is offered an annual physical assessment if eligible to continue on the program. All paperwork will be reviewed and approved by Regional Employment Coordinators and central staff. Eligibility records and documents will be maintained at local offices and in the central office in Trenton.

(4) Orientation: describe the orientation procedures for:

(A) Participants

The initial orientation is provided to the participant at the time of enrollment by the Regional Employment Coordinators. At the time of orientation, the participant is provided with a Participant Orientation Package. Included in this package is the *Terms of Enrollment* form, which the participant signs. The *Terms of Enrollment* states that the participant received a verbal orientation along with the Orientation Package. The orientation covers the following:

- SCSEP rules and regulations, termination policy, and grievance policy
- SCSEP/Workforce 55+ Participant Bill of Rights and attendance policy
- NJ Division Civil Rights, Lipman Bill, and Hatch Act
- Paid holiday schedule, income eligibility, and *Terms of Enrollment*

(B) Host Agencies

The initial orientation is provided to the Host Site at the time of enrollment by the Regional Employment Coordinator. At the time of orientation, the Host Site is provided with a Host Agency Orientation Package. Included in this package is the *Terms of Enrollment* form, which the Host Site also signs as a part of the Letter of Agreement. The Orientation Package includes the following:

- Host Agency roles and responsibilities
- SCSEP rules and regulations, termination policy, and grievance policy
- SCSEP/Workforce 55+ Participant Bill of Rights and attendance policy
- NJ Division Civil Rights, Lipman Bill, and Hatch Act
- Paid holiday schedule, income eligibility, and *Terms of Enrollment*

(5) Duration Limits: describe any policy for maximum duration of enrollment or maximum time in community service and provide a copy of the current Duration Limit policy.

LWD strictly adheres to the 48-month durational limit policy and does not grant exceptions to extend the timeframe for participation in the SCSEP/Workforce 55+ program. The durational limit policy is reviewed with participants during orientation. Prior to reaching durational limit, participants are notified in advance, one year, 90-days, 60-days and 30-days prior to exiting the program. Throughout a participant's enrollment in the program, Regional Employment Coordinators provide on-going job placement assistance in conjunction with the One-Stop Career Center. Additionally, participants within one year of their durational limit receive transitional services, including employment counseling, job search assistance, referrals to supportive services such as food banks, meals-on-wheels, medical, housing, and social services.

(6) Assessments: describe the procedures for assessing job aptitudes, job readiness, and job preferences of participants and their potential to transition into unsubsidized employment. Also describe how the assessment will be used to develop the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP).

An Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is completed between the participant and Regional Employment Coordinator. As part of the IEP process, the Coordinator identifies the participant's job aptitudes, job preferences, job readiness and potential for transition into unsubsidized employment. The IEP must include: an appropriate employment goal; objectives with timeline; barriers; and be jointly agreed upon with the participant. The IEP is developed with the participant during the first 30 days of enrollment in the program and annually thereafter. IEPs are frequently reviewed and updated via case notes.

The IEP includes both short-term and long-term goals with action steps and timelines. The IEP uses information which identifies:

- Participant goals
- Barriers
- Training needs
- Specialized skill development
- Education needs
- Supportive service needs

In an effort to transition participants into unsubsidized employment, participants are matched with appropriate host agency assignments for on-the-job training and work experience.

(7) Community Service Assignments: describe how the participant will be assigned to community service including:

(A) the types of community service activity that will be emphasized and how they were chosen; methods used to match participants with community service training;

Regional Employment Coordinators interview applicants at the time of enrollment to determine the most suitable Host Site that will enhance the participant's skills, interests and abilities. Participants are assigned to community service based on their initial assessment and IEP. Their employment interests and goals are evaluated during the initial enrollment process. Participants are reviewed at least once annually and may be rotated to another host agency, classroom based training that may meet their needs.

The Coordinator will monitor the host site and participant to ensure training is continually provided which enhances the participant's skills, goals and increase their opportunities to obtain unsubsidized employment.

(B) the extent to which participants will be placed in the administration of the project itself;

In PY 2015 the program started utilizing participants as staffers to assist with recruitment and enrollment activities. Participant staffers will work no more than 25 hours a week. Regional Employment Coordinators will ensure participant staffer receive on-the-job and classroom training as indicated in their IEP and meet their identified goals.

(C) the types of host agencies used and the procedures and criteria for selecting the assignments;

Only non-profit 501(c)3 agencies and federal, state and local government employers are used for Host Sites. Types of host agencies utilized by the program include:

- Government agencies (Courts, One-Stops, Housing Authorities)
- Libraries
- Food/Nutrition Programs (Meals on Wheels)
- Schools and Daycare providers
- Social Service agencies (Goodwill)
- Faith-Based Organizations (Catholic Charities)
- Community-Based Organizations (Puerto Rican Action Committee – PRAC)

The host site provides the SCSEP/Workforce 55+ program with the job description for the CSA, which is matched with participant's job skills and employment goals. More important, the participant's IEP is vital and is reviewed frequently to ensure the CSA is able to assist the participant in increasing their skills and achieving their employment goals.

(D) the average number of hours in a participant's training week;

Participants train on average 15 – 20 hours weekly.

(E) the fringe benefits offered (if any); and

Participants are offered an annual Physician's Exam. All efforts are made by program staff to promote the physical exam fringe benefit. If the participant declines, they are required to sign an exception documenting their refusal. Participants are offered this benefit at the time of enrollment and at recertification.

(F) procedures for ensuring adequate supervision.

As per the program's CSA Agreement, all host sites are required to have a Supervisor who will oversee the participant at their assigned work site. Regional Employment Coordinators frequently visit host sites and conduct safety monitoring visits to ensure compliance. Additionally, Host Site Supervisors are required to electronically sign participant timesheets verifying their hours of work.

(8) Training: describe the training that will be provided during community service assignments and any other types of training provided, including linkages with local one-stop centers, and Registered Apprenticeship.

Host Agency Supervisors are responsible for training participants assigned to their agency. All training is designed to increase participant opportunities to achieve unsubsidized employment. Regional Employment Coordinators monitor and determine if the training site is providing suitable training and safe working conditions as outlined in the Host Agency Agreement.

Participants via the One-Stop Career Centers are able to participate in:

- Adult Literacy Programs
- ESL Training Programs
- Effective job search and readiness workshops
- Interviewing techniques workshops
- Job Fairs/Positive Recruitments
- Job Clubs

LWD is responsible for all state apprenticeship activities, in conjunction with its federal partner, USDOL Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training. New Jersey Talent Networks are linked through LWD with Registered Apprenticeship programs and the local WDBs and One-Stops; together, they explore the creation of registered apprenticeship opportunities in key industry sectors with business customers and workforce partners. In addition, the SETC and LWD have collaborated to create and support the NJ PLACE program, New Jersey Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education. The program, administered by the University College Community at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, represents a strong partnership between New Jersey's community colleges, organized labor, employer associations, federally registered apprenticeship programs, educational institutions, and several state agencies. NJ PLACE is a statewide model that awards college credit to graduates of participating registered apprenticeship programs through articulation agreements with all 19 community colleges in New Jersey. Moving forward, NJ PLACE will align with the seven key industry sectors and green energy opportunities in New Jersey. In particular, deeper program development will be explored within the Health Care sector and Green Energy fields, building on work begun in the SETC Health Care Workforce Council and the SESP Council.

(9) Supportive Services: describe the supportive services that will be offered to help participants obtain and retain an unsubsidized job, including transportation assistance (if applicable).

In addition to the services noted above, the One-Stop Career Centers will offer the following to SCSEP/Workforce 55+ participants:

- Employment Counseling;
- Literacy and ESL;
- Vocational/Occupational training;
- Transportation Assistance;
- Referrals for supportive services;
- Job Search and Job Coaching Assistance;
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services; and
- Access to jobs via:

- Marketing of program and participants to employer community;
- Jobs4Jersey.com, LWD's resume bank with has over 16,000 employer openings;
- Virtual Job Fairs; and
- Targeted Job Fairs for Older Workers.

- Participants are informed of local transportation options, including free or reduced fare options that are offered by their counties. Every effort will be made to obtain job-related transportation services for the participants from local resources at no cost to the program.

(10) Termination: describe procedures for terminating a participant, including IEP terminations. Please provide a copy of the current termination procedures.

Terminations can be made in the following instances:

- For Cause
- Income eligibility requirements no longer met at time of Recertification
- IEP-related

For cause terminations are made when a participant violates the rules and policies of the program as outlined in the Termination Policy. This policy is described in the Participant Orientation Package. Prior to participants reaching the termination stage they must receive a verbal warning, a written warning and a written warning follow-up detailing the outcome. All decisions to terminate a participant for cause are at the discretion of the Program Manager.

If the decision to terminate a participant for cause is reached, the participant is given a 30-day notice in writing prior to being exited from the program. The Grievance Procedure and Grievance Form are included in the 30-day Termination Letter. Exceptions to the 30-day notice are instances where a participant commits a violation such as violence, gross misconduct, larceny or possession of drugs. These acts would result in immediate termination.

If at the time of their annual recertification a participant's income exceeds the guidelines, the participant will be exited from the program after a written 30-day notice is given.

The SCSEP/Workforce 55+ Program will use IEP-related terminations as a last option. Removal from the program occurs only after all options have been exhausted and the participant has been provided written notice.

Written grievance procedures for complaint resolution for applicants are included in the Orientation Package and the following is verbally explained at Orientation:

- Participants are informed of their rights;
- All terminations are subject to the grievance policy;
- Documentation is kept on file; and
- Participants are informed of their right to appeal.

(11) Complaints & Grievances: describe the procedures for addressing and resolving complaints and grievances related to program termination. Please provide a copy of the current complaint/grievance policies.

If the decision to terminate a participant for cause is reached, the participant is given a 30-day notice in writing prior to being exited from the program. The Grievance Procedure and Grievance Form are included in the 30-day Termination Letter. Exceptions to the 30-day notice are instances where a participant commits a violation such as violence, gross misconduct, larceny or possession of drugs. These acts would result in immediate termination.

Written grievance procedures for complaint resolution for applicants are included in the Orientation Package and verbally explained at Orientation at which time:

- Participants are informed of their rights;
- All terminations are subject to the grievance policy;
- Documentation is kept on file; and
- Participants are informed of their right to appeal.

The SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ Program has established policies and procedures for participants. These policies are administered uniformly. Each participant is provided with a copy of the approved grievance procedures during the initial orientation. Participants terminated due to administrative adverse action, i.e. IEP related termination, are provided with a copy of the approved grievance procedures at the time of termination.

The grievance procedure consists of an informal and formal hearing process. To initiate the informal grievance process, the participant must notify the Regional Employment Coordinator. The Coordinators must meet informally with the participant and CSA Supervisor within five working days of the reported grievance to attempt to reach a resolution. If an acceptable solution is not reached, the participant must contact the Regional Employment Coordinator Supervisor or Program Manager immediately. The Regional Employment Coordinator Supervisor and/or Program Manager will attempt to resolve the problem within twenty working days after review. If dissatisfied with the recommended resolution, the participant must file a written appeal to the Program Manager within five working days of the hearing.

The Program Manager must hold a hearing to make a decision within five working days of the receipt of the appeal. If dissatisfied with the Program Manager's decision, the participant must file a written appeal to the Assistant Commissioner, LWD, through the Director, Division of Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity within five working days after the second decision. The Hearing Officer appointed by the Assistant Commissioner must conduct a hearing within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal. The Hearing Officer shall render a decision within 10 working days of the hearing.

(12) Maximizing enrollment: describe procedures for fully enrolling all available slots, including over enrolling participants, and how over-enrollments will be balanced with equitable distribution requirements.

Program staff are stationed at One-Stop Career Centers and partner with community-based, and faith-based organizations to recruit participants. Additionally, the Program Manager and Field Supervisor monitor slots and participant durational limits (via SPARQ QPR reports) to ensure equitable distribution is achieved and slots are filled.

Over enrollment is only considered when it is determined that there is a significant amount of unobligated program funds that can be moved to the participant wages and fringe category of the budget to pay for the additional enrollment of participants. The additional enrollments are distributed in accordance with Equitable Distribution and the percent of the older workers in the counties.

(13) Performance: include a proposed level for each performance measure for each of the program years covered by the plan. While the plan is under review, the State will negotiate with the Employment and Training Administration to set the appropriate levels for the next year. The State may also negotiate performance levels in a subsequent modification. At a minimum, States must identify the performance indicators required under the SCSEP Final Rule published on September 1, 2010, and, for each indicator, the State must develop an objective and quantifiable performance goal for the next year. The performance measures include:

(A) entered employment,

(B) employment retention,

(C) average earnings,

(D) service level,

(E) service to most-in-need, and

(F) community service

QUANTIFIABLE PERFORMANCE GOALS		
QUANTIFIABLE GOAL	**PY 2015 PERFORMANCE**	**PROPOSED GOAL PY 2016 – PY 2020**
Entered Employment	43.1%	45.0%
Employment Retention	72.7%	75%
Average Earnings	$7,317	$7,500
Service Level	153.5%	160.0%
Community Service	75.0%	80%
Most In Need	2.51	2.55

Figure 62

(14) Administrative Costs: describe any request for an increase in administrative costs consistent with section 502(c)(3) of the Older Americans Act.

In an effort to increase training and employment opportunities for participants, LWD will request additional administrative funding on an as needed basis.

SCSEP Assurances

#	Statement of Assurance
1.	Where SCSEP is included in the Combined Workforce Plan, the State established a written policy and procedure to obtain advice and recommendations on the State Plan from representatives of the State and area agencies on aging; State and local boards under WIOA; public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations providing employment services, including each grantee operating a SCSEP project within the State, except as provided under section 506(a)(3) of OAA and 20 CFR 641.320(b); Social service organizations providing services to older individuals; Grantees under Title III of OAA, Affected Communities, Unemployed older individuals, Community-based organizations serving older individuals; business organizations; and labor organizations.

Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program

When Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO), also known as Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (authorized by Section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532)), is included in the Combined State Plan, the State and REO grantee(s) will describe efforts to coordinate services for justice-involved individuals with other employment and training activities as part of a larger employment strategy.

As part of the Combined State Plan, the State should:

(a) describe how the State and the REO grantee(s) will coordinate services and activities for justice-involved individuals to successfully attain employment and transition into their communities with Statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems; and may

Ensuring continuity of services for offenders transitioning from prison back to their communities is an important goal for New Jersey. WIOA Title II and State Literacy funds (Workforce Learning Link) are provided to the correctional system so that work-readiness services can be implemented prior to release to help promote a seamless transition to community-based One-Stop Career Center services and then into employment.

Wagner-Peyser provides accessibility for all populations to the full range of One-Stop Career Center employment and training programs. Programs designed to serve the needs of special populations with or without significant barriers to employment are integrated into the universal access provided by Wagner-Peyser and WIA. Members of special populations, however, identified as having significant barriers to employment often require more intensive services to reach the employment goal. Significant barriers include poor previous attachment to the workforce, literacy or language barriers, ex-offender status, educational or occupational skills gap or lack of a credential, physical or mental disability, and driver's license suspension.

To help special populations with significant barriers to employment, New Jersey has created targeted programs and dedicated staff to help ensure positive outcomes. The challenge is to meet customers where they are by creating a proactive approach to promote and serve special populations. Once special populations enter the One-Stop Career Center system, ensuring that customers receive the services needed to reach their goal becomes a staff responsibility. All One-Stop Career Center staff members need to take ownership for the customer experience by providing warm handoffs when referrals to other service providers are appropriate. That involves taking the extra time to walk customers to where they need to go, introducing them to staff that can help them, and then circling back with customers to make sure their needs were met. Staff need to follow-up with customers to ensure all jobseekers remain engaged and focused on overcoming barriers to enable them to successfully (re)enter the workforce. Maintaining a stronger, more supportive connection to customers will result in better outcomes and improve the perceived value of the One-Stop Career Centers.

The LWD Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program ensures that not more than 10 percent of 82.5 percent of the funding for the cost of educational programs is allocated for

programs for criminal offenders in the correctional facilities as well as for other institutional individuals. Emphasis is on programs that promote:

- Adult Basic Education
- Programs for individuals with disabilities as well as other special needs
- English literacy programs
- Secondary school credit programs
- Transitional support to prepare students to make a successful transition to the community
- Life skills and employability skill development to prepare students to gain employment.

LWD will use the same grant announcement and application process to provide funds to serve individuals in correctional facilities and other institutions that is being used for all other eligible providers.

Providers that receive funds to provide programs and services to correctional facilities and other institutions will be required to describe in their grant application, in addition to all other program requirements, how they will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

As noted previously, the SETC also works with the Department of Corrections and the Juvenile Justice Commission to align educational and training opportunities for incarcerated individuals.

(b) provide examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by Faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs), State reentry councils, and justice organizations in coordination with education and training providers, one-stop centers and other supportive services, which improve employment outcomes for justice-involved individuals.

In October 2010, LWD secured grant funding from USDOL for a youth-centered Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). DVRS was identified as the lead division to increase the capacity of pilot Workforce Development Board areas to serve youth with disabilities (ages 16 – 26), in particular youth offender populations and returning veteran youth. This funding also includes ability to promote universal design in One-Stop Career Centers throughout the entire state.

Endnotes

[i] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, 2014 Annual Averages on March 2015 Benchmark, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[ii] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, May 2015 Estimates, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[iii] New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages, 2014 Annual Averages, NJLWD, Division of Workforce, Research & Analytics, Bureau of Labor Market Information, December 2015.

[iv] Percentage totals are the sum of all mutually exclusive component industries. Therefore, the sum of individual industry cluster annual averages will not equal the total cluster industries annual averages. In addition, the sum of individual industry cluster percentages of totals will not equal the percentage of total.

[v] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[vi] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[vii] Burning Glass Technologies Inc., Labor Insight, Prepared by New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, December 2015

[viii] The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development through its agreement with Burning Glass technologies is able to provide labor market information aggregated from online employer job listings. This data provides valuable insight regarding current demand for characteristics such as knowledge, skills and abilities, sought by employers.

[ix] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

[x] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Selected Economic Characteristics*

[xi] NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information, Economic and Demographic Research, March 15, 2016

[xii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Sex by Age by Employment Status for the Population 16 years and over*

[xiii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Sex by Age by Employment Status for the Population 16 years and over*

[xiv] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Age by Veteran Status by Employment Status for the Civilian Population 18 to 64 years*

[xv] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Employment Status by Disability Status*

[xvi] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Work Experience by Disability Status*

[xvii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months of Individuals by Sex by Employment Status*

[xviii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Selected Social Characteristics in the United States*

[xix] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Educational Attainment and Employment Status by Language Spoken at Home for the Population 25 Years and Over*

[xx] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

[xxi] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Educational Attainment by Employment Status for the Population 25 To 64 Years*

[xxii] Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc., Analyst, 2015

[xxiii] While Annual Openings are reported for the 2-digit SOC groups, Most Required Education Level represents the minimum education level required for the highest number of annual openings of the 5-digit SOC groups that fall within each 2-digit group. Percent reports the portion of openings in this occupations with the most common educational requirement.

[xxiv] A full explanation and definitions of these additional performance measures are included in Section III.(b)(4) of this plan.

[xxv] SETC, *Investing in New Jersey's Adult Learners – Needs Analysis and Recommendations Regarding the State of Adult Literacy Education in New Jersey*, January 2013.

[xxvi] New Jersey calculated the 70%/30% formula with the three factors established in this section (disadvantaged youth, excess unemployment, and substantial unemployment). Using that formula the three factors are 23.3% of the whole with 30% remaining which is discretionary. Of the 30% discretionary allocation, the State chose to allocate an additional 1.7% to excess unemployment and substantial unemployment bringing them to 25% each, 10% to excess poverty, and the remaining 16.6 % to disadvantaged youth bringing it to 40% of the total allocation.

[xxvii] This formula utilizes the Adult Employment and Training Discretionary Allocation option. New Jersey adds the high school attainment component as an additional factor. New Jersey calculated the 70%/30% formula with the three factors established in this section (disadvantaged adults, excess unemployment, and substantial unemployment). Using that formula the three factors are 23.3% of the whole with 30% remaining which is discretionary. Of the 30% discretionary allocation, the State chose to allocate the full 30% component as follows: 25% of the overall total based on the high school diploma attainment factor, and an additional 1.7% to the other three categories bringing them to 25% each of the overall total (where they were 1/3 of 70% of the overall, or 23.33% of the overall total based on the formula).

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Appendix 1: Performance Goals for Core Programs

New Jersey Department of Labor of Workforce Development (LWD)
Assumptions in Developing Appendix 1 for PY16 and PY17

Many key concepts associated with performance measurement and their relation to workforce program operations are still in draft form. LWD reserves the right to revisit and amend all proposed targets contained in this appendix that may be inconsistent with final regulations/guidance provided by the Departments of Education and Labor or that prove unattainable with the proposed alignment of resources and our ability to collect the necessary data.

Establishing PY16 and PY17 performance targets are challenging as the transition from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) introduces substantial programmatic and technical changes which will require evaluation, testing, and modification.

I. Co-Enrollment of WIOA Title I and Title III Participants

It is New Jersey's intent that, effective July 1, 2016, all WIOA Title I and WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser) participants will be co-enrolled in both programs; this is reflective of the new One-Stop service integration and will be reflected in the performance outcomes of both programs.

It is also New Jersey's intention to apply the WIOA Title I Primary Indicators to the WFNJ program; this will be included in future SNAP and WorkFirst Employment and Training Plans beginning July 1, 2016.

II. Credential Attainment Rate:

LWD assumed that the denominator contained only those participants who were enrolled in education or training. This allowed LWD to submit a proposed goal for Title 1 Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth populations.

Appendix 1: Performance Goals for Core Programs

	PY2016		PY2017	
	Proposed/ Expected Level	Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	Proposed/ Expected Level	Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Adults	57%		58%	
Dislocated Workers	57%		58%	
Youth*	62%		63%	
Adult Education	Baseline		Baseline	
Wagner-Peyser	57%		58%	
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline		Baseline	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)				
Adults	53%		54%	
Dislocated Workers	53%		54%	
Youth*	60%		61%	
Adult Education	Baseline		Baseline	
Wagner-Peyser	53%		54%	
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline		Baseline	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Adults	$5700		$5750	
Dislocated Workers	$7800		$7850	
Youth	$2300		$2350	
Adult Education	Baseline		Baseline	
Wagner-Peyser	$7400		$7450	
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline		Baseline	

*Measure for youth includes percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment

Appendix 1: Performance Goals for Core Programs

	PY2016		PY2017	
	Proposed/ Expected Level	**Negotiated/ Adjusted Level**	**Proposed/ Expected Level**	**Negotiated/ Adjusted Level**
Credential Attainment Rate				
Adults	50%		51%	
Dislocated Workers	50%		51%	
Youth	50%		51%	
Adult Education	Baseline		Baseline	
Wagner-Peyser	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline		Baseline	
Measurable Skill Gains				
Adults	Baseline		Baseline	
Dislocated Workers	Baseline		Baseline	
Youth	Baseline		Baseline	
Adult Education	Pending		Pending	
Wagner-Peyser	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline		Baseline	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers				
Adults	Baseline		Baseline	
Dislocated Workers	Baseline		Baseline	
Youth	Baseline		Baseline	
Adult Education	Baseline		Baseline	
Wagner-Peyser	Baseline		Baseline	
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline		Baseline	

Baseline: An indicator for which States will not propose an expected level of performance in the plan submission and will not come to agreement with the Departments on adjusted levels of performance.

Pending: Targets will be established once final regulations have been published by the Departments of Education and Labor.

Appendix 1: Performance Goals for Core Programs

Additional Indicators of Performance:

Measures for WIOA Title I, WIOA Title II and WorkFirst New Jersey

1. Number of program participants served by the program
2. Number of program participants exited from the program
3. Percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment as follows:
    a. Disability
    b. Ex-offender
    c. No high school diploma
    d. Previously or currently in foster care
    e. Homeless
    f. Limited English Proficiency or Low Level Literacy
    g. Long-Term Unemployed (continuously unemployed for at least 12 consecutive months)
    h. Public Assistance customer
4. Percentage of program participants responding to survey who are satisfied with their training/counseling after exiting from the program

Measures for WIOA Title I ONLY

5. Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification

    The State will evaluate the WDB's local area achievement based on its ability to meet all WDB certification requirements.

6. Number of High Quality Partnerships established:

    High Quality Partnerships are those workforce and education efforts which are employer-driven and have developed a clearly defined mission and vision statement, with defined roles, responsibilities and impact measures for all partners. All programs will integrate the use of career pathways, and provide both interim process measures as well as outcome measures, which will be particularly focused on industry valued credentials, employability skills, and experiential learning.

7. Regional Coordination

    Three workforce planning regions are designated in New Jersey: North, Central, and South. The State will evaluate if each region has effectively administered their activities under WIOA which requires that each region engage in a planning process that results in specific outcomes.

Appendix 2: Public Comment Summary

Key Industries	*Disposition*
1. Since Healthcare is an industry specific sector, it may be beneficial to separate it out from Education when reporting metrics. (N002)	**Implementation**
2. Replace "Writing" with "collaboration" as one of key skills for healthcare industry. (N002)	**Addressed in Section 2**

Lack of Time for Public Comment	*Disposition*
1. Not providing reasonably sufficient time for public comment, New Jersey violates the spirit of WIOA. Because the Final Plan will drive New Jersey Regional and Local Plans later this year, we want our voices to be heard at the outset of the Plan's existence – before it begins to take on a life of its own. (N003)	**Future Consideration**
2. On behalf of the Middlesex County Workforce Development Board, I have to express both dismay, and disappointment that the above referenced plan was sent to the local areas early this morning with requested comments due back at 4 PM today. Since the document is 375 pages, it will take some time to review and digest what has been presented. In order to provide useful comments, much more time is needed. Additionally, while I would like to seek the input of our board members, I cannot impose such an unrealistic time constraint on them. While Middlesex County would like to provide input to this important plan, it is very difficult to do so, on such short notice. I will do my best to review and provide comments in the few hours that have been allotted to do so. (N004)	**Future Consideration**
3. Couldn't at least 3 days be allowed for review and comment of this critical plan? (N005)	**Future Consideration**
4. We respectfully request more time to read, and comment on, this important document. (N006)	**Future Consideration**
5. There should be more notice for public comment for something this important. (N007)	**Future Consideration**
6. I am in receipt of the draft plan, but am troubled by the less than 1 day comment period. (N008)	**Future Consideration**

7. "[We are concerned] about the quick turnaround [for public comments]since this was only sent this morning and due today. (N009)	**Future Consideration**
8. Less than 5 hours to review almost 400 pages of the DRAFT New Jersey Combined State Plan is a very limited time and therefore I have no other option, but to list the needs and concerns that affect my programs in Essex and Passaic Counties as well as the concerns of other adult education providers. (N012)	**Future Consideration**
9. The draft plan is very a comprehensive document and it is an injustice to the overall work to develop the plan to only offer an 8 hour review period. I have briefly looked at the SCSEP section which runs from page 292 to 316. I would like the opportunity to review this section in greater detail. SCSEP is an important support for NJ's seniors that struggle with meeting their monthly expenses. (N014)	**Future Consideration**
10. In my opinion given the size of the document that you have released for review today, the comment period that you provide is unreasonable. It flouts the intent of the aforesaid statute's public comment process that was meant to provide meaningful and timely feedback before submission of the plan to USDOL. (N016)	**Future Consideration**
11. On behalf of the members of the NJ Library Association, I wish to express our dismay that we were given so limited a time to respond to a document of this length (375 pages). As advocates we worked with members of Congress on the authorization of WIOA. This is a critical piece of legislation for all residents of New Jersey. It is extremely unfair to all those who are involved with these issues on a local level to have been given such a short period of time to respond. (N017)	**Future Consideration**
12. On a practical level, there is no way possible to properly review and comment on the 375-page plan in any type of substantive way, even if one was to have the time available today to review the plan... New Jersey is not only the last state to release its plan, it is almost 2 weeks later than the next to last state. I should also note, that most states have allowed at least 2 weeks for plan comments, and in some cases, considerably longer periods of time. Certainly no state, except New Jersey, has had a deadline of the same day that the plan was released. I should also note, that the previous public input process to the New Jersey WIOA blueprint, is in no way a proper substitute or equivalent process for commenting on the state's comprehensive 4-year plan for its workforce development system. Lastly, I would like to note that in contrast to the process New Jersey, and its complete lack of transparency and opportunities for sufficient public feedback on the plan, a number of states have had highly transparent processes with appropriate deadlines and feedback. (N020)	**Future Consideration**

Talent Development	*Disposition*
1. Information provided on healthcare industry that for many RN positions, particularly at acute care facilities, a Bachelors (BSN) is now needed, not an Associates. Recommendation that BSN be included as educational expectation for RN position. (N002)	**Plan Updated, Section 2. Implementation**

Economic/Workforce Development	*Disposition*
1. In my quick review of this document, I don't see mention of the key role the transportation infrastructure plays to New Jersey's economy and workforce. In order to maintain a healthy economy, especially one this densely populated and regional, our transportation network (including highways, bridges, tunnels and public transit) must remain healthy, properly maintained and properly funded. If the transportation network is not properly maintained and funded, the state's economy and workforce will suffer. Many job seekers need a cost effective public transportation system to be able to get to jobs. Also public transportation plays important role for the 17% of NJ residents who work out of state, which a large portion traveling through and use Hudson County as a gateway to get to their jobs in NYC. (N010)	**Future Consideration** **-** **Transportation issues also will be addressed through the WIOA regional planning process.**
2. Don't forget that one size doesn't fit all when developing policies. Areas such as Cape May County have limited opportunities for full time year round employment. Cape May County statistically has had the highest unemployment in the State. The implementation of the Combined State Plan should be able to address the support of economic opportunities and growth in areas as small as the population in Cape May County. N018)	**Future Consideration**

General	*Disposition*
1. On the list of Figures on Page 317, I think it would be easier for readers if we list the title of each Figure. There are just too many acronyms to be familiar with. It will be very helpful if we have an index of all the acronyms with their full titles. (N001)	**Future Consideration**

Partner Issues	*Disposition*
1. We respectfully request the SETC provide a more transparent and thorough process of receiving and reviewing public comment for the State Plan to implement WIOA, a potentially beneficial Act to New Jersey work force and those facing barriers to employment. (N003)	**Future Consideration**
2. While the draft plan includes several mentions of area vocational-technical schools and career and technical education high schools as partners in the workforce development system, it does not include county vocational-technical schools as part of the high-quality employer-driven partnerships that will be central to the various WIOA initiatives. We recommend including county vocational schools (or a generic reference to area vocational/technical education providers) as potential partners in the provision of high quality employer driven partnerships, as career and technical education programs already provided by county vocational-technical schools already include the desired partnerships with employers and are a model for replication. (N015)	**Incorporate into Plan**
3. I am also concerned that "NJ is building a new network of One Stop Career Centers, community colleges, libraries, CBOs, faith based organizations, organized labor and educational institutions …. toward access to high quality career guidance and job search assistance." Again, Community Based Organizations have been providing high quality career guidance and job search assistance for decades. I would hope that this extensive network of talent not be overlooked in this process, and that resources would not be needlessly spent to develop a new network resulting only in duplication of service. (N019)	**Future Consideration**

Individuals with Barriers to Employment	*Disposition*
1. Please see attached document for the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities comments. (separate attachment) (N011)	**Future Consideration**
2. Concerns include: i. My programs, like many, serves a populations of over 60% ESOL & EL-Civics clients with most of the remaining students being ABE (mostly 4th to 6th grade level) ii. The state as a whole serves 95% low level learners (per LACES) iii. Within the last year the state went from serving close to 30 thousand to almost 20 thousand Tittle II participants (per LACES) iv. With all the changes and requirements in WIOA we are risking disservice to most of our population since they are	**Future Consideration**

low level and cannot attain a High School Diploma within a fiscal year and much less a recognized certification v. Undocumented participants cannot obtain a state certification and cannot be served at the One Stop Centers, but they are recognized as clients under Tittle II vi. Most students need many hours of training to be taking from a zero grade level to a High School Diploma, in average 1 1/2 years vii. We work with adults and there are many barriers that preclude them from dedicating their time to education (work schedule, childcare, economic issues, support system, etc.) and cannot commit in many cases to even 10 weeks of training. (on average 50% of the students stop before the end of each session) viii. Most of the high school dropout students that get to our programs have behavioral issues that couldn't be addressed in the school system and certainly cannot be address in our programs due to lack of funds ix. Many of our ESOL & EL-Civics clients are not with us to obtain a HSD or certification, they already have credentials from their countries x. Some of our clients are with us just to obtain their citizenship and other very important goals that do not align with WIOA (N012)	
3. As a state, we need to guarantee equal opportunity to a future for all the population and rather than limit or reduce the number of students served within the Tittle II programs, we have to increase them. (N012)	**Future Consideration**
4. We here at RespectAbility wanted to send you our thoughts, ideas, and comments on your State Plan. Even once your State Plan has been completely approved by DOL, there will be continuing challenges and opportunities to improve outcomes for your state's citizens with disabilities. (separate attachment) (N013)	**Future Consideration**
5. I ask that you consider the WIOA regulations and our state needs to find the way to stop reducing the services provided to our population. The Department of Labor has created many committees to develop and implement best practices and there are some initiatives for collaboration with us the providers. We should continue developing collaborative partnerships in order to better serve our clients while expanding our services. About 10% of the population in New Jersey does not have a High School Diploma. (N012)	**Future Consideration**
6. In briefly reviewing the document, I was pleased to see the Adult Literacy and Community Library Pilot Program mentioned. Many of our libraries are actively involved in providing adult literacy and ESL classes. For many these classes are a critical first step in acquiring the basic literacy skills which provide	**NA**

	the foundation for any employment opportunity. We anticipate the need for this program to grow. Many proposals regarding obtaining citizenship status for those currently living in the United States would require that the individual learn English. Providing those opportunities should be a priority of our State. (N017)	
7.	I am concerned that long serving and successful CBOs will have a diminished role based on the following: • Focus on industry valued credential or degree • Eligible Training Provider List • Consumer Report Card • Performance Data Many, if not most, of the individuals served by CBOs like Abilities, do not enter the labor market with a credential, nor it is reasonable to expect that they will. There are exceptions, yes, but I am concerned about the majority. To expect that 50-80% of these individuals will be in such programs within a 5 year period is not reasonable. Much of the work done by CBOs focus on "Employability" Skills – described within the plan as those soft skills of career readiness and work habit development. Employability Skills are expected to be part of the curricula for the industry valued training programs. While that is important, these soft skill programs often stand alone and make the difference of employment or unemployment for a person with a disability. There is no industry credential for these soft skills. Since referrals and contracts for service will likely be made based on performance data generated by the consumer report card for the Eligible Training Provider List, it is imperative that the metrics used not be "one size fits all". The critical soft skills training that has been done for decades for persons with disabilities and resulted in thousands of job placements cannot be allowed to be lost in this process. It needs to be recognized and applauded and not re-invented. Metrics that will be used to measure outcomes and success for a community college will be grossly different from those used for CBOs. I ask that this be reflected and that thoughtful attention, with input from the CBO community, be given to the topic. (N019)	**Future Consideration**

Public Comment Instructions

Public Comment on the

DRAFT New Jersey Combined State Plan

for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 2016

must be submitted in writing to the

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission (SETC)

by **4 pm on Monday, March 28, 2016**.

Mail to:

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission
Attn: Janet M. Sliwinski
One John Fitch Way
PO Box 940
Trenton, NJ 08625-0940

E-Mail to:

JanetM.Sliwinski@dol.nj.gov

Appendix 3: Key New Jersey Talent Development Policies

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2015-01

SUBJECT: Local Workforce Development Board Member Appointments and Process

Purpose

This policy provides the membership requirements for Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), as well as the process for appointing members to the local boards, under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Note: WIOA renames two local entities established under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and relevant to this policy as follows:

- Local Workforce Investment Area is renamed Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA); and
- Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) is renamed Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)

Background

The Local Chief Elected Official (LCEO) of the designated local Workforce Development Board Area (LWDA) is responsible for the process for appointing and reappointing members to the local Workforce Development Board.

The state-led WIOA Governance and Planning Workgroup, comprised of LWDB directors and State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) members, examined the requirements of WIOA and the current structure of local boards, and considered the potential opportunities and challenges involved in re-aligning board membership. The SETC Governance Committee reviewed the workgroup recommendations, the existing SETC policy and WIOA requirements and is proposing the attached "Policy on LWDB Member Appointments and Process". The purpose of the new policy is to create a process that supports the roles and work of the local Workforce Development Boards and is in alignment with WIOA.

Upon formal resolution by the SETC, the policy will be posted on the SETC website and the policy document distributed to the Local Chief Elected Officials, local Workforce Development Board Chairs, and Executive Directors. Subsequently, the policy will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor as part of the New Jersey Combined State Plan, and be available for public comment as part of the State Plan.

Resolution:

It is hereby resolved that the State Employment and Training Commission formally adopts the "Policy on Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Member Appointments and Process". This policy takes immediate effect and will be included in the New Jersey Combined State Plan and SETC local board member handbook.

Commission Approved: October 9, 2015 *Replaces SETC #2010-01 (9/17/2013)*

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Policy on Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Member Appointments and Process

Board Member Requirements

The Chief Elected Official (CEO) is responsible for the process of appointing members to the local Workforce Development Board (LWDB). The following are the categories and required representatives of Board membership.

Business Representatives (51%)	Local WDB membership must have a majority (minimum 51%) of business representatives who reflect the composition of the local and regional pool of employers. [WIOA Section 107 (b)(2)(A)(i)]
	The Chair of the Board must be a private sector representative elected by the Board. [WIOA Section 107 (b)(3)]
	Business members shall be business owners, chief executives, or chief operating officers of nongovernmental employers, or other private sector executives who have optimum policy-making or hiring authority. [NPRM Proposed §NPRM 20(f)] [20 CFR 661.315(a)] "Optimum policy-making authority" is described as an individual who can reasonably be expected to speak affirmatively on behalf of the entity he or she represents and to commit that entity to a chosen course of action. [NPRM Proposed § 679.120(a)] [20 CFR 661.203(a)]
	Business members should represent the local area's key industry sectors as defined in the LWDB regional and local plans; these local sectors should align in whole or in part with the state's key industry sectors. Additional business members should be appointed if needed to represent significant employers in the region. Membership should include women, minorities and individuals who have disabilities.
	Representatives from private not-for-profit entities that operate as businesses and are employers may be considered business sector members on the local WDB. The not-for-profit entities should align with the key industry sectors for the local area, as identified in the WDB regional and local plans. Membership should include representatives from small businesses.
	Representatives from proprietary schools cannot be considered a business sector member.
Process for securing nominations for business representatives	▪ Business representatives on the Board are selected from individuals nominated by local business organizations and trade organizations. [WIOA Section 107(b)(2)(A) (iii)] ▪ Nominations must be aligned to the business representation described above. ▪ Nominations are submitted to the Chief Elected Official. Copies of the nominations must be provided to the local WDB Chair and Executive Director.
Economic Development	Local WDB membership must have, <u>at a minimum</u>, one (1) representative from economic development authorities, agencies or organizations.
	Representatives must be board members or employees of an economic development organization and must be individuals with optimum policy-making authority within their own organization. Economic development representatives may be considered business sector members.

Organized Labor and Community Based Organization Representatives (20%)	Local WDB membership must have not less than 20% of its members be representatives from organized labor and community-based organizations. WIOA Section 107(b)(2)(B)(i-ii).
	Local WDB membership must include representatives of labor organizations, who should reflect the various types of industries that have substantial employment in the local or regional area.
	Local WDB membership must include one (1) joint labor-management apprenticeship program representative. If no such joint program exists in the area, then an apprenticeship program representative shall be a member, if such program exists in the area. The representative must be a member of a labor organization or a training director.
	Representatives of labor organizations must be individuals with optimum policy-making authority within their own organization.
	Labor representatives must be affiliated with organized labor by being a union member, labor union staff, or other individual participating in labor union activities. A labor federation is defined as an alliance of two or more organized labor unions for the purpose of mutual support and action. [NPRM Proposed § 675.300] [20 CFR 661.203(a)] [[20 CFR 660.300]
	Representatives of labor organizations should be active in apprenticeship programs such as the Apprenticeship Advisory Committee or serve in an advisory capacity for a college or school board.
Process for securing nominations for labor representatives	Recognized state and local labor federations submit nominations to the Chief Elected Officials. Nominations must be aligned to the labor representation described above. Copies of the nominations must be provided to both the local WDB Chair and local WDB Executive Director.
Community-Based Organizations (CBO)	Local WDB membership may include representatives from CBOs that have demonstrated experience and expertise in serving those with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities and veterans) and organizations with experience and expertise addressing the employment, training or education needs of youth. WIOA Section 107(b)(2)(B)(iii-iv).
(Included in 20% above)	The term CBO refers to a private nonprofit organization (which may include a faith-based organization) that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and has demonstrated expertise and effectiveness in the field of workforce development. WIOA Section 3(10). Additional representatives of CBOs should be appointed if needed to reflect significant population segments. Representatives of local Community Action Agencies, designated by the NJ Department of Community Affairs, may be considered CBO members on the local WDB.
	Representatives of CBOs must be individuals with optimum policy-making authority within their own organization.
	Members appointed to the local WDB must be actively engaged with a CBO as a board member, employee, or active member.
Process for securing nominations for CBO representatives	Community leaders may submit nominations to the CEO. Copies of the nominations must be provided to both the local WDB Chair and Executive Director.

Education Representatives	Local WDB membership must have, <u>at a minimum</u> • one (1) member from a Title II Adult Education and Literacy provider** • one (1) member from a higher education entity, including Community Colleges, that provides workforce training • one (1) member representing a County Vocational-Technical School in the local area (SETC Requirement) Other members may include: • Superintendent from a K-12 system • Representatives of local educational agencies or CBOs with demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the training and education needs of individuals with barriers to employment.
	**If there are multiple eligible providers of Title II serving the local area, or multiple institutions of higher education serving the local area by providing workforce investment activities, each representative on the local board shall be appointed from among individuals nominated by the local providers or institutions. WIOA Section 107(b)(6)
Process for securing nominations for Education Representatives	Education leaders may submit nominations to the Chief Elected Official with a copy to the local WDB Chair and local WDB Executive Director except in those instances where a specific individual is required to be appointed to the local WDB. WIOA Section 107(b)(2)(C)
Government Partners	Local WDB membership must have, <u>at a minimum</u> • one (1) member representing the State Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser) Office, with optimal policy-making authority • one (1) member representing the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, with optimal policy-making authority Other members may include representatives from agencies providing local area programs related to transportation, housing and public assistance, such as: • Housing and Urban Development or local Housing Authority • Local Community Services Block Grant <u>http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dhcr/offices/caalist.html</u> • Carl D. Perkins programs • County Board of Social Services • Human Services Advisory Council Director/Coordinator/Chair
Other Individuals	Local Elected Officials may appoint other individuals to the Board. These appointments should be consistent with the required membership of the board and should primarily reflect a business majority on the board.
Multiple Entity Representation	An individual may be appointed as a representative of more than one entity, except business representatives, if the individual meets all the criteria for representation, for each entity. [NPRM Proposed § 679.320(h)]
Multi County/City jurisdictions	In local Workforce Investment Areas that are comprised of more than one County and/or City, CEOs by agreement, may rotate membership among specific institutions and programs within any one of the categories.

Process for local WDB Nominations and Appointments

The Chief Elected Official (CEO) is responsible for the process of appointing members to the local WDB. Private Sector representatives, labor representatives, community-based organization representatives and several education representatives must be nominated by a highly regarded local organization in accordance with the requirements of Section 107 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and as stipulated in New Jersey's State Plan and any modifications thereto. The CEO may require each of the nominating organizations recommend a minimum of 1-1/2 individuals (but no more than two individuals) per each open slot.

At the time of appointment, the term of the member's seat is established. Local WDB member terms must be fixed and staggered over a three year period of time. "Fixed" means that they must be from one point in time to another. "Staggered" means that membership turnover must be less than one-third in any given year.

Organizations submitting a nomination must use a nominating form and be accompanied by a current resume or curriculum vitae. The local nominating organizations must submit their nominations to the CEO with a copy to both the local WDB Chair and WDB Executive Director.

In many jurisdictions, the local Board of Chosen Freeholders and/or the local Municipal Authority formally approve appointments to the local WDB. The CEO, acting on behalf of the Board of Chosen Freeholders/Municipal Authority is responsible for providing notification of the appointments in writing to both the local WDB Chair and WDB Executive Director. Similarly, the CEO must provide a copy of all letters of appointments and written letters of acceptance by the new Board member to both the local WDB Chair and WDB Executive Director within fifteen days. A copy of the written appointment, letters of notification of appointments and letters of acceptance must be maintained in the files by the local WDB Executive Director. WDB Executive Directors must also notify the SETC immediately when appointments to the Board are made and the term of membership. Board members serve until their successor is appointed.

Process for Filling Vacancies

When a vacancy occurs, the local WDB is required to notify the CEO in writing within 30 days of receiving the notice. In addition, the local WDB must notify the CEO of terms expiring 120 days prior to the expiration, or sooner.

When a Board Member's term has expired, the CEO must submit a written notification to the Board Member indicating either that they are being reappointed to the Board or notifying them that their term has expired.

All vacancies should be filled within 90 days from the time a vacancy occurs. The CEO must ensure that the vacancy is filled in the same manner as the original process. Appointees to vacant positions will serve until the end of the term assigned to the vacant position. Copies of all notifications must be kept on file at the local WDB office.

Local WDB Attendance Policy

Board members are expected to be actively engaged in the work of the local WDB, attending meetings as well as serving on local WDB Committees. The local WDB by-laws must include an attendance policy which establishes minimum attendance requirements at Board meetings and/or Committee meetings. Local WDB Chairs are responsible for notifying the Board member, in writing, that s/he is in violation of the local WDB's attendance policy and that the members' term has lapsed due to attendance requirements in the By-laws. An appeal process must be included in the by-laws. Copies of the correspondence must be submitted to the CEO and WDB Executive Director. The CEOs must fill this vacancy in the same manner as the original process and within the time frame described above.

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2015-02

SUBJECT: New Jersey Local Area Designations

Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 requires that the Governor designate local areas that are consistent with labor market areas in the State, are consistent with regional economic development areas in the State, and have available the Federal and non-Federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities under 29 U.S.C. 3151 through 3181 (Chapter 32, Subchapter I, Part B, of WIOA) and any other applicable provisions of WIOA, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools. This is to be done through consultation with the State workforce development board and after consultation with chief elected officials and local boards, and after consideration of comments received through the public comment process as described within 29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(E)(iii)(II).

Initial Designation and Timeframe

WIOA states that during the first 2 full program years following July 22, 2014, the Governor shall approve a request for initial designation as a local area from any area that was designated as a local area for purposes of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) for the 2-year period preceding July 22, 2014, performed successfully, and sustained fiscal integrity.

The period of initial designation for local areas will be from July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017. This covers Program Years 2015 and 2016. Local areas must submit requests for initial designation using the process included in this policy.

Subsequent Designation and Timeframe

WIOA further states that after the initial designation period, the Governor shall approve a request for subsequent designation as a local area from such local area, if such area has performed successfully, sustained fiscal integrity and in the case of a local area in a planning region, met the requirements described in 29 U.S.C. 3121(c)(1).

The SETC will create a policy and process for subsequent local area designations, which will be set forth with the Governor's approval in the New Jersey Combined State Plan. The State Plan will be submitted to USDOL by March 3, 2016. **The subsequent local area designation will be effective July 1, 2017.**

RESOLUTION:

As required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, the State Employment and Training Commission hereby resolves that local area requests for initial designation be reviewed and approved or denied, as outlined in this document, for a period of initial designation from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017. At such time, a policy for subsequent designations of local areas will take effect.

Attachment: Local Area Initial Designation Request Letter Template
Commission Approved: October 9, 2015

New Jersey Local Area Initial Designation Policy, Process and Definitions

Initial Designation Submission Items

1. Letter of Request approved by local workforce development board, signed by board chairperson
2. Proof of Approval of request by local elected officials, signed by chief local elected official

Initial Designation Submission Process/Timeline

1. SETC provides local areas with Initial Designation Request letter Template for local board signature and approval by Local Elected Officials: **October 2015**
2. Local areas submit signed request letter with local elected official approval to SETC: **December 28, 2015**
3. SETC and NJLWD verify local area performance and fiscal integrity for PY 2012 and PY 2013: **January 2016**
4. SETC approves or denies local area requests for initial designation: **January 2016**
5. SETC provides notice of approval/denial of initial designation requests to local areas: **February 2016**

Performance Success

An area shall be determined to have performed successfully, for the purposes of initial designation, if:

a) the local area has met or exceeded all common measures under WIA in the two preceding years, Program Years 2012 and 2013. To meet the measure, the local area must have achieved at least 80% of the performance target

OR

b) the local area did not meet one or more of the common measures in either/both of these program years and subsequently created a performance improvement plan or corrective action plan, which was approved by the SETC. The area must have followed through on the planned improvements and subsequently met or exceeded that measure in the following program year.

With regard to the above definition of "performance success," the State has provided local areas with a degree of flexibility in a manner consistent with pertinent State rules; specifically, N.J.A.C. 12:42-3.1 et seq.

Fiscal Integrity

An area shall be determined to have sustained fiscal integrity, if the Secretary of the United States Department of Labor has not made a formal determination, during either of the last 2 consecutive years preceding the determination regarding such integrity, that either the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the area misexpended funds provided under 29 U.S.C. 3151 through 3181 (Chapter 32, Subchapter 1, Part B, of WIOA) (or, if applicable, title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 as in effect prior to the effective date of such part B of this subchapter) due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provision involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration.

Appeals

Any unit of general local government (including a combination of such units) or grant recipient that requests but is not granted designation of an area as a local area may appeal that determination pursuant to the procedure set forth at N.J.A.C. 12;42-3.11 (Appeals). When utilizing the procedure at N.J.A.C. 12;42-3.11 for the purpose of challenging a denial of local area designation, one should substitute the phrase, "denial of local area designation" for the phrase, "corrective action and/or penalty determination;" and one should substitute the term "State Employment and Training Commission" for the term "Assistant Commissioner."

SETC Resolution #2015-02 - Attachment: Local Area Initial Designation Request Letter Template

Dennis M. Bone, Chairman
New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission
PO Box 940
Trenton, NJ 08625-0940

Chairman Bone:

On behalf of the ___ Local Area and the ____ Workforce Development Board, we are formally requesting the initial designation of the ___ Local Area, as outlined under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014.

As required in WIOA Section 106(b)(2), the ___ Local Area was designated as a local area under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, and functioned as a local area for the 2-year period preceding the enactment of WIOA in July 2014.

Under the prior Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, the ___ Local Area performed successfully and met or exceeded the required WIA performance measures for each of the last 2 consecutive years. The performance measures are recorded as Program Year 2012 (July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013) and Program Year 2013 (July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014). [In __ instance(s), __ common measure(s) was/were not met in __ Program Year; a performance improvement plan or corrective action plan was developed by the ___ Local Area in coordination with the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJLWD). Technical assistance was provided by these agencies and the performance measure was subsequently met or exceeded in the following year.]

The ___ Local Area also confirms that it has sustained fiscal integrity in this time period and meets the requirements of fiscal integrity as defined in SETC Policy #2015-02.

As part of this request, the ____ Local Area acknowledges that it does not, by itself, constitute a labor market area, and therefore commits to participate in New Jersey's regional coordination efforts, including regional planning, regional resource allocation and regional coordination of services, as part of the region identified by the State.

We thank you for your consideration of this request and look forward to serving the workforce system of New Jersey under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Sincerely,

Chairperson
_____ Workforce Development Board

cc: Harold J. Wirths, NJLWD Commissioner
Aaron R. Fichtner, NJLWD Deputy Commissioner
SETC Executive Director

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2015-03
SUBJECT: New Jersey Out-of-School Youth Definition and Youth Work Experiences Definition

Purpose

The Shared Youth Vision Council recommends establishing a clear and comprehensive definition for Out-of-School Youth and definitions of the various Work Experiences which the State and Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) must provide to New Jersey's priority youth populations. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires states and their LWDBs to invest prescribed resources to promote the creation and implementation of programs and services for Out-of-School Youth that provide both theoretical and practical methods of application. The Out-of-School Youth and Work Experiences definitions will ensure those investments will have the potential for yielding the highest returns.

Background

The State of New Jersey, the 18 local areas and the One-Stop Career Centers are responsible for investing 75% of WIOA youth funds to serve Out-of-School Youth populations, as identified by WIOA. The State of New Jersey and the local areas are required to invest 20% of WIOA youth funds for the purpose of providing New Jersey's priority youth populations identified under WIOA, with work experience activities.

The SETC's Shared Youth Vison Council (SYVC) is comprised of employers, state agencies, local area representatives, educational entities, community and faith-based organizations. The SYVC examined the requirements of WIOA, and considered the existing state definitions for In-School Youth and national organization definitions for Out-of-School Youth. The SYVC examined the definitions for the various work experiences that WIOA-funded youth programs must provide. The SYVC is proposing the attached "New Jersey Out-of-School Youth Definition and Youth Work Experiences Definition." The purpose of the definitions is to provide the State of New Jersey and the local areas with the language necessary to articulate the needs and direct the investments for priority youth populations, as prescribed by WIOA.

Upon formal resolution by the SETC, the policy will be posted on the SETC website and shared with the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, LWDBs, and One-Stop Career Centers. Subsequently, the policy will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor as part of the New Jersey Combined State Plan.

RESOLUTION:

As required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, the State Employment and Training Commission formally adopts the "New Jersey Out-of-School Youth Definition and Youth Work Experiences Definition." This policy takes immediate effect and will be included in the New Jersey Combined State Plan

Attachment: New Jersey Out-of-School Youth Definition and Youth Work Experiences Definition

Commission Approved: October 9, 2015
Commission Approved as Updated: January 19, 2016

New Jersey Out-of-School Youth Definition

Out-of-school, or disconnected youth are young people between the ages of 16 – 24, that do not have a high school diploma or, have a high school diploma and are deficient in basic skills, are not enrolled in school, and are disconnected from work and/or underemployed.

New Jersey Youth Work Experiences Definition

On-The-Job Training; means training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that—

a) Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job;

b) Is made available through a program that provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant, except as provided in section 134(c)(3)(H), for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training; and

c) Is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, taking into account the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant, and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate. [WIOA Section 3 (44)]

Pre-Apprenticeship; is a program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a registered apprenticeship program and has a documented partnership with at least one, if not more, registered apprenticeship program(s).

a) Approved training and curriculum

b) Strategies for long term success

c) Access to appropriate support services

d) Promotes greater use of Registered Apprenticeship

e) Hands on Training

f) Facilitated Entry and or Articulation

Community Service/Volunteerism; is the principle that an individual or a group of individuals will donate their time and energy as a civic responsibility. These types of activities are performed for the benefit of the community and are coordinated with public entities such as; nonprofit organizations, government entities, community and faith based organizations.

Internship; is a pre-professional experience that provides an opportunity to gain relevant knowledge and skills prior to starting out in a particular career field.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), whether interns are deemed "employees" of an employer under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) (i.e., due at least minimum wage and overtime compensation) depends on all of the circumstances surrounding their activities for the employer. If the following criteria apply, interns are not "employees" within the meaning of the FLSA:

a) The internship includes supervised practical training.

b) The internship is for the benefit of the interns.

c) The interns do not displace regular employees, but work under close supervision.

d) The interns are not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the training period.

Unpaid Intern; is an individual who performs work for an employer for the purpose of training, under the following circumstances:

a) The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;

b) The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;

c) The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;

d) The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern; and on occasion its operations may actually be impeded;

e) The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and

f) The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.

Externship/Job Shadowing; means to observe and evaluate an individual, typically a professional within an industry or a workplace of the individual's areas of interest.

- Externships are typically held for short time period lasting anywhere from a single day to eight weeks.

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2015-04

SUBJECT: New Jersey Regional Designations

Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 requires that the State identify regions in the State, after consultation with the local boards and chief elected officials in the local areas, that are consistent with labor market areas in the State, are consistent with regional economic development areas in the State, and have available the Federal and non-Federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities under 29 U.S.C. 3151 through 3181 (Chapter 32, Subchapter I, Part B, of WIOA) and any other applicable provisions of WIOA, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools.

Process to Identify Workforce Planning Regions

The state-led WIOA Governance and Planning Workgroup, comprised of Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) directors and State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) members, examined the requirements of WIOA, the labor market areas and regional economic development areas, and resources in the State, and considered the potential opportunities and challenges involved in creating regional partnerships.

The SETC adopted three regional designation options as part of "Pathways and Partnerships: New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development" in June 2015. Presentations of these three regional designation options were subsequently provided to the New Jersey Association of Counties, to LWDB Chairpersons and Directors, and One-Stop Operators, and Local Chief Elected Officials at regional meetings held throughout the state. In addition, the regional designations presentation was made available for written public comment.

The SETC Governance Committee reviewed the workgroup recommendations, the feedback provided through the regional workforce meetings, and the public comment received. The committee is now proposing that **Option 1**, as illustrated by the attached regional map, be used for the purpose of creating three (3) workforce planning regions in New Jersey:

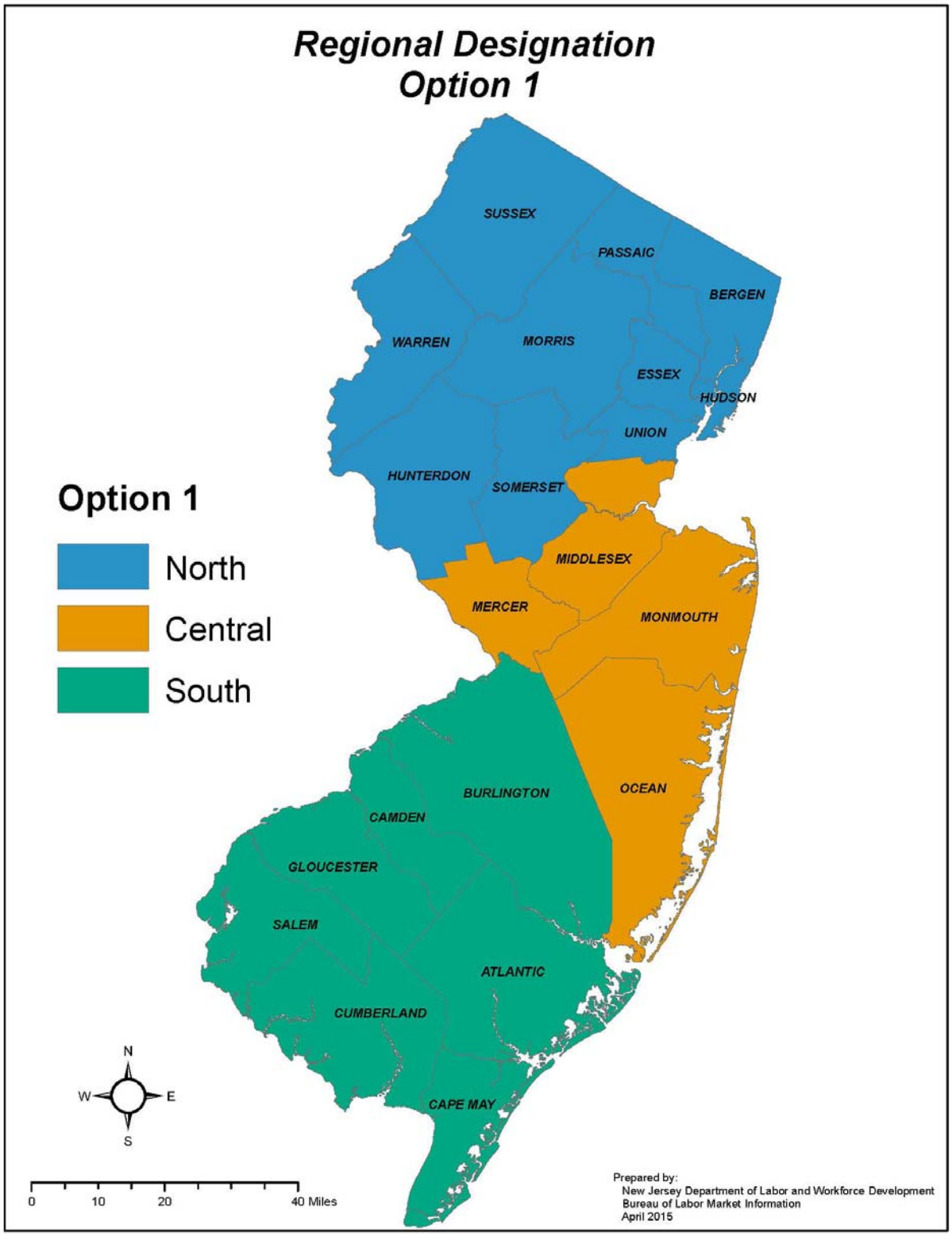
- **North Region:** Bergen, Essex, Newark, Hudson/Jersey City, Passaic, Union, Greater Raritan (Somerset/Hunterdon) and Morris/Sussex/Warren
- **Central Region:** Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean
- **South Region:** Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Cumberland/Salem, Atlantic/Cape May

Upon formal resolution by the SETC, the policy will be posted on the SETC website and the policy document distributed to the Local Chief Elected Officials and Local Workforce Development Board Chairpersons and Directors. Subsequently, the policy will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor as part of the New Jersey Combined State Plan, and be available for public comment as part of the State Plan.

RESOLUTION:
As required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, the State Employment and Training Commission hereby resolves that three (3) workforce planning regions be designated in New Jersey: North, Central and South, as illustrated in the attached regional map. This policy takes immediate effect and will be included in the New Jersey Combined State Plan.

Attachment: Regional Designation Option 1 Map

Commission Approved: November 10, 2015



OPTION 1 Map - Local Areas

North Region: Bergen, Hudson/Jersey City, Essex, Newark, Passaic, Union, Greater Raritan (Somerset/Hunterdon) and Morris/Sussex/Warren

Central Region: Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean

South Region: Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Cumberland/Salem, Atlantic/Cape May

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

PROPOSED POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2015-06
SUBJECT: SCALES Policy Recommendations: Adult Basic Education - WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act

Purpose
The importance of New Jersey's adult literacy system to the overall success of the state's public workforce system is clearly and concisely articulated throughout New Jersey's combined state plan under WIOA.

Background
The State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) focuses on improving the adult literacy delivery system. It is a bipartisan body created within the SETC by statute in 1999 to facilitate state and local policy development, planning and oversight in consultation with stakeholders in the area of adult literacy education.

In July 2015, SCALES created a taskforce that consisted of current SCALES members and local area adult basic education practitioners and experts. The taskforce held weekly conference calls and reported to the broader SCALES members through quarterly meetings. Over three months, SCALES was able to focus on three policy initiatives that can effectively strengthen both New Jersey's adult literacy system and the public workforce system. The recommendations are provided here as the **Adult Basic Education - WIOA Title II Policy Recommendations** framework document.

For more than ten years, federal program aid coming from the Workforce Investment Act has been allotted to a lead agency in each county or workforce area. The lead agency selects other eligible agencies in the region to also deliver adult literacy services, and manages the funding and compiles the required fiscal and programmatic data and reports. The grants are not managed by the local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). The aid is awarded directly to the lead agency, based on an annual application process to the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJLWD). The role of each WDB has been to review and comment on the application before it is submitted to NJLWD to ensure alignment with the local area's WDB plan.

Because no individual program has the resources and expertise to provide appropriate services to learners at each stage of their chosen career pathway, collaboration between programs is a necessity, rather than a luxury. WIOA requires programs at the regional and local levels to coordinate their activities in order to place career pathways at the heart of various services. For adult literacy learners to successfully navigate their chosen career pathway, there needs to be a partnership between adult literacy providers, postsecondary education and the employer system. SCALES will recommend three over-arching policy initiatives that have the potential to positively direct the adult literacy system in a more substantial role within New Jersey's public workforce system.

Upon formal resolution by the SETC, the policy will be posted on the SETC website and shared with the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, LWDBs, and One-Stop Career Centers. Subsequently, the policy will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor as part of the New Jersey Combined State Plan.

RESOLUTION: The State Employment and Training Commission accepts the policy recommendations in the attached Adult Basic Education - WIOA Title II Policy Recommendations framework document provided by SCALES, for incorporation into New Jersey's Combined State Plan.

Commission Approval: November 10, 2015

SCALES Policy Recommendations
ADULT BASIC EDUCATION
WIOA TITLE II ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT

This Act provides most of the aid for adult literacy, adult secondary education and English-as-Second Language in New Jersey. The purpose of the adult literacy programs is to enable undereducated adults to obtain the knowledge and skills for employment and economic self-sufficiency, and to succeed in their roles as family members and citizens.

Major Changes for Adult Literacy Programs As Required by WIOA

- Performance accountability measures focus primarily on employment outcomes, not on basic skills;
- Career pathways are emphasized as the way to move learners through adult literacy to postsecondary education and family-sustaining employment;
- It will be necessary for adult literacy to establish and maintain working partnerships with a variety of other programs and organizations if it is to achieve its goals under WIOA;
- The emphasis changes from enrolling students in "siloed' programs to transitioning them into postsecondary education and family-sustaining employment.

Policy Recommendations for the NJ State Employment and Training Commission

1. **How do we ensure that all levels of adult learners are adequately served by the New Jersey Workforce System?**
    - The educational needs of all learners, including access to career pathways, must be considered in designing the Workforce System. This is particularly true in respect to lower-level learners.
    - Programs need to tailor curriculum to each student's level;
    - For all level of learners, the Workforce System needs to provide the support (e.g. counseling, financial aid) that is necessary for progress through career pathways;
    - For lower-level students, there needs to be recognition of realistic student outcomes, including indicators of "measurable skill gains".

2. **How do we develop and support the program partnerships that are necessary to enable adult learners to move through adult literacy to postsecondary education and family-sustaining employment?**
    - State, regional and local collaborations are necessary if the Workforce System is to meet its goals. This is true because individual programs and

organizations alone cannot develop the programs that are necessary for students to transition from adult literacy to postsecondary education and family-sustaining employment. Assistance in developing and maintaining partnerships must be provided at all levels and local WDB plans must specify how One-Stop programs will be coordinated to promote partnerships.

- Local planning must include identifying, combining and coordinating multiple sources of funding and directing the resulting "consolidated' funding to adult literacy goal attainment.
- WDB plans for local and regional adult education networks will require that WDBs establish active Adult Literacy Councils representing all literacy providers in the area.

3. **How to develop the skills and knowledge adult literacy teachers, administrators and counselors need to function effectively in the New Jersey Workforce System?**
    - The state must develop, and adequately fund, a comprehensive, ongoing professional development system that enables adult literacy staff to meet new WIOA requirements,
    - The state must require WDBS to conduct joint planning and training for One-Stop, adult literacy and WDB staff directed toward establishing partnerships, resource sharing and appropriate and necessary student referrals
    - Professional development must utilize multiple delivery modes to reach part-time and other hard to reach staff. This includes a mix of in-person meetings, synchronous online events and resources made available online.

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-01
SUBJECT: New Jersey Local Workforce Development Board Certification Process for 2016

Purpose
The Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) are critical to the strategic direction, operation and oversight of programs and services in the local area. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 reinforces the importance of each Local Workforce Development Board by requiring the Governor in partnership with the State Workforce Development Board, to establish criteria based on specific items outlined in WIOA Section 107 to certify local boards.

Background
WIOA Section 107, and New Jersey's administrative code N.J.A.C 12:42-4, requires that the Governor shall, once every 2 years, certify one local board for each local area in the State. Such certification shall be based on meeting membership criteria and the extent to which the local board has ensured that workforce investment activities carried out in the local area have enabled the local area to meet the corresponding performance accountability measures and achieve sustained fiscal integrity, as defined in section 106(e)(2) of WIOA. All New Jersey Local Workforce Development Boards were certified under WIA as of June 2014.

The LWDB certification process for 2016 will use an updated process and items required for submission, as outlined below, which is slightly abbreviated from the 2014 certification process. In 2018, the LWDB certification process will return to the full process, and may contain additional items required by the State Employment and Training Commission.

Additional information concerning Local Board Certification, Recertification and Decertification is provided in the New Jersey Administrative Code, N.J.A.C. 12:42-4: Local Workforce Investment Boards: Certification, Recertification and Decertification, including consequences and appeals for local boards that do not successfully achieve certification.

Timeframe
All items identified in the 2016 LWDB Certification process are due to the SETC by **April 1, 2016.**

Date	Activity/Outcome
January 2016	WDB Recertification Process Rollout
Feb 2016 – June 2016	Technical Assistance and Capacity Inventory
April 1, 2016	Required Local Area Documents due to the SETC
May 16, 2016	Final Application Form, Signed by Chief LEO, WDB Chair and WDB Director
June 19, 2016	SETC vote to approve/deny LWDB Certification Requests
July 1, 2016	LWDB Certification Completed

Commission Approved: January 19, 2016
Attachment: *LWDB Certification Application/Checklist*

Application for Workforce Development Board 2016 Certification

Date: (Date Submitted) **Due by May 16, 2016**

To: **New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission**

This application for recertification is submitted on behalf of the (Area name) Workforce Development Board (WDB).

By signature below, we certify that the required materials and information have been provided to the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) as outlined in the chart below, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 12:42-4.

Submitted by: ***Signature*** ***Date***

_____ _____

(Name), (Title of Chief Elected Official), (City/County name) City/County

_____ _____

(Name), Chairperson, (Area name) Workforce Development Board

_____ _____

(Name), Director, (Area name) Workforce Development Board

Item Number	Required Materials and Information
1	A current list of local board members appointed by the chief elected official in a local area in accordance with SETC Policy Resolution 2015- 01 – Local Workforce Development Board Member Appointment and Process. The list will show: • That the WDB membership follows the guidelines set forth in the WDB Member Handbook • That the WDB has a 51% business membership • That the WDB Chair is a business member • The list must note if board development is needed, and the plan to achieve board membership compliance, including the recruitment and orientation process for new board members.
2	The Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Programs Budget, required under N.J.S.A. 34:15C-15e(4), and the Local WDB Staff Budget, for the extant and two preceding program years (Program Years 14 and 15). • LWDA Program Budget must include all workforce program funding allocations to the local area, including WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) and indicate the levels of service (participants) for each program. • Summary of Leveraged Resources, including Grants and Special Initiatives • IRS Tax Status Letter / 501(c)3 Status documentation must be provided, if applicable.
3	The local board's annual reports, required under N.J.S.A. 34:15C-15e(5), for the extant and two preceding program years (Program Years 13 and 14).
4	The local board's meeting minutes for extant and two preceding program years (Program Years 14 and 15) • Minutes should reflect regular meetings, held at least quarterly • Minutes should reflect the LWDB budget approval process
5	List of local board staff, including: • Name • Title • Office address • Name/title of who they report to • Percent of time dedicated to WDB activity

6	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between local board and local elected officials: • The MOU must outline the process for board member appointment and removal • Multi-county areas must provide the MOU which establishes the lead county, if a separate agreement
7	MOUs between the local board, One-Stop Operator and One-Stop Partners. • A Resource Sharing Allocation Agreement must be included in the MOU.
8	Youth Transition Plan from WIA to WIOA: 75% out of School and 20% work experience • The local area Youth Plan must be in place and implementation must be in progress. <u>Strategic initiatives</u> • Youth Investment Councils • Leveraging of partnerships <u>Operational Initiatives</u> • RFP process (securing all 14 program elements) • 75% out of school youth (recruitment and retention) • 20% Work experience. • Innovation/Promising Practices • Local Area Challenges
9	Regional Planning Activities: • Provide a two-page narrative summary of the regional and local planning activities held to date. ***For subsequent certifications, starting in 2018:*** *Local areas will be required to participate in the development and submission of a regional workforce development plan, as required under WIOA Section 106, in addition to the local strategic plan, required under WIOA Section 108.*

10	Local Performance Measures: As outlined in the Local Workforce Investment Boards: Certification, Recertification and Decertification Rule, N.J.A.C. 12:42-4.4(e): • Where the Commission determines that the local board has during the preceding two years failed to ensure that the workforce investment activities carried out in the local area have enabled the local area to meet the local performance measures, that the local board has failed to satisfactorily carry out its functions under N.J.S.A. 34:15C-15e and *20 CFR 661.305*, that either the local board, or any of its members, has engaged in fraud or abuse, as those terms are used within *29 U.S.C. §2832*(c)(3)(A), or that either the local board, or any of its members, has engaged in any of the prohibited conduct listed as cause for corrective actions and penalties under *N.J.A.C. 12:42-3.6*, the Commission shall deny the chief elected official's application for recertification of the local board. • The SETC will evaluate the local WDB's application for recertification based on the local area achievement of the 9 negotiated performance outcomes for the area's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding for Program Year 2013 and Program Year 2014. The recommendation for WDB recertification will be made with consideration for any corrective actions and penalties instituted for the local area under the Local Workforce Investment Areas and Local Workforce Investment Boards: Performance, Technical Assistance, Corrective Actions and Penalties Rule, N.J.A.C. 12:42-3. ***For subsequent certifications, starting in 2018:*** *The local area performance success will be determined using the WIOA Primary Indicators (effective PY 2016) and any additional performance measures identified as part of the State Plan.*

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-02
SUBJECT: New Jersey Subsequent Local Area Designation

Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 requires that the Governor designate local areas that are consistent with labor market areas in the State, are consistent with regional economic development areas in the State, and have available the Federal and non-Federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities under 29 U.S.C. 3151 through 3181 (Chapter 32, Subchapter I, Part B, of WIOA) and any other applicable provisions of WIOA, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools. This is to be done through consultation with the State workforce development board and after consultation with chief elected officials and local boards, and after consideration of comments received through the public comment process as described within 29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(E)(iii)(II).

Initial Designation and Timeframe

WIOA states that during the first 2 full program years following July 22, 2014, the Governor shall approve a request for initial designation as a local area from any area that was designated as a local area for purposes of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) for the 2-year period preceding July 22, 2014, performed successfully, and sustained fiscal integrity. The period of initial designation for local areas is from July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017. This covers Program Years 2015 and 2016. Local areas must submit requests for initial designation using the process included in SETC Policy #2015-02.

Subsequent Designation and Timeframe

WIOA further states that after the initial designation period, the Governor shall approve a request for subsequent designation as a Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) from such local area, if such area has performed successfully, sustained fiscal integrity and in the case of a local area in a planning region, met the requirements described in 29 U.S.C. 3121(c)(1). In addition, the SETC is requiring that the LWDA demonstrate its ability to coordinate planning with its regional partners, and fully support its WDB roles, through the Regional Coordination metric and WDB Certification metric, as defined in the Combined State Plan. **Requests from local areas for subsequent designation must be provided to the SETC by March 31, 2017. The subsequent Local Workforce Area designation will be effective July 1, 2017.**

Option 1: Existing Local Area, No Changes

The Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) requests that its designation be continued under WIOA, with no changes to its current area configuration. The LWDA provides a letter of request to the SETC and NJLWD, and a signed Agreement with the Chief Elected Official, using the process, timelines and templates provided in this policy. The existing LWDA must demonstrate its ability to work effectively with its regional partners, as measured by the Regional Coordination metric outlined below. The existing LWDA must also demonstrate its ability to effectively carry out the WDB duties required under WIOA, as measured by the WDB Certification metric defined in the Combined State Plan.

Option 2: Modification of Local Area

If a local area, after consultation with all affected Local Workforce Development Board Directors and CEOs, opts to be subsequently designated as a different Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) under WIOA, the Board Directors must contact the SETC and NJLWD **by December 31, 2016.** The SETC and NJLWD will then work with the Board Director and CEO(s) to plan the designation of the new LWDA, which will be held to the same criteria as other local areas seeking subsequent designation.

The new proposed LWDA must be consistent with labor market areas, align with regional economic development areas, must have available resources necessary to effectively administer activities under WIOA, must demonstrate performance success under the initial local area designation period, and must conform with New Jersey regional designation areas. The new LWDA must demonstrate how it will successfully achieve the Regional Coordination metric and WDB Certification metric, as defined in the Combined State Plan.

Examples of local area modification include: two existing local areas proposing to merge into a new combined single LWDA or various local areas that will be combined into a new single LWDA.

The new LWDA will then provide a letter of request to the SETC and NJLWD, and a signed Agreement with the Chief Elected Official, using the process, timelines and templates provided in this policy.

RESOLUTION:

As required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, the State Employment and Training Commission hereby resolves that Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) requests for subsequent Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) designation be submitted, and approved or denied, as outlined in this document, for subsequent LWDA designation beginning on July 1, 2017.

Commission Approved: January 19, 2016

New Jersey Local Area Initial Designation Policy, Process and Definitions

Option 1 - Timeline/Process for Existing Local Area, No Changes

1. Letter of Request, signed by LWDB Chair, with Local Elected Official Approval of Request, and CEO Agreement for Single or Multi-Jurisdictional Local Area: **Submit to SETC by February 28, 2017.**
2. SETC and NJLWD verify local area performance and fiscal integrity by **March 31, 2017**.
3. SETC approves or denies local area requests for initial designation: **April 2017**
4. SETC provides notice of approval/denial of initial designation requests to local areas: **May 2017**

Option 2 - Timeline/Process for Option 1 (Modification of Local Area)

1. Local WDB Directors must contact the SETC and NJLWD to advise of the desired modification to the local area by **December 31, 2016**.
2. The SETC and NJLWD will then work with the affected local area(s) to determine if the required conditions are met to enable this modification.
3. Letter of Request, signed by LWDB Chair, with Local Elected Official Approval of Request, and CEO Agreement for Single or Multi-Jurisdictional Local Area: **Submit to SETC by February 28, 2017.**
4. SETC and NJLWD verify local area performance and fiscal integrity by **March 31, 2017**.
5. SETC approves or denies local area requests for initial designation: **April 2017**
6. SETC provides notice of approval/denial of initial designation requests to local areas: **May 2017**

Chief Elected Official(s) (CEOs) Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) Executed with the Local Workforce Development Board(s)

This agreement ensures the local CEO of a single jurisdiction LWDA, or all local CEOs in a multi-jurisdiction LWDA understand and agree to the following items.

- Identification of counties and/or cities comprising the LWDA.
- Compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements In accordance with WIOA (P.L. 113-128), and organize and implement activities pursuant to WIOA and in accordance with requirements established by the Governor of the State of New Jersey for purposes of implementing programs and services under WIOA.
- Identification of the Chief Elected Official(s) in the LWDA who are parties to the agreement.
- Designation of the Grant recipient – Identification of the CEO who will serve as the local Grant Recipient responsible for the WIOA funds allocated to the LWDA.
- Designation of the Fiscal Agent – Designation by the Grant Recipient CEO of:
    - A local governmental grant sub-recipient or fiscal agent to assist the CEO in the administration of the grant funds; or
    - Acknowledgement that a Fiscal Agent will be designated, and that the entity will have reliable internal controls for financial management and disbursement of funds.
    - Membership of the LWDB – Recognition to appoint a LWDB. If the LWDA is multi-jurisdictional, then identification of each local CEO's role in appointing the LWDB.

Local boards should take steps to ensure that the MOUs with the Chief Elected Officials are kept current. The SETC will require the latest version to be submitted as part of the Local Workforce Development Board Certification process.

Performance Success

An area shall be determined to have performed successfully, for the purposes of subsequent designation, if:

a) the local area has met any additional metrics, including the Regional Coordination metric and WDB Certification metric, as defined in the Combined State Plan

AND met either of the following criteria:

b) the local area has met or exceeded all common measures under WIA in the two preceding program years, Program Years 2014 and 2015. To meet the measure, the local area must have achieved at least 80% of the performance target

OR

c) the local area did not meet one or more of the common measures in either/both of these program years and subsequently created a performance improvement plan or corrective action plan, which was approved by the SETC. The area must have followed through on the planned improvements and subsequently met or exceeded that measure in the following program year.

With regard to the above definition of "performance success," the State has provided local areas with a degree of flexibility in a manner consistent with pertinent State rules; specifically, N.J.A.C. 12:42-3.1 et seq.

Fiscal Integrity

An area shall be determined to have sustained fiscal integrity, if the Secretary of the United States Department of Labor has not made a formal determination, during either of the last 2 consecutive years preceding the determination regarding such integrity, that either the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the area misexpended funds provided under 29 U.S.C. 3151 through 3181 (Chapter 32, Subchapter 1, Part B, of WIOA) (or, if applicable, title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 as in effect prior to the effective date of such part B of this subchapter) due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provision involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration.

Appeals

Any unit of general local government (including a combination of such units) or grant recipient that requests but is not granted designation of an area as a local area may appeal that determination pursuant to the procedure set forth at N.J.A.C. 12;42-3.11 (Appeals). When utilizing the procedure at N.J.A.C. 12;42-3.11 for the purpose of challenging a denial of local area designation, one should substitute the phrase, "denial of local area designation" for the phrase, "corrective action and/or penalty determination;" and one should substitute the term "State Employment and Training Commission" for the term "Assistant Commissioner."

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-03
SUBJECT: New Jersey Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Programs Budget and Local Workforce Development Board (WDB) Budget and Staffing Requirements

LWDA Programs Budget – Background

Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) have specific oversight roles and responsibilities, including budgeting, which are outlined in WIOA Section 107. As part of the board's responsibility for strategic planning, the board must ensure that the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) program budget reflects the goals and priorities of the regional and local workforce plans.

LWDA Programs Budget - Process and Requirements

1. Workforce funding allocations are provided by the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJLWD) through Notices of Obligation (NOOs) to the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) for each new Program Year (PY), beginning July 1, 2016 (PY 2016).

2. The Local Workforce Development Board (WDB) staff will provide the local board with a draft LWDA Programs Budget showing all workforce funding streams, including the WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) program, any external workforce grants received, and other sources of funding for the local area. The budget must also include the anticipated Level of Service (number of customers to be served) under each program in the local area. A template budget will be provided by the SETC.

3. The LWDA Programs Budget must reflect the amount set aside for local board staffing requirements. Local boards should review and approve the LWDA Programs budget and the WDB Staff Budget at the same time.

4. The local board will review and approve the LWDA Programs Budget and the WDB Staff Budget in an open and public process. This process must include:
    a. Initial budget review by a WDB-led budget committee, or an existing WDB committee;
    b. Budget presentation and recommendations made by this committee to the full WDB at one of its quarterly meetings;
    c. Approval by the full WDB within 90 days of receipt of the NOOs by the LWDA.

5. The WDB must then provide the approved LWDA Programs Budget and the WDB Staff Budget to the SETC and NJLWD within ten (10) days of approval.

6. If the budget(s) are modified at any time during the year, the modified budget must be approved by the local board in the same manner as outlined above, and the modified budget must be provided to the SETC and NJLWD within ten (10) days of approval.

7. Failure to provide these budgets to the SETC and NJLWD may negatively impact the provision of workforce funds to the local area.

WDB Budget and Staffing Requirements

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) stipulates specific functions and responsibilities of the local workforce boards under P.L. 112-128 Section 107(d). Requirements fall within three primary categories: Strategic Functions; System Capacity Building; and Systems Alignment and Effective Operations. To provide the best opportunity for local area success, the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJLWD) are requiring a fiscal set-aside for Workforce Development Board (WDB) staff.

At a minimum, the staff must include a full-time WDB Director, two full-time professional policy staff, and a full-time support person to execute the WDB functions that fall within the three primary categories identified above. The staff must also operate the required councils and committees as outlined within WIOA and required by the SETC. Job descriptions that clearly identify functions to be performed by each WDB staff must be developed.

Staff Functions and Cost Classification

Staff functions are what influences the cost classifications of personnel. Costs are Administrative or Program and can be Direct or Indirect. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) defines Administrative Costs as a portion of necessary and reasonable costs that are not related to direct provision of workforce services. These are further defined around financial management, procurement and purchasing, personnel and property management, payroll, audit and general legal services, oversight and monitoring of administrative activities, developing information systems and procedures related to administrative functions. Administrative costs are limited to a percentage of the total award (program or grant). The CFR also defines direct and indirect costs, and indicates they can be either Administrative or Program. Direct Costs are costs identified with a specific grant or program and can be readily identified with a particular cost objective, and are program specific. Indirect Costs are costs shared among multiple programs or categories and are not readily identifiable with a particular cost objective but are rather shared across objectives. Indirect cost rates are a percentage of a specific direct cost base and are negotiated. Local areas negotiate independently to establish their indirect cost rate. If the local area has already negotiated an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency, that rate remains in effect until they renegotiate a new rate. For example, NJLWD has an indirect cost rate of 2.87% set with USDOL, which remains in effect through June 30, 2106. The local area fiscal agent should have the specific knowledge pertaining to the indirect cost rate for the local area.

WDB Budget - Process

Workforce funding allocations are provided by the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development through Notices of Obligation (NOOs) to each Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA). Local areas are then required to develop a budget (template to be provided by the SETC) that reflects all workforce funding streams, including WorkFirst New Jersey, all external workforce grants, and any additional sources of funding for the local area.

The LWDA Programs Budget, beginning with PY16, must clearly delineate a sufficient set-aside for the WDB staff. The local board will be required to develop job descriptions that define staff functions to ensure the local area can properly classify functions with cost categories of administrative, program, direct or indirect. The WDB Staff Budget and Job Descriptions must be approved by the local board and submitted to the SETC and LWD within 100 days of receiving the NOO, along with the LWDA Programs Budget, as outlined above. The contract between LWD and the local fiscal agent should include the budget that reflects the amount set aside for local board staffing.

RESOLUTION:

The State Employment and Training Commission hereby resolves that the Local Workforce Development Area Programs Budget and the Workforce Development Board Budget, including the required staffing costs, must be reviewed and approved by the Local Workforce Development Board, through an open and public process, within 90 days of the receipt of the Notice of Obligations by the LWDA, and provided to the SETC and NJLWD within 10 days of that approval. This policy takes effect for the Program Year 2016 budgets, starting July 1, 2016.

Commission Approved: January 19, 2016

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-04

SUBJECT: Local Area Funding Formula Allocations

Background and Purpose:

Under WIA, the funds were allocated using the federal formulae provided by USDOL-ETA. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) maintains the same basic categories of funding and provides some additional flexibility for states to set priorities for local area allocations.

New Jersey will distribute WIOA Title I funds to local Workforce Development Areas based on the following formulae. These formulae are designed to ensure that funds are allocated based on the best estimates of the number of individuals in need of services, and reflective of the priorities identified in the *New Jersey Blueprint for Talent Development*. The formulae incorporate the federal required elements. The formulae also use data sources that are reliable, available at the county and city level and updated on a regular basis. The "hold harmless" provisions under WIOA will apply to these funding allocations.

RESOLUTION:

The State Employment and Training Commission hereby resolves that the New Jersey will use the following formulae for distribution of WIOA Title I funds to local Workforce Development Areas. This policy takes effect beginning with Program Year 2016, as of July 1, 2016, and will be included in the New Jersey Combined State Plan.

Commission Approved: January 19, 2016

Youth Funding				
Percentage of Total Youth Funds			**Indicator**	**Explanation**
WIA Formula:	**WIOA Requires:**	**NJ Proposal:**		
33.3%	At least 23.3%	**40%**	Relative number of disadvantaged youth in each local area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state.	A disadvantaged youth is an individual age 16 through 21 who received an income, or is a member of a family that received a total family income, that, in relation to family size, does not exceed the higher of— the poverty line; or 70 percent of the lower living standard income level
33.3%	At least 23.3%	**25%**	Relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each local area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.	Any area that is of sufficient size and scope to sustain a program of workforce investment activities and that has an average rate of unemployment of at least 6.5 percent for the most recent 12 months.
33.3%	At least 23.3%	**25%**	Relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each local area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state.	The number that represents the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5% of the civilian labor force in the State; or the number that represents the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5% of the civilian labor force in areas of substantial unemployment in such State.
	Up to 30% at state's discretion	**10%**	Excess poverty in urban, rural, and suburban local areas.	Poverty concentrations.

Adult Funding				
Percentage of Total Adult Funds			**Indicator**	**Explanation**
WIA Formula:	**WIOA Requires:**	**NJ Proposal:**		
33.3%	At least 23.3%	**25%**	Relative number of disadvantaged adults in each local area as compared to the total number of disadvantaged adults in the state.	A disadvantaged adult is an individual age 22 through 72 who received an income, or is a member of a family that received a total family income, that, in relation to family size, does not exceed the higher of—the poverty line; or 70 percent of the lower living standard income level.
33.3%	At least 23.3%	**25%**	Relative excess number of unemployed individuals in the local area as compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state.	The number that represents the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5% of the civilian labor force in the State; or the number that represents the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5% of the civilian labor force in areas of substantial unemployment in such State.
33.3%	At least 23.3%	**25%**	Relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the local area as compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.	Any area that is of sufficient size and scope to sustain a program of workforce investment activities and that has an average rate of unemployment of at least 6.5 percent for the most recent 12 months.
	Up to 30% at state's discretion	**25%**	High school diploma attainment.	Lack of high school diploma.

Dislocated Worker Funding				
This formula utilizes the most appropriate information available to distribute amounts to address the State's worker readjustment assistance needs.				
Total Dislocated Worker Funds			**Indicator**	**Explanation**
WIA NJ Weights	**WIOA Requires:**	**WIOA NJ Weights:**	WIA and WIOA provide the same six categories for the funding allocations. The State decides the weight for each.	
20%	State Decision	**25%**	Declining Industries	Based on the total projected employment change in declining industries.
20%	State Decision	**25%**	Insured Unemployment Data	Based on number of Unemployment Insurance claimants.
20%	State Decision	**25%**	Long-term Unemployment	Based on number of claimants who have exhausted Unemployment Insurance.
20%	State Decision	**25%**	Unemployment Concentration	Number of Unemployed Individuals
20%	State Decision	**0%**	Plant Closing and Mass Layoff Data	An accurate source of data is not available at the state or local level.
	State Decision	**0%**	Farmer-Rancher Economic Hardship Data	An accurate source of data is not available at the state or local level.

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-05
SUBJECT: College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education

Purpose:
The State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) recommends establishing the College and Career Readiness Standards as the standards for New Jersey's Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) System. Equipped for the Future (EFF) standards are currently the recognized standards for New Jersey's Adult Literacy system. In order to create a consistent and comprehensive adult literacy system, the standards should align with the standards recognized by USDOL-OCTAE (Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education) and NRS (National Reporting System for Adult Education).

Background:
SCALES focuses on improving the adult literacy delivery system. It is a bi-partisan body created within the SETC by statute in 1999, to facilitate state and local policy development, planning and oversight in consultation with stakeholders in the area of adult literacy education. In carrying out its role, the Council is responsible for developing a broad-based State Literacy Plan, appropriate performance standards, system-wide impact measures, statewide benchmarks to evaluate adult literacy services, and advocating for professional development and information sharing for practitioners and policy makers.

In 2000, Equipped for the Future (EFF) were established as standards for New Jersey's Adult Literacy system. The EFF standards expanded the traditional goals of adult literacy reading, writing and math, to include a wider range of the skills adults need to be successful in their families, communities and work. The EFF standards created broad guidelines for New Jersey's Adult Literacy system.

In 2013, USDOL-OCTAE released the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education. These standards include a subset of the Common Core State Standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics that are most appropriate for adult education. The College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education are aligned to the needs of both employers and the post-secondary community. Many states have adopted these standards for their adult literacy systems, in order to meet the new requirements under WIOA. The College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Literacy not only meet the requirements of WIOA, the standards measure proficiencies up to a 12th

grade level and beyond. In turn, USDOL-OCTAE is revising the EFL descriptors for Adult Basic Education and Adult Secondary Education to reflect the CCR standards.

The NRS is the state accountability system for the federally funded adult education program. It defines the descriptive, participation and outcome measures that each state must report on adult education students, specifes the methods states are to use to collect these measures and establishes reporting procedures. States report NRS data annually to the USDOL-OCTAE using data tables that contain aggregated state totals. The data provide a picture of adult education students that USDOL-OCTAE uses to report about the program to Congress, other Federal agencies, states and the public. USDOL-OCTAE also uses this data to set state performance levels and incentive awards.

WIOA promotes better coordination between local area Title II providers, One-Stop Career Center programs and services, and the various workforce development partners. Better collaboration of One-Stop partners, implementation of proven EFF concepts and resources and alignment of college and career readiness standards, presents New Jersey's Adult Literacy system with the opportunity to improve. The opportunities for improvement include service delivery, leveraging of available resources, professional and curriculum development.

RESOLUTION: In order to better align WIOA Title II programs with the federally recognized standards and data measures, the SETC formally adopts the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education as the standards for New Jersey's Adult Literacy system. This policy takes immediate effect and will be included in the New Jersey Combined State Plan.

Commission Approved: January 19, 2016

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-06
SUBJECT: New Jersey's Definition for Employment First

Purpose

In April 2012, Governor Chris Christie declared that New Jersey would become the 14th *Employment First* state in the United States. According to the United States Department of Labor's, Office of Disability Employment Policy; *Employment First* means that competitive employment is the first and preferred post-education activity for everyone, including individuals with the most significant disabilities. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires states and their LWDBs to invest prescribed resources to promote the creation and implementation of workforce development and training programs and services designed specifically for individuals with significant disabilities. A unified *Employment First* Definition for New Jersey would ensure the public workforce system has a singular focus and vision that ensures all workforce development/training resources dedicated for individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, have the potential for yielding the highest return on investment.

Background

Employment First, a framework for systems change that is centered on the premise that all citizens with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life. Individuals with disabilities are a multi-skilled workforce resource for employers. An inclusive workplace promotes diversity, expands the tax base and creates an expanded pool of qualified candidates for available jobs. 'Employment First' is about creating an environment for individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, that empowers them with choices for their future, reduces poverty, shrinks enrollment in entitlement programs, eases demand on state and community based social service agencies and provides workers with a sense of achievement.

Employment First Definition

Competitive integrated employment will be seen as the first and primary option for all individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD), who apply through informed choice for workforce services.

RESOLUTION: The State Employment and Training Commission hereby resolves that the State of New Jersey and its local area requests for defining *Employment First* for New Jersey, as identified above, be reviewed and approved or denied, as defined in this policy.

Commission Approved: January 19, 2016

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-07
SUBJECT: *Employment First* Career Pathways Framework

Purpose

In April 2012, Governor Chris Christie declared that New Jersey would become the 14th *Employment First* state in the United States. According to the United States Department of Labor's, Office of Disability Employment Policy; *Employment First* means that competitive employment is the first and preferred post-education activity for everyone, including individuals with disabilities. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 places a greater emphasis on career pathways across its titles. *Employment First* strategies must be developed within a Career Pathways Framework to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including individuals with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities, have equal access to competitive integrated employment in the general workforce and opportunities for economic self-sufficiency.

Background

Employment First is a framework centering on the premise that competitive integrated employment is the first and preferred outcome for individuals with disabilities, and New Jersey commits to support the development of an *Employment First* Framework utilizing Career Pathways to improve competitive integrated employment for individuals with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Capitalizing on the work already done by the New Jersey Department of Labor in identifying industry sectors that engage employers and align the skills and training to the needs of targeted industry sectors, New Jersey's workforce development system will strive to:

- Increase the availability of integrated workforce, education and employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
- Increase the number of youth with disabilities who earn a post-secondary industry-valued credential or degree in their chosen careers;
- Increase knowledge among individuals with disabilities and their families of the variety of pathways that lead to competitive integrated employment; and
- Increase the number of individuals with disabilities who obtain competitive integrated employment.

RESOLUTION: The State Employment and Training Commission undertakes a commitment to support the development of an *Employment First* Career Pathways Framework to improve competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities, including individuals with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Commission Approved: January 19, 2016

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-08

SUBJECT: The relationship between the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) and the State Rehabilitation Councils (SRCs) for both the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI).

Purpose

It is recommended that both the State Rehabilitation Councils (SRCs) of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) be recognized as the disability advisory and policy development entities for the SETC. The two SRCs are able to provide the SETC with expertise, advocacy and data when necessary, as it pertains to disability employment and workforce related issues that will impact New Jersey's public workforce system.

Background

Under WIOA, State and Local Workforce Development Boards are encouraged to establish and maintain a standing committee that focuses on all the development of policies, planning, and performance for individuals with disabilities in New Jersey's public workforce system. The SETC first established a disabilities issues committee in 2001. In 2008, the SETC's Disabilities Issues Committee was rebranded as the Discoverability Committee. The committee's work focused on a Medicaid Infrastructure Grant that had various policy-related initiatives, however the work of the committee became more operational in nature and was less focused on policy development and advisory roles.

The two State Rehabilitation Councils (SRCs) were established in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The Governor appoints the members of the SRCs. The SRCs give advice to, and work in partnership with, DVRS and CBVI. The two SRCs assist their respective agencies with the development of state goals and priorities, and evaluate the effectiveness of Vocational Rehabilitation programs. The SRCs are a partnership of individuals with disabilities, community-based organizations, state government agencies, advocates, employers and other interested persons. They are committed to ensuring through policy development, implementation and advocacy that New Jersey has rehabilitation programs that are not only comprehensive and consumer-responsive but also effective, efficient and significantly funded. The SRCs are dedicated to ensuring that individuals with disabilities receive rehabilitation services that result in employment. The SRCs are performing many of the functions that the SETC Disability Issues Committee was tasked with providing for the SETC in the past.

The SRCs will provide the SETC with information as it pertains to the needs, wants, and barriers facing individuals with disabilities who are served by Vocational Rehabilitation programs within New Jersey's public workforce system. The SRCs are qualified to perform this function for the following reasons:

- Each SRC contains members who have the expertise and depth of knowledge to appropriately inform the SETC on the policy needs of individuals with disabilities.

- The SRCs conduct extensive statewide needs assessments of their customers, employees and employers, as well as ongoing customer satisfaction surveys.

- The SRCs provide oversight of programs and services for their respective state agencies.

- Each SRC has the necessary data that will help the SETC in making policy decisions that will further advance the opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Process

As appropriate, the chairs of the DVRS and CBVI State Rehabilitation Councils will present information, reports, and policy recommendations to the SETC for its consideration. Agenda items will be considered at the discretion of the SETC Chairperson.

RESOLUTION:

The State Employment and Training Commission hereby recognizes the DVRS and CBVI State Rehabilitation Councils as the entities which will provide disability expertise, policy recommendations and information to the SETC in order to improve New Jersey's public workforce system and its services to individuals with disabilities.

Commission Approved: January 19, 2016

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-09
SUBJECT: SETC Approval of New Jersey Initial Local Area Designations

Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 requires that the Governor designate local areas that are consistent with labor market areas in the State, are consistent with regional economic development areas in the State, and have available the Federal and non-Federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities under 29 U.S.C. 3151 through 3181 (Chapter 32, Subchapter I, Part B, of WIOA) and any other applicable provisions of WIOA, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools. This is to be done through consultation with the State workforce development board and after consultation with chief elected officials and local boards, and after consideration of comments received through the public comment process as described within 29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(E)(iii)(II).

Initial Designation and Timeframe

WIOA states that during the first 2 full program years following July 22, 2014, the Governor shall approve a request for initial designation as a local area from any area that was designated as a local area for purposes of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) for the 2-year period preceding July 22, 2014, performed successfully, and sustained fiscal integrity.

The period of initial designation for local areas will be from July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017. This covers Program Years 2015 and 2016. Local areas must submit requests for initial designation using the process included in SETC Policy #2015-02, approved October 9, 2015. Subsequent local area designations will be reviewed by the SETC in 2017, and will be effective July 1, 2017.

As shown in the attached summary, complete requests for initial designation have been received from 18 local areas. It has been determined that each of these areas has met the designation requirements, and has sustained performance success and fiscal integrity, as required under WIOA and SETC Policy #2015-02.

RESOLUTION:
As required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, the State Employment and Training Commission hereby approves the 18 local area designation requests received, for a period of initial designation from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017.

Attachment: Local Area Initial Designation Requests Received as of 3/29/2016

Commission Approved: March 29, 2016

Summary of Initial Local Area Designation Requests Received
3/29/2016

Under SETC Policy Resolution #2015-02, and as required under WIOA, local areas are required to submit a letter of request, signed by the local Board Chairperson and approved by local elected officials, for the local area's initial designation under WIOA. The period of initial designation for local areas will be from **July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017**. This covers Program Years 2015 and 2016. The policy provided a template letter for local boards to use.

Local Area	Request Letter Received	Board Chair Signature	Local Elected Official Approval	Performance Success Confirmed (SETC)	Fiscal Integrity Confirmed (LWD)
Atlantic-Cape May	12/28/2015	10/14/2015	2/25/16	Yes	Yes
Bergen	1/21/2016	1/15/2015	1/21/2016	Yes	Yes
Burlington	12/17/2015	12/10/2015	12/9/2015	Yes	Yes
Camden	10/15/2015	10/13/2015	8/20/2015	Yes	Yes
Cumberland-Salem	12/23/2015	11/25/2015	12/22/15	Yes	Yes
Essex	1/15/2016	11/4/2015	2/10/2016	Yes	Yes
Gloucester	12/01/2015	11/25/2015	11/24/2015	Yes	Yes
Greater Raritan	11/10/2015	11/9/2015	11/9/2015	Yes	Yes
Hudson	2/9/2016	10/27/2015	3/8/2016	Yes	Yes
Jersey City	2/9/2016	10/27/2015	3/22/2016	Yes	Yes
Mercer	1/7/2016	10/27/2015	11/24/2015	Yes	Yes
Middlesex	1/26/2016	1/26/2016	2/4/2016	Yes	Yes
Monmouth	1/20/2016	11/30/2015	12/10/2015	Yes	Yes
Morris-Sussex-Warren	12/8/2015	12/7/2015	11/23/15	Yes	Yes
Newark	1/18/2016	1/13/2016	1/15/2016	Yes	Yes
Ocean	12/8/2015	10/14/2015	12/2/2015	Yes	Yes
Passaic	1/28/2016	12/28/2016	1/26/2016	Yes	Yes
Union	1/22/2016	1/7/2016	1/21/2016	Yes	Yes

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-10
SUBJECT: New Jersey Additional Performance Measures

Background

In preparation to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, New Jersey adopted *Pathways and Partnerships: New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development* that includes seven policy goals and related strategic actions as a guide. Among those goals is data-informed decision making. New Jersey will make performance data on workforce development programs accessible to workforce decision-makers and the public. The State will examine and use additional performance measures to assess and guide training investments across federal and state workforce programs.

In alignment with the Balanced Scorecard Model, adopted by the SETC in 2012, New Jersey is adopting additional performance measures in accordance with section 116 of WIOA. These measures will be used to assess the performance of:

- local Workforce areas for WIOA Title I,
- local Workforce areas providing services through the WorkFirst NJ program (TANF, GA and SNAP Employment and Training), and
- providers of literacy services funded by WIOA Title II.

Co-Enrollment of WIOA Title I and Title III Participants

It is New Jersey's intent that, effective July 1, 2016 all WIOA Title I and WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser) participants will be co-enrolled in both programs; this is reflective of the new One-Stop service integration and will be reflected in the performance outcomes of both programs.

It is also New Jersey's intention to apply the WIOA Title I Primary Indicators to the WFNJ program; this will be included in future SNAP and WorkFirst Employment and Training Plans beginning July 1, 2016.

Core Performance Measures Required by WIOA

SEC. 116. PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM.

(A) PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The State primary indicators of performance for activities provided under the adult and dislocated worker programs authorized under chapter 3 of subtitle B, the program of adult education and literacy activities authorized under title II, the employment

services program authorized under sections 1 through 13 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) (except that subclauses (IV) and (V) shall not apply to such program), and the program authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.), other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741), shall consist of—

1. the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
2. the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
3. the median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
4. the percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (subject to clause (iii)), during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program;
5. the percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and
6. the indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause (iv).

(**ii) PRIMARY INDICATORS FOR ELIGIBLE YOUTH**.—The primary indicators of performance for the youth program authorized under chapter 2 of subtitle B shall consist of—

1. the percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program;
2. the percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program; and
3. the primary indicators of performance described in subclauses (III) through (VI) of subparagraph (A)(i).

(iii) INDICATOR RELATING TO CREDENTIAL.—For purposes of clause (i)(IV), or clause (ii)(III) with respect to clause (i)(IV), program participants who obtain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent shall be included in the percentage counted as meeting the criterion under such clause only if such participants, in addition to obtaining such diploma or its recognized equivalent, have obtained or retained employment or are in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within 1 year after exit from the program.

(iv) INDICATOR FOR SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS.—Prior to the commencement of the second full program year after the date of enactment of this Act, for purposes of clauses (i)(VI), or clause (ii)(III) with respect to clause (i)(IV), the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education, after consultation with the representatives described in paragraph (4)(B), shall jointly develop and establish, for purposes of this subparagraph, 1 or more primary indicators of performance that indicate the effectiveness of the core programs in serving employers.

Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I, WIOA Title II and WorkFirst New Jersey

1. **Number of program participants served by the program**
2. **Number of program participants exited from the program**
3. **Percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment as follows:**
    a. Disability
    b. Ex-offender
    c. No high school diploma
    d. Previously or currently in foster care
    e. Homeless
    f. Limited English Proficiency or Low Level Literacy
    g. Long-Term Unemployed (continuously unemployed for at least 12 consecutive months)
    h. Public Assistance customer

4. **Percentage of program participants responding to survey who are satisfied with their training/counseling after exiting from the program**

Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I ONLY

5. **Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification**
   The State will evaluate the WDB's local area achievement based on its ability to meet all WDB certification requirements.

6. **Number of High Quality Partnerships Established**
   High Quality Partnerships are those workforce and education efforts which are employer-driven and have developed a clearly defined mission and vision statement, with defined roles, responsibilities and impact measures for all partners. These partnerships will drive programs and investments with current industry and workforce data, and will focus on collaborative curriculum development based on industry need. All programs will integrate the use of career pathways, and provide both interim process measures as well as outcome measures, which will be particularly focused on industry valued credentials, employability skills, and experiential learning. It is additionally expected that programs will develop plans for sustainability beyond the life of any one funding stream.

High Quality Partnerships are characterized by some or all of these factors:

- **Employer Driven Partnerships:** Partnerships shall include private sector employers, and may include but are not limited to: educational institutions; nonprofit organizations or industry associations; and local or state government agencies.

- **Clear Roles and Responsibilities:** The program shall have clearly delineated roles and responsibilities for all partner participants, including a clear coordinator, convener, or backbone organization. Participants should have a shared vision and mission around a challenge area, and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions, such as may be found in a strategic plan.

- **Employer Valued Degree or Credential:** The education and/or training provided by the program leads to skills, degrees, or credentials that create advanced opportunities for students or job seekers in high-demand fields or identifiable career pathways. Programs should use existing career pathways models, or develop new pathways models.

- **Data Informed Strategies:** The program shall integrate quantitative and qualitative labor market or institutional data in identifying industry sector demand. This data will be shared broadly among all partner participants. The program will endeavor to provide education and/or training in a skills or credentials in-demand category as identified by the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Credential Review Board.

- **Collaborative Curriculum:** Curriculum shall be demand based, and developed in collaboration with partnership participants. The program includes at least one of the following: career awareness and readiness; mentorship; internship, apprenticeship, or other experiential learning; and/or employability skills training.

- **Program Effectiveness:** Program provides for measurable evaluation of the partnership which could include such tangibles as evaluation of improved skills, employment for students or job seekers, program growth, or increased funding. Additionally, the program shall lead to an industry valued degree, credential, or employment for students or job seekers. Program measures and evaluates job placement effort made by, or in collaboration with, a Partner Organization responsible for connecting students or job seekers to employment opportunities.

- **Sustainable Plans:** The program shall have a plan for continued funding of initiative, which may include single-source or a variety of funding streams, including braided funding strategies. This should include a plan for continuing staffing and resource allocation sufficient to continue or expand the effort.

7. **Regional Coordination**

   Three workforce planning regions are designated in New Jersey: North, Central, and South. The State will evaluate if each region has effectively administered their activities under WIOA which requires that each region engage in a planning process that results in:

   a. the preparation of a regional plan;
   b. the establishment of regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery agreements;
   c. the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region;
   d. the collection and analysis of regional labor market data (in conjunction with the State);
   e. the establishment of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate, for the region;
   f. the coordination of transportation and other supportive services, as appropriate, for the region;
   g. the coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers; and
   h. the establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures for local areas or the planning region.

Implementation

For New Jersey's additional performance measures outlined above, the measures data will be collected beginning July 1, 2016 (Program Year 2016) as a baseline year. Performance targets will be set for the state and local areas for Program Year (PY) 2017; the outcomes for PY 2017 will be published but will not be subject to penalties for PY 2017 under the Performance Accountability Rule, N.J.A.C. 12:42-3.

Resolution:

It is hereby resolved that the State Employment and Training Commission formally adopts the "Policy on New Jersey Additional Performance Measures". This policy takes immediate effect and will be included in the New Jersey Combined State Plan, 2016.

Commission Approved: March 29, 2016

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman* **Chris Christie**, *Governor*

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-11
SUBJECT: Industry-Valued Credentials

Background

In preparation to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, New Jersey adopted *Pathways and Partnerships: New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development* that includes seven policy goals and related strategic actions as a guide. Among those strategic actions is a focus on increasing the number of individuals in New Jersey who have earned an industry-valued post-secondary credential or degree. To support this goal, New Jersey is developing a list of industry-valued credentials based on extensive analysis of labor market data and based on extensive feedback from employers.

A credential is defined as a recognized degree, diploma, certificate or certification; awarded by an occupation. Industry-valued credentials will have the following characteristics:

- Valued and demanded by employers
- Portable – skills learned are transferable and provide broad opportunities
- Stackable – skills learned may lead to opportunities for continuous or advanced training and education
- Leads to higher wages, career advancement, and/or increased job security

The State will use this list to guide training investments across federal and state workforce programs. This list will also act as a consumer protection for those in search of training. Job seekers and those seeking career advancement can be assured that a credential is valid and recommended by knowledgeable employers, educators, and workforce professionals.

The Statewide Demand Occupations List still stands and will be maintained as required by New Jersey state law.

Process to Create and Recognize the Industry-Valued Credentials List

New Jersey will develop the industry-valued credential list on an annual basis using the following process. This effort is currently underway and a draft Industry-Valued Credentials list was released for public comment in March 2016. The final list for 2016-2017 will be released in May 2016 and will go into effect on July 1, 2016.

1. Analysis of Labor Market Data

Labor market analysts in the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) have initially identified credentials in demand by the seven major industry clusters in New Jersey. These are Advanced Manufacturing; Financial Services; Health Care; Life Sciences; Retail, Hospitality & Tourism; Technology; and Transportation, Logistics & Distribution. Credential information will also be included for the Utility and Construction industries. This research includes the review of New Jersey specific labor data and occupational employment projections. LWD has identified occupational employment trends by industry and wages, major employers, demand occupations, and demand degrees/certifications. LWD has also analyzed job-postings data to identify credentials and degrees that are included in employer's hiring efforts. Labor market analysts have also reviewed relevant labor market reports and analysis developed by established industry associations, universities and the federal government.

2. Feedback from Employers

The state's Talent Networks are being used to obtain feedback from employers and industry experts during the development of the industry-valued credentials list. Directors associated with our major industries reviewed and updated the draft credentials list prior to meetings with all Talent Network partners. Subsequently, ten industry-specific meetings were held with those partners to solicit additional employer feedback and create a preliminary list of industry-valued credentials. Among the topics discussed in the meetings were current credentials in demand, relevance of current labor market information, and the importance of credentials in the hiring process.

Expanded input from employers is being gathered through an on-line survey distributed by the LWD Office of Research and Information with the assistance of the Talent Networks and industry associations. The survey will be used to obtain direct feedback from employers on the value of various credentials and degrees.

3. Feedback from Stakeholders

In February, an initial list of industry-valued credentials and degrees was released for public comment. Educational institutions, workforce development boards, training providers and other stakeholders will be encouraged to provide feedback on the initial list.

4. Formal adoption of the list by the Credential Review Board

In accordance with state law, LWD's Center for Occupational Employment Information will create a Credential Review Board. This Board, made up of representatives from LWD, the Department of Education, the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education and the State Employment and Training Commission, will review the draft list, all available data and information and the feedback from employers and stakeholders. The Credential Review Board will establish the industry-valued credentials list. The Credential Review Board will make final recommendations and approve the list no later than May 2016. The adopted list will be published no later than May 31, 2016.

Process to Maintain and Update the Industry-Valued Credentials List

There will exist a need to update the list based on changes in an industry or the economy. In the first year following adoption of the list by the Credentials Review Board, the Board will be assembled at least once per quarter to review and update the existing list. Subsequently, the CRB will be assembled at least once every six months to review and update the existing list. Changes to the list may be initiated at any time by changing labor market conditions, a request by an employer or other responsible and authorized body, or by call of the CRB itself. A public comment period will be held for any proposed changes to the list prior to adoption by the CRB.

Goals

The State intends to create a workforce system valued by employers that also creates bridges for individuals to attain post-secondary credits. Our goal is to dedicate at least 80% of all federal and state funds spent on occupational training to programs that result in an industry-valued credential or degree. The five-year plan will proceed incrementally for each Local Area as follows:

State Fiscal Year 2017 *(July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017)* – 50%

State Fiscal Year 2018 *(July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018)* – 60%

State Fiscal Year 2019 *(July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019)* – 70%

State Fiscal Year 2020 *(July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020)* – 75%

State Fiscal Year 2021 *(July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021)* – 80%

Resolution:

It is hereby resolved that the State Employment and Training Commission formally adopts the "Policy on Industry-Valued Credentials". This policy takes immediate effect and will be included in the New Jersey Combined State Plan, 2016.

Commission Approved: March 29, 2016

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-12
SUBJECT: New Jersey Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 2016

Collaborative Process to Develop the NJ Combined State Plan

In 2014, the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law, setting a new direction for workforce development programs across the nation. New Jersey launched a collaborative effort to develop and implement a shared vision for talent development and to prepare for the implementation of this new legislation, beginning with the creation of a Combined State Plan. This effort involved the launch of a WIOA website, development of six workgroups of stakeholders and state staff, webinars to solicit additional input and a two-day "Pathways and Partnerships" conference with more than 300 stakeholder participants.

The resulting *New Jersey Blueprint for Talent Development* was adopted by the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) on June 16, 2015 to guide the implementation of WIOA and to serve as a foundation for this State Plan. In the fall of 2015, the SETC and LWD worked closely with stakeholders, partners and SETC Committees to further refine the Plan and to develop policies to fully implement WIOA and to further build a talent development system.

In December 2015, the SETC and LWD jointly hosted a two-day policy discussion and feedback session with key stakeholders in the workforce system. Key policies and program initiatives related to Board Governance, Performance and ETPL, Career Pathways and One-Stop Operations were shared with more than 100 representatives from the state board, local workforce boards, state and local partner agencies, community colleges, literacy program providers, and state and local workforce program staff. In addition to the verbal feedback received during these two days, participants were able to submit written comments through an online portal on the LWD website.

Throughout the planning process, workgroups met with SETC standing committees covering governance, adult literacy, youth, and performance to further enhance connection with the SETC, to develop the key policies which were adopted as resolutions by the SETC on the recommendation of these standing committees.

Public Comment Period and Ongoing Feedback/Review

The draft New Jersey Combined State Plan will be released for public comment, with comments due to the SETC on Monday, March 28, 2016. The Combined State Plan must be submitted to USDOL by Friday, April 1, 2016, with the public comment period completed. While the initial public comment time period is short, partners and stakeholders may provide feedback on the State Plan beyond that period. The Plan is a living and breathing document that will, over time, be reviewed and modified as necessary.

RESOLUTION:

The State Employment and Training Commission hereby resolves to approve the draft New Jersey Combined State Plan for WIOA, 2016 for submission to the US Department of Labor by April 1, 2016, as required.

Commission Approved: March 29, 2016

New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission