



NEW JERSEY

Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

2022 Modification



NEW JERSEY PYS 2022-2023 (MOD)

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OVERVIEW

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor that outlines a four-year strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce development system is a national network of Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all job-seekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. States must have approved Unified or Combined State Plans in place to receive funding for core programs. WIOA reforms planning requirements, previously governed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), to foster better alignment of Federal investments in job training, to integrate service delivery across programs and improve efficiency in service delivery, and to ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers. Successful implementation of many of these approaches called for within WIOA requires robust relationships across programs. WIOA requires States and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery, including through Unified or Combined State Plans.

OPTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A STATE PLAN

A State has two options for submitting a State Plan— a Unified State Plan or a Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for the core programs. The six core programs are—

- the Adult program (Title I of WIOA),
- the Dislocated Worker program (Title I),
- the Youth program (Title I),
- the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program (Title II), and
- the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program (authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III),
- the Vocational Rehabilitation program (authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV).

Alternatively, a State may submit a Combined State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for WIOA's core programs plus one or more of the Combined State Plan partner programs. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" (Sections II-IV of this document) where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program where such planning requirements exist separately for the program. The Combined State Plan partner programs are—

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))¹
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders program (programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

[1] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

HOW STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS ARE ORGANIZED

The major content areas of the Unified or Combined State Plan include strategic and operational planning elements. WIOA separates the strategic and operational elements to facilitate cross-program strategic planning.

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State's workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.

- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State’s efforts to support the State’s strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:
 - State Strategy Implementation,
 - State Operating Systems and Policies,
 - Assurances,
 - Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
 - Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.² States must develop strategies that look beyond strategies for the general population and develop approaches that also address the needs of target populations.

Paperwork Reduction Act: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) provides that an agency may not conduct, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to be 86 hours per state; including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Responding to this collection is required to obtain or retain the Federal grant benefit. In addition, responses to this information collection are public, and the agencies offer no assurances of confidentiality. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Investment, and reference OMB control number 1205-0522. Note: Please do not return the completed plan to this address.

[2] Target populations include individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in WIOA Sec. 3, as well as veterans, unemployed workers, and youth.

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

Unified or Combined State Plan. Select whether the State is submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that covers the six core programs. Unified or Combined State Plan. Select whether the State is submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that covers the six core programs.

Unified State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

Combined State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below.

This is a combined plan

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

Indicate which Combined Plan partner program(s) the state is electing to include in the plan.

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)

No

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

No

Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))

No

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))

No

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))

Yes

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)

Yes

Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)

No

Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))

Yes

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

No

Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))

No

B. PLAN INTRODUCTION OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Unified or Combined State Plan may include an introduction or executive summary. This element is optional.

New Jersey has chosen to the option provided in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to submit a Combined State Plan. This plan includes several additional federal workforce programs administered by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL).

The following programs, administered by NJDOL unless otherwise noted, are included in this plan:

Required Partners

- WIOA Title I, Adult Programs
- WIOA Title I, Dislocated Worker Programs
- WIOA Title I, Youth Programs
- WIOA Title II, Adult Basic Education and Family Literacy
- WIOA Title III, Wagner-Peyser
- WIOA Title IV, Vocational Rehabilitation
 - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)
 - Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CVI), administered by the NJ Department of Human Services

Additional Partners

- Jobs for Veterans State Grants (Title 38, Chapter 41)
- Reentry Employment Opportunities Program (Section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (Title V, Older Americans Act)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Program (Chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974)

Guided by the Governor's Jobs NJ, and his vision for a stronger and fairer New Jersey, the strategies and actions described in this plan also reflects the ongoing collaboration among the several state agencies that provide people-center programming, such as the New Jersey Departments of Education and Human Services as well as the state's economic development administration.

This Plan reflects the ways in which New Jersey's workforce development ecosystem is evolving in support of a stronger and fairer economy. Section II provides a comprehensive overview of New Jersey's current and projected job growth and the labor force requirements to fuel continued economic growth. The section also outlines the strategic framework for this evolution as well as myriad ways the Administration has leveraged technology, State investments, and the assets of federal programs to achieve two mutually reinforcing objectives:

- To ensure all career seeking New Jerseyans have the education and training necessary to access high-quality employment.
- To ensure businesses and employers that are offering high-quality employment in New Jersey can quickly and efficiently fill their talent needs.

The balance of the Plan documents the current and planned operations of the 10 federal programs covered in this Combined Plan.

Governor Murphy titled his economic development plan *The State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey*. In that spirit, this Plan reflects a segment in time – specifically from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2024 – and it anticipated that during that period these programs will continue to improve with the regular input of system customers, stakeholders, and the community at large. To that end, the State Employment and Training Commission, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and those leading the individual programs covered in this Plan welcome at any time input and insights from all who are impacted by this work.

Prior to and through the pandemic, a Future of Work Task Force was constituted by Governor Murphy and met before and through the pandemic. Its focus indicates the salience of work-related issues for the Governor’s Agenda and in its February 2022 report he speaks to the importance of the topic. The Chairman of the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission served on the Task Force along with representatives of government, labor, the community, academics and employment.

In a rapidly changing economy directly impacted by the creation of new technology, inequality, and the challenge of the climate crisis, the state has an important and urgent role to play in equipping our residents to be successful. We must act now to strengthen workers’ rights, including the right to organize; protect worker health and safety; and expand opportunities for lifelong learning.

Creating opportunities for new industries, well-paid work, and paths for career growth will be essential to our economy and to easing the fear and anxiety caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had an enormous impact on the state labor market and work environment. The pandemic has raised and renewed serious concerns around the health and safety and the economic security of workers. Specifically, the new prevalence of remote work may presage longer-term shifts in where, when, and how people work.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a Strategic Planning Elements section that analyzes the State’s current economic environment and identifies the State’s overall vision for its workforce development system. The required elements in this section allow the State to develop data-driven goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies for aligning workforce development programs to support economic growth. Unless otherwise noted, all Strategic Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs.

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions, economic development strategies, and labor market in which the State’s workforce system and programs will operate.

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 must include—

I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

II. EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

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.

[i]. [ii]. [iii]

[i] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, 2019 Annual Averages on 2018 Benchmark, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[ii] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Survey, June 2019 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, January 2020.

From 2011-2019, New Jersey added 355,000 private sector jobs, and experienced eight consecutive years of job growth. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the annual decline of 351,000 jobs in 2020, returning employment levels to those from a decade earlier. The State had nearly 3.85 million non-farm jobs in 2020, with three quarters of those jobs concentrated in nine (9) sectors. These data represent an increasing diversification of the economy, with strong growth in areas that offer competitive living wages. Below is a snapshot of the State's employment by major cluster in 2020.



For the year 2020, the following is an overview of average private sector employment, by NJ industry sectors. This is the framework used to define the NJ Industry Partnerships:

Industry Sector	Average Annual Employment	Average Annual Wages	Total Wages	Percent of Private Employment	Percent of Private Total Wages
Health Care	487,484	\$61,133	\$29,801,440,188	13.9%	12.7%
Retail trade	447,280	\$36,279	\$16,227,031,107	12.7%	6.9%
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	414,584	\$73,259	\$30,372,063,215	11.8%	12.9%
Leisure & Hospitality	391,518	\$26,347	\$10,315,241,007	11.2%	4.4%
Manufacturing	249,464	\$81,648	\$20,368,334,944	7.1%	8.7%
Finance & Accounting	221,991	\$128,793	\$28,590,899,156	6.3%	12.1%
Technology	183,352	\$133,942	\$24,558,610,587	5.2%	10.4%
Construction & Utilities	174,071	\$78,634	\$13,687,913,815	5.0%	5.8%
Biopharmaceutical & Life Science	76,433	\$163,365	\$12,486,476,249	2.2%	5.3%
All Sector Industries	2,614,933	\$68,815	\$179,947,712,791	74.5%	76.5%
All Private Sector Industries, NJ	3,510,614	\$67,040	\$235,350,988,074	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

There were nearly 3.8 million employees across all occupations within New Jersey in 2020. Of the top ten occupations, only Registered Nurses (\$85,720) had a higher than average annual salary (\$63,690) for the State. The top 10 occupations accounted for just over 20 percent of all employment in New Jersey that year. Those who move things by hand (Laborers of Freight and Stock) was the largest occupation, accounting for 3 percent of all employment. That occupation has an average wage of \$33,830, which is roughly half of the average wage for the State.

Occupation (6-digit SOC)	2020 Annual Average Employment	2020 Average Annual Salary
Total, All Occupations	3,782,730	\$63,690
Laborers of Freight and Stock	114,920	\$33,830
Retail Salespersons	98,690	\$32,470
Cashiers	84,180	\$26,930
Registered Nurses	78,590	\$85,720
Customer Service Representatives	64,900	\$42,460
Stockers and Order Fillers	61,420	\$31,580
Fast Food and Counter Workers	61,190	\$25,860
Office Clerks, General	59,900	\$37,870
Janitors and Cleaners	59,830	\$34,030
Packers and Packagers, Hand	57,170	\$32,430

Source: 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 (NJLWD) has conducted a deeper analysis of those sectors. An overview is below, and later in this Section is information relating to the skills and certifications that are most in demand by employers in these sectors.

Manufacturing

- The manufacturing industry sector contributed \$54 billion to New Jersey’s Real Gross Domestic Product in 2020, or about 10.1 percent of all state output (latest available from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis).
- In 2020, there were nearly 237,000 people employed in New Jersey in industries classified as manufacturing, or about 6 percent of statewide employment.
- Chemical manufacturing industries, the sector’s largest segment, employed nearly 44,400 in 2020, or about 18 percent of all manufacturing workers in the state. The state’s jobholding in chemical manufacturing represents 5.2 percent of U.S. chemical manufacturing employment.
- The state’s advanced manufacturing industry establishments paid a total of nearly \$20 billion in wages in 2018, or roughly 817 percent of New Jersey’s total wages.

Transportation, Distribution, Logistics

- In 2020, transportation, distribution and logistics (TDL) average employment totaled 401,000 workers in New Jersey; or 12.5 percent of the state's private sector workers, a higher percentage than for the nation (9.5%).
- The state's TDL employers in 2020 paid nearly \$30.2 billion in total wages, 12.7 percent of all wages paid in the state.
- New Jersey offers access to approximately 39,000 miles of public roadways, 950 miles of the nation's freight rail network and NJ Transit system (rail, light rail, bus and paratransit services) that's been able to carry over 900,000 passengers each day. The State is also home to many key transportation facilities necessary for a strong TLD industry cluster including several top-ranking seaports and two international airports.
- New Jersey's TDL contributed \$62.5 billion to the state's Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2020, the sixth highest dollar amount per state nationwide. The Journal of Commerce has noted that one-third of the nation's GDP is produced within 250 miles of the Port of New York and New Jersey.

Leisure & Hospitality

- Leisure and hospitality jobholding totaled 281,800 in 2020, or 8.8 percent of the state's private sector workers.
- New Jersey leisure and hospitality employers paid over \$8 billion in wages during 2020, or 3.4 percent of the state total. The average annual wage for the industry in 2020 was \$28,640.
- Three of 10 jobs in L&H are located in three counties: Bergen, Monmouth and Atlantic. Middlesex and Essex counties ranked fourth and fifth, respectively.
- Based on official employment projections for New Jersey's industries prepared by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, payrolls in L&H are projected to grow by nearly 49,400 from 2018 to 2028. The rate of job growth is faster than that projected for the state overall (12.7%, L&H vs. 5.6%, all industries).
- The Food Services/Drinking Places component is projected to create the second highest number of new jobs in the state (36,550) from 2018 to 2028 with an annual growth rate of 1.3 percent.

Retail

- Retail trade jobholding totaled 405,800 in 2020, or 12.7 percent of the state's private sector workers.
- New Jersey retailers paid over \$16.2 billion in wages during 2020, or 6.8 percent of the state total. The average annual wage for the industry in 2020 was \$39,800.
- Nearly 3 of 10 jobs (29.3%) in the Retail Trade Industry are located in three counties: Bergen, Middlesex & Monmouth. Morris and Union counties ranked fourth and fifth, respectively.
- Retail trade is characterized by a large number of seasonal and part-time jobs and by workers who are younger than the average for all industries. Nearly one-quarter (23.0%) of workers are under 25 years old compared with just over one in ten (11.7%) for all industries.

- The retail industry that posted the largest employment gain was also the fastest-growing in the state: non-store retailers (+4,200 jobs, or 34.7%). The significant gain could be partly attributed to an increase in online shopping and the influx of warehouses and fulfillment centers.

Finance & Insurance

- Despite a relatively small employment base (6.8% of New Jersey's total private sector employment) the finance industry contributed almost \$32 billion, or nearly 7 percent, to the state's Real Gross Domestic Product in 2020.
- New Jersey's finance industry sector employs more than 218,500 workers in the state with an annual average wage of nearly \$138,000.
- The finance 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 approximately 60 data centers located in the state, more than a third are located in Hudson County. (Source: datacentermap.com)
- In 2020, more than \$30.1 billion in total wages were paid by New Jersey's finance industry employers. The greatest concentration of jobs within the finance industry cluster is found in Hudson County (18.2%).

Health Care

- The health care sector contributed over \$44 billion to New Jersey's Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2020, or roughly 8.2 percent of all state output (latest available from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis).
- Health care sector employment is comprised of three industry groups: ambulatory health care services (49%), hospitals (34%) and nursing and residential care facilities (17%).
- From 1990 to 2020, New Jersey's health care sector added 234,200 jobs, while all other private sector industries combined had a net gain of 211,400.
- The outlook for New Jersey's health care employment is bright. From 2018 through 2028, it is projected that 64,860 jobs will be added, an annual increase of 1.2 percent.
- Health care employers paid nearly \$30.3 billion in total wages in 2020, or roughly 12.8 percent of all wages paid in the private sector statewide.

Biopharmaceutical and Life Sciences

- New Jersey's biopharmaceutical & life sciences sector employment totaled 76,510 in 2020, or 2.4 percent of the state's private-sector workers, nearly double the national concentration of 1.3 percent.
- New Jersey's biopharmaceutical and life sciences sector employment is comprised of three primary components: the pharmaceutical sector (43.6%), biotechnology (42.0%) and medical device manufacturing (14.4%). In 2020, the state's pharmaceuticals employment accounted for 7.9 percent of pharmaceutical job-holding in the U.S.
- New Jersey biopharmaceutical life science employers paid over \$14.1 billion in wages during 2020, or 6 percent of the state's total wages.

- The state’s highly educated workforce is seen in this sector as over two-thirds (70.7%) of its workers hold a Bachelor’s degree or higher: Bachelor’s (34.8%), Master’s/Professional (26.9%) and Doctoral degree (9%).

Technology

- In 2020, New Jersey’s technology sector accounted for 184,400 jobs, or 5.8 percent of private sector employment statewide. Nationally, the technology sector also accounted for 5.8 percent of all private sector employment.
- The annual average wage for the technology sector was \$146,100 in 2020, or nearly double the statewide average (\$74,100) for all industries. Employers in the industry paid more than \$26.9 billion in total wages, or about 11.3 percent of the total wages paid in all industries.
- Technology employment can primarily be found within the following sectors: professional, scientific and technical services (76.6%), and information (23.4%).

Construction and Utilities

- T
- The construction and utilities sector provides many employment opportunities for blue-collar workers to earn better than average salaries.
- In 2020, New Jersey’s construction industry averaged 151,600 in total employment, a decrease of 9,880 (-9.3%) jobs from 2019. The majority (64.2%) of these workers are classified as specialty trade contractors. The average annual wage for construction workers in 2020 was \$77,900.
- The utilities industry has seen a slight increase in its annual average employment of 2 percent over the past ten years. The industry employed 13,840 people in 2020. This represents an increase of 310 jobs over the past ten years.
- New Jersey is home to more than 380 utility establishments; nearly half of these organizations are classified as power generation and supply.

Over the past five years (2016 to 2020), the utility industry has seen an increase in its annual average earnings from \$118,600 to \$130,300 (+8.9%).

More information about the skill requirements of these sectors can be found later in this section.

[i]

[i]Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

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 105,000 jobs over the next 10 years. Along with Educational and Health Services’ 1.0% increase, Professional and Business Services are expected to gain nearly 60,000 jobs. The largest percentage growth is in the Leisure and Hospitality sector which is projected to add nearly 50,000 jobs. The biggest reduction will be in

Information and Government Jobs; however, due to the aging of that workforce and persistent challenges state and municipal government agencies report in hiring skilled workers, it is possible that retirements will exceed the job loss and there will be rich opportunities in that sector.

Industry (2-digit NAICS)	2018 Jobs	2028 Jobs (Projected)	Change in Jobs	Percent Change
Goods Producing	409,100	425,010	15,910	0.4%
Natural Resources and Mining	1,300	1,350	50	0.4%
Construction	158,000	169,440	11,440	0.7%
Manufacturing	249,800	254,220	4,420	0.2%
Services Providing	3,749,700	3,965,670	215,970	0.6%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	884,100	898,310	14,210	0.2%
Information	69,700	56,300	(13,400)	(2.1%)
Financial Activities	251,300	249,610	(1,690)	(.1%)
Professional and Business Services	675,700	735,070	59,370	0.8%
Education and Health Services	1,023,900	1,129,310	105,410	1.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	387,600	436,970	49,370	1.2%
Other Services	171,100	182,780	11,680	0.7%
Government	286,300	277,320	(8,980)	(.3%)

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections

Employment is expected to grow by 5.7 percent from 2018 to 2028 and add nearly 250,000 jobs to New Jersey. Anticipated demand for Home Health Aides is projected to grow by more than 40 percent, adding nearly 17,500 new positions. Four of the ten occupations projected to add the most jobs do not require any educational attainment and short on-the-job training, which provides the opportunity to connect more young people with early work experience, as well as those adults with no credentials who are striving to start along the path to economic self-sufficiency.

Occupation (6-digit SOC)	2018 Employment	2028 Employment (Projected)	Change in Employment	Percent Change	Educational Requirement/Training
Home Health Aides	42,660	60,110	17,450	40.9%	High school diploma or equivalent
Laborers of Freight and Stock	141,760	156,860	15,100	10.7%	No formal educational credential
Registered Nurses	85,470	95,090	9,620	11.3%	Bachelor's degree
Food Preparation and Serving Workers	46,070	55,560	9,490	20.6%	No formal educational credential
Software Developers, Applications	48,110	57,100	8,990	18.7%	Bachelor's degree
Waiters and Waitresses	60,280	66,560	6,280	10.4%	No formal educational credential
Personal Care Aides	16,270	22,140	5,870	36.1%	High school diploma or equivalent
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	52,200	57,540	5,340	10.2%	Postsecondary non-degree award
Cooks, Restaurant	21,220	26,490	5,270	24.8%	No formal educational credential
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	31,540	36,780	5,240	16.6%	Postsecondary non-degree award
Total, All Occupations	4,400,060	4,649,570	249,510	5.7%	

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections

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The occupations above are the ones that are projected to add the most jobs, 2018-2028. Those below are the occupations that are projected to grow the fastest. Only three of these ten do not require any formal education beyond a high school diploma while the three other occupations require a Master's Degree.

Occupation (6-digit SOC)	2018 Employment	2028 Employment (Projected)	Change in Employment	Percent Change	Educational Requirement/Training
Home Health Aides	42,660	60,110	17,450	40.9%	High school diploma or equivalent
Personal Care Aides	16,270	22,140	5,870	36.1%	High school diploma or equivalent
Physician Assistants	2,920	3,860	940	32.2%	Master's degree
Nurse Practitioners	6,250	8,010	1,760	28.2%	Master's degree
Massage Therapists	4,150	5,300	1,150	27.7%	Postsecondary non-degree award
Physical Therapist Assistants	1,670	2,100	430	25.7%	Associate's degree
Cooks, Restaurant	21,220	26,490	5,270	24.8%	No formal educational credential
Speech-Language Pathologists	6,750	8,340	1,590	23.6%	Master's degree
Phlebotomists	5,080	6,230	1,150	22.6%	Postsecondary non-degree award
Information Security Analysts	3,530	4,320	790	22.4%	Bachelor's degree
Home Health Aides	42,660	60,110	17,450	40.9%	High school diploma or equivalent
Total, All Occupations	4,400,060	4,649,570	249,510	5.7%	

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections

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[iv].[v]

At the opening of this section, an overview was presented of nine key sectors for the Garden State. In addition to traditional data sources, Labor Insight data from Burning Glass[i] provided a well-rounded picture of the certifications and the key knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that are most desired by employers in those sectors. While certifications and technical skills vary by industry, there are characteristics, such as Communication Skills and Organizational Skills, that are in demand across all industries. Further, Driver's License shows as an in-demand certification at or near the top of every list; for specialized skills, Project Management is on five out of nine lists for specialized skills and Customer Service is on eight lists – when they appear, they are often near the top.

Manufacturing

Top 10 Certifications in Greatest Demand	Top 10 Specialized Skills
Driver's License	Project Management
Security Clearance	Budgeting
Project Management Certification	Scheduling
OSHA Forklift Certification	Quality Assurance and Control
Certified Public Accountant (CPA)	Customer Service
Project Management Professional (PMP)	Sales
Six Sigma Certification	Packaging
CDL Class A	Repair
IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) Certification	SAP
Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	Forklift Operation

Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Top 10 Certifications in Greatest Demand	Top 10 Specialized Skills
Driver's License	Customer Service
CDL Class A	Scheduling
CDL Class B	Logistics
OSHA Forklift Certification	Forklift Operation
Security Clearance	Lifting Ability
Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification	Customer Contact
Project Management Certification	Repair
First Aid CPR AED	Sorting
Air Brake Certified	Commercial Driving
Hazardous Materials Certification	Sales

Manufacturing

Top 10 Certifications in Greatest Demand	Top 10 Specialized Skills
Security Clearance	Lifting Ability
Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification	Customer Contact
Project Management Certification	Repair
First Aid CPR AED	Sorting
Air Brake Certified	Commercial Driving
Hazardous Materials Certification	Sales

Leisure & Hospitality

Top 10 Certifications in Greatest Demand	Top 10 Specialized Skills
Driver's License	Cleaning
ServSafe	Customer Service
First Aid CPR AED	Cooking
Food Handler Certification	Scheduling
Food Service Certification	Restaurant Experience
Training For Intervention Procedures (TIPS) Certification	Guest Services
Personal Fitness Trainer Certification	Food Safety
CDL Class A	Food Preparation
Alcohol Server Certification	Customer Checkout
Registered Dietitian	Bartending

Retail

Top 10 Certifications in Greatest Demand	Top 10 Specialized Skills
Driver's License	Customer Service
Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB)	Retail Industry Knowledge
Certified Pharmacy Technician	Sales
Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification	Merchandising
CDL Class A	Scheduling

Leisure & Hospitality

Top 10 Certifications in Greatest Demand	Top 10 Specialized Skills
Cosmetology License	Customer Contact
OSHA Forklift Certification	Cleaning
Pharmacist License	Store Management
Optician	Sales Goals
Project Management Certification	Product Knowledge

Finance & Insurance

Top 10 Certifications in Greatest Demand	Top 10 Specialized Skills
Driver's License	Customer Service
Registered Nurse	Sales
Certified Public Accountant (CPA)	Project Management
Series 7	Customer Contact
Basic Life Saving (BLS)	Risk Management
Project Management Certification	Budgeting
Insurance License	Scheduling
Property and Casualty License	SQL
Insurance Agent Certification	Java
Certified Medical Assistant	Accounting

Health Care

Top 10 Certifications in Greatest Demand	Top 10 Specialized Skills
Registered Nurse	Patient Care
Driver's License	Scheduling
First Aid CPR AED	Home Care
Basic Life Saving (BLS)	Home Health
Home Health Aide	Treatment Planning
Basic Cardiac Life Support Certification	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) Certification	Customer Service
Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)	Long-Term Care
Certified Nursing Assistant	Occupational Health and Safety
Certified Medical Assistant	Customer Billing

Biopharmaceutical & Life Sciences

Top 10 Certifications in Greatest Demand	Top 10 Specialized Skills
Driver's License	Project Management
Project Management Certification	Budgeting
Project Management Professional (PMP)	Quality Assurance and Control
Certified Public Accountant (CPA)	Biotechnology
IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) Certification	Chemistry
Six Sigma Certification	Pharmaceutical Industry Knowledge
Certified in Production and Inventory Management (CPIM)	Quality Management
Six Sigma Black Belt Certification	Drug Development
American Society <u>For</u> Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Certification	SAP
Certified Quality Auditor (CQA)	Product Development

Technology

Top 10 Certifications in Greatest Demand	Top 10 Specialized Skills
Driver's License	Project Management
Project Management Certification	Customer Service
Security Clearance	Sales
Certified Public Accountant (CPA)	Customer Contact
Project Management Professional (PMP)	Budgeting
IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) Certification	SQL
Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	Quality Assurance and Control
Licensed Professional Engineer	Scheduling
Capability Model Maturity Integration (CMMI) Certification	Java
Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)	Software Development

Construction & Utilities

Top 10 Certifications in Greatest Demand	Top 10 Specialized Skills
Driver's License	Repair
Project Management Certification	Plumbing
Licensed Professional Engineer	Customer Service
Environmental Protection Agency Certification	Scheduling
Project Management Professional (PMP)	HVAC
Electrician Certification	Talent Acquisition
Certified Public Accountant (CPA)	Project Management
CDL Class A	Export Compliance
Occupational Safety and Health Administration Certification	Sales
OSHA Forklift Certification	Budgeting

As noted above, these lists are generated from Burning Glass Technologies Inc.'s Labor Insight tool. While this information is extremely useful, it is just the foundation for NJ's work moving forward. As indicated elsewhere in this Plan, New Jersey launched its Industry Partnerships in 2020. As a critical component of this work, businesses in key sectors will be engaged to help turn the information above into actionable intelligence to guide the investment of resources to fuel job growth and employer prosperity in the Garden State.

[i]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.

[i] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[ii] Burning Glass Technologies Inc., Labor Insight, Prepared by New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, January 2020

[iii] 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.

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 WIOA⁴. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups⁵ in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes—

[4] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

[5] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

I. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.

II. LABOR MARKET TRENDS

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

III. EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

IV. SKILL GAPS

Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

[i]·[ii]

New Jersey’s economy had been on an upward trajectory since the end of the Great Recession in 2009, enjoying one of the longest expansions in state history. By the beginning of 2020, there were 4.5M residents in the labor force. The average unemployment rate had steadily decreased over the decade from 10 percent to nearly 3 percent, levels that had not been seen in the last 45 years. Although the labor force participation rate had also been in steady decline, the employment to population ratio edged upward. In basic economic terms, the state was approaching full employment, a situation where nearly everyone who wanted a job could find one.

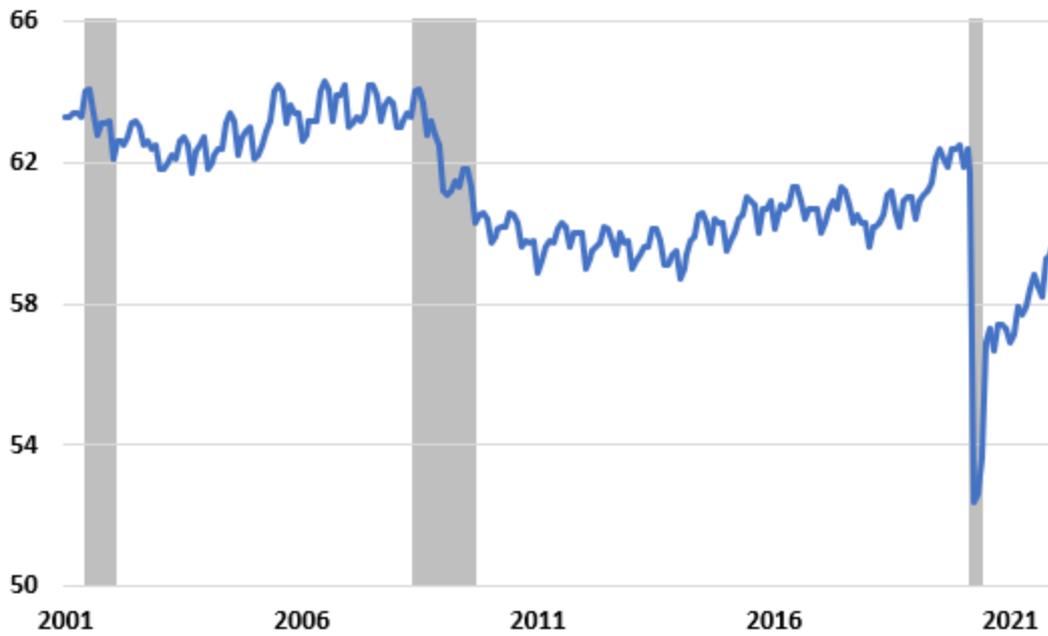
The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in early Spring 2020 had a drastic impact on the economy that resulted in scale-altering effects to many employment metrics. The unemployment rate spiked to more than 16 percent as nearly 700,000 jobs were lost. With so many out of work for some time, the employment to population ratio showed a downward spike from a monthly reading greater than 60 percent to nearly 52 percent in April 2020.

Both the quick, severe decline and rapid recovery of these economic conditions over the past two years have been unprecedented. More than 300,000 residents became employed over the Summer of 2020, and the monthly job growth has continued. The unemployment rate quickly declined as well, and while it is still higher than the pre-pandemic months, it is approaching those levels. The slow but steady decline labor force participation rate over the past decade appears to have leveled off in the 63 to 64 percent range, down from 67 percent a decade ago.

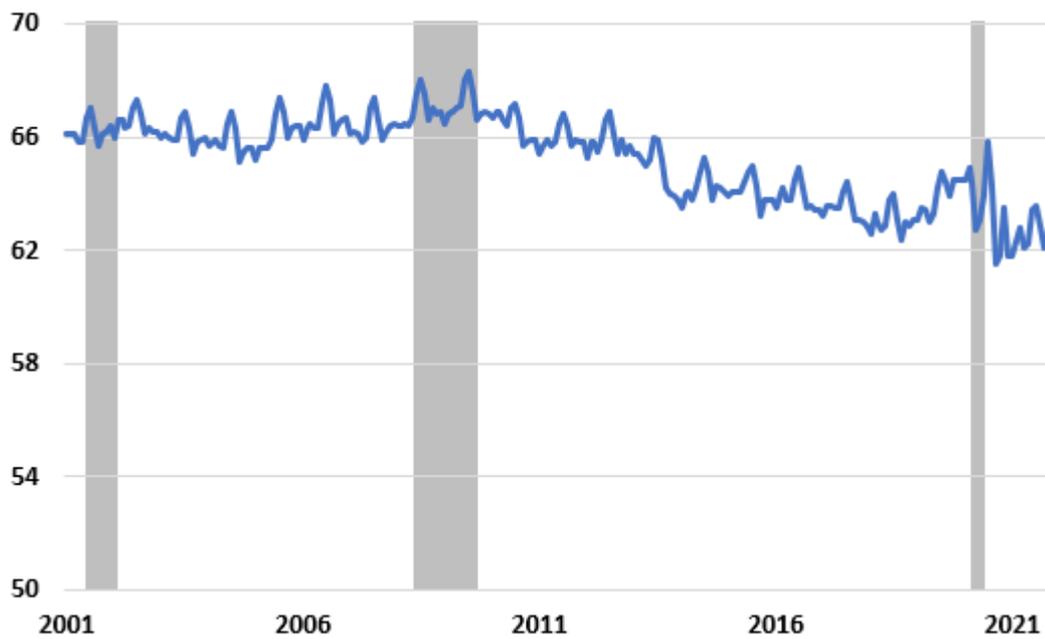
Unemployment and Labor Force Participation Rate Trends, 2001-2021



Employment to Population Ratio (%)



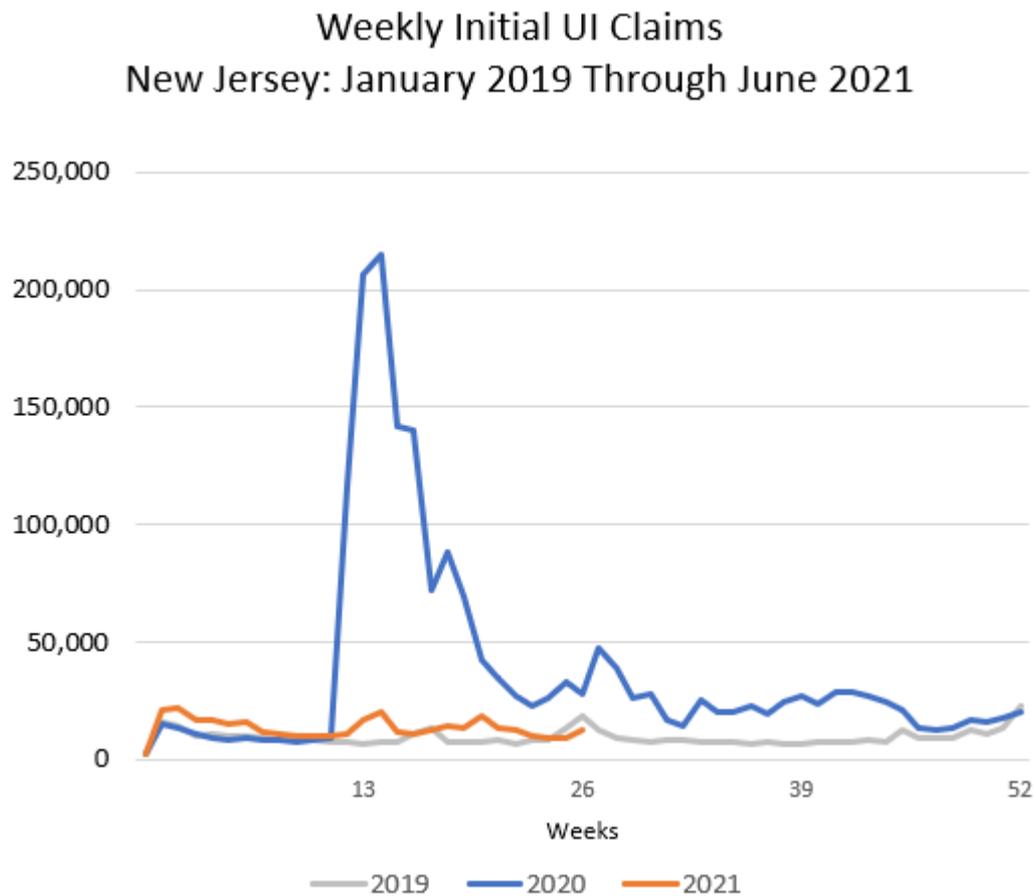
Labor Force Participation Rate (%)



Source: NJDOL, Division of Economic and Demographic Research, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, annual averages

Characteristics of Unemployment Insurance Claimants[iii]

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are also evident in the weekly reading of initial claimants for unemployment insurance. The weekly counts in New Jersey during a good economy typically range from 10 to 20 thousand. Starting in late March 2020, there were five consecutive weeks where the number of people filing for unemployment insurance topped 100,000 and a two-week stretch that spiked over 200,000 claims. There was a subsequent rapid decline during the summer months and this measure is nearing pre-pandemic levels.



Due to the nature of the pandemic, many people had very different experiences in terms of how their employment was affected. Some types of industries like hospitals and grocery store retailers were deemed essential, and workers employed these areas largely did not face unemployment. Other sectors that require face to face interaction, like dentist’s offices and beauty salons, were intensely affected and their workers filed for unemployment in record numbers. The top three sectors that were most adversely affected were accommodation and food services, health care and social assistance, and retail trade.

Demographically, women were far more likely to file a claim for benefits than men in the early stages, as many service-providing establishments were either forced to trim payrolls to meet demand or were temporarily closed. There were early signs that younger workers were hit hard, but those trends quickly evened out. Education played a large role in determining who was more likely to become unemployed as nearly three quarters of all claimants reported earning less than a Bachelor’s degree. Lastly, it was food services and sales workers who filed the most claims.

Youth Workers[iv]

On average between 2015 and 2019, there were just over 1M residents aged 16-24 in New Jersey. Of these, 32.2 percent of 16-19 year olds participated in the labor force and 72.1 percent of 20-24 year olds participated. Youth unemployment remains high, with an average rate of 17.9 percent and 11.2 percent for 16-19 year olds and 20-24 year olds, respectively. The average labor force participation rate for 16-19 year olds was 26.3 percent; for 20-24 year olds it was 63.7 percent. These data have inspired several of the youth-focused strategies discussed in this Plan, as early engagement in the labor force is a predictor of long term education and career success.

Older Workers[v]

Between 2015 and 2019 there was an annual average of 2,611,200 individuals aged 55 or older in New Jersey, an increase of over 460,00 residents in that category over the last five-year period, 2010-2014. As would be expected, labor force participation rates begin to decrease at 55, and drop dramatically for the 65-74 age group. Unemployment rates for this group tend to be a bit lower than younger age groups.

Age Group	Labor Force Participation Rate	Employment to Population Ratio	Unemployment Rate
55-59	77.7%	74.5%	4.2%
60-64	64.8%	62.1%	4.1%
65-74	31.3%	30.0%	4.2%
75 Years and Older	7.9%	7.6%	4.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 2019 5-Year Estimates

Veteran Workers[vi]

From 2015-2019, there was an annual average of over 99,000 veterans in New Jersey's civilian labor force. Of those, nearly 94,000 were, on average, employed. Of the approximately 5,000 of the state's veterans who were unemployed, the highest rate by far was for those 18 to 34 years of age at 6.97 percent, followed by those 55-64 years of age at 5.13 percent. 35-54 year olds experienced an unemployment rate of 4.86 percent, roughly on par with their non-veteran peer age group for the period.

Individuals with Disabilities[vii].[viii].[ix]

According to the American Community Survey, there was an annual average of more than 404,000 individuals with disabilities between 2015 and 2019 residing in the Garden State. Among this population, 44.2 percent participated in the workforce during the period with an unemployment rate of 12.5 percent. While this rate is 6.1 percentage points lower than the 2010-2014 annual average, it is still unacceptably high. Recognizing this, Governor Murphy included a \$10M tax credit in his minimum wage law specifically to help individuals with disabilities join the workforce.

From 2015-2019, nearly a quarter of the working individuals with disabilities were employed in the educational services, health care and social assistance industry. The top five industries of employment are listed below.

Industry	Percent of Working Individuals with Disabilities Employed in the Industry
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	24.0%
Retail trade	13.4%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	11.7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	8.6%
Manufacturing	7.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 2019 5-Year Estimates

Low-income Individuals[x]

Between 2015 and 2019, the average poverty rate in New Jersey was 10.0 percent, with just more than 869,000 individuals with income below the poverty level in the previous 12 months. Just over 244,000 – or just under over 28 percent – of New Jersey residents living in poverty were in the labor force, with an average unemployment rate of over 23.5 percent.

English language learners[xi].[xiii]

In New Jersey, 38.6 percent of the population over the age of five years old has a primary language other than English and speaks English less than “very well”. NJDOL continues to work with all state and local partners to ensure equitable access to programs serving those in need of adult basic education (ABE), adult secondary education (ASE) and for English language Learners (ELLs); as such, NJDOL is committed to utilizing federal and state funding to support Title II programs, to develop career pathways, and to cultivate other facets of adult literacy initiatives throughout the state.

Transgender and/or LGBTQI populations

The New Jersey Transgender Equality Task Force formed by Governor Murphy cites in its *Addressing Discrimination Against Transgender New Jerseyans* the recommendation that *NJDOL...support the specialized employment programs for the transgender and/or the LGBTQI population...The report further recommends the consideration of funding and incentives to assist the population with ...securing meaningful employment, job referrals, career coaching, resume reviewing... and other services. In its discussion, the Task Force cites the U.S. Transgender Survey for data regarding barriers and increased unemployment among the population.*

[i]

As described in the previous section, New Jersey’s economy is strengthening for the overall population, with nearly 4.5M residents in the labor force. The state 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.

In September 2019, Governor Murphy's newly created Future of Work Task Force began its work. The Task Force, chaired by NJ Chief Innovation Officer Dr. Beth Simone Noveck, is comprised of leaders and experts from academia, labor, business, and policy; the SETC Chairman is an ex-officio member. Its mission is to understand and assess the impact of technological advancement on New Jersey's residents, and to develop new solutions for the challenges the state's workforce faces.

To provide a shared foundation for the Task Force's work and to inform all workforce planning in New Jersey, NJDOL created [Future of Work](#), which can be accessed here. The Task Force recently released the *NJ Future of Work Task Force – Road Map and Recommendations, February 2022* which can be accessed at fowtf.innovation.nj.gov. The trends highlighted include:

- New Jersey has the sixth highest median household income in the nation (\$82,545) and the fifth lowest poverty rate (9.2 percent). However, wealth and poverty are unevenly distributed across the state's geography and population subgroups, and New Jersey ranks 10th among states in income inequity. For example, Camden has a median household income of about \$27,000 and a 36 percent poverty rate. Further, poverty is significantly higher for adults without a high school diploma, Black/African American and Latinx residents, people with disabilities, un-naturalized foreign-born residents, and children from birth to age four.
- New Jersey has a 91 percent overall high school graduation rate, outpacing its bordering states: Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New York. However, here too inequities exist. There is a substantial gap between the graduation rates of white and Asian high school students and those of Black/African American and Latinx students.
-
- Unemployment rates also vary significantly by racial/ethnic group. In 2021, the annual average unemployment rate was 9.6 percent for Blacks/African Americans, compared to 5.5 percent for Whites and 7.1 percent for Hispanics.
- Jobs that require lower- and middle skills and often perform routine tasks are more susceptible to replacement or augmentation by technology than are those requiring at least some postsecondary education. Workers in lower wages jobs are more likely to be adversely affected, and the skills that are in demand may shift quickly, adding to the challenges of upskilling and reskilling the workforce. If increased productivity does not translate into higher wages for this group of workers, it may lead to greater income inequality.

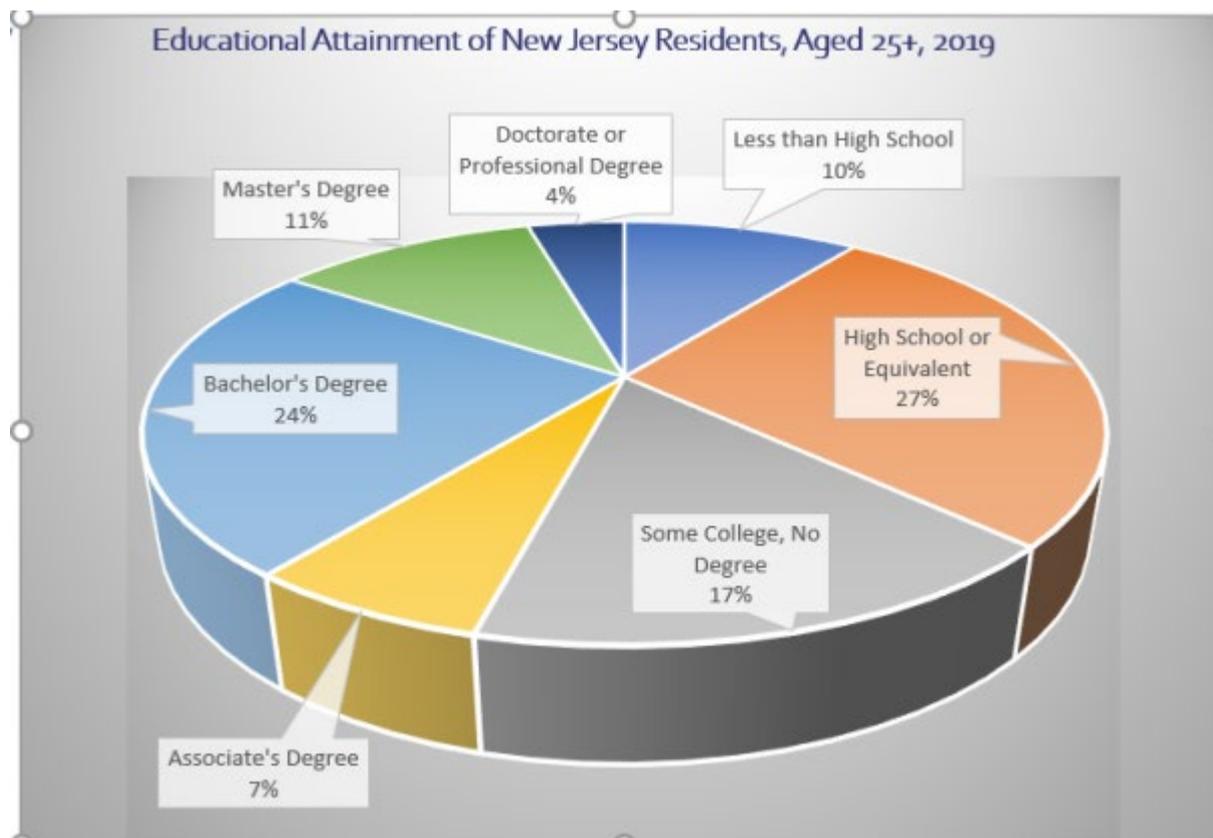
These trends are at the core of why Governor Murphy believes in a stronger and fairer New Jersey, and the disparities that will be addressed by Jobs NJ and all the state efforts that fall under its mantle, including the programs within this Combined Plan. As we build back from the pandemic, the efforts made at the State and local level to continue to identify skill gaps, recognize underutilized populations within certain industries and occupations, and offer real-

time labor market information to decision makers is critical to the continued success of New Jersey's workforce and economy.

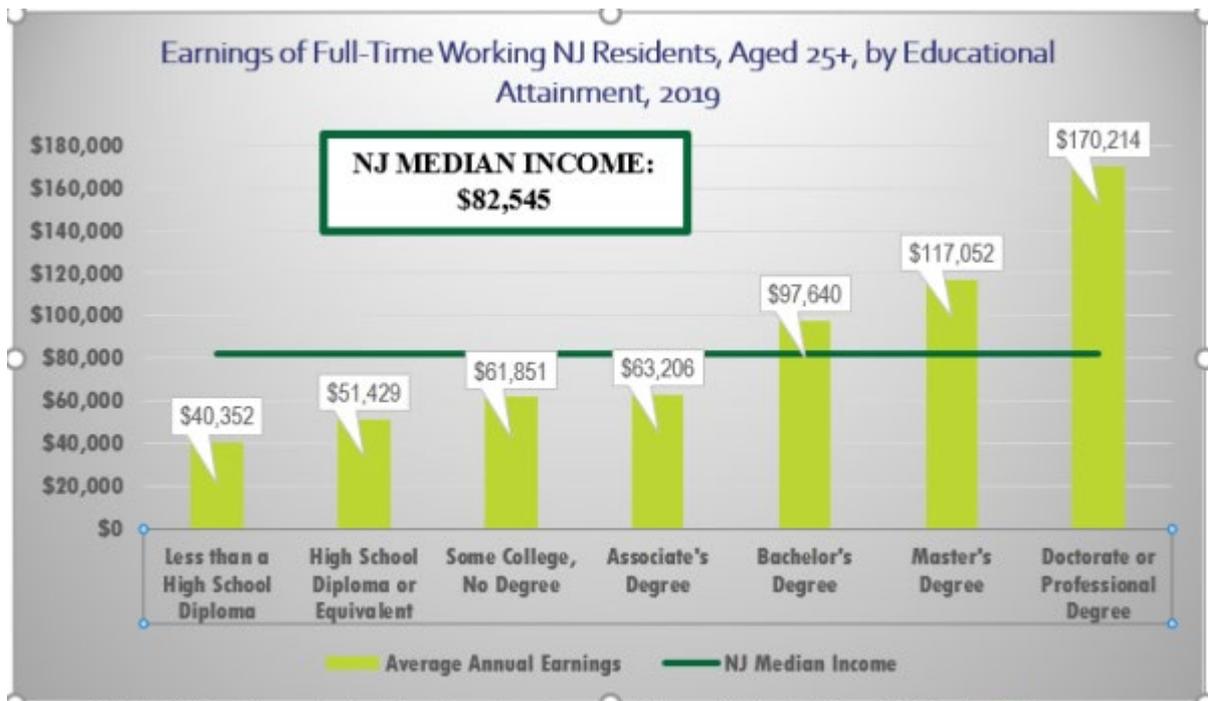
[i] Website: New Jersey's Economy: Planning for the Future of Work in the Garden State, <https://arcg.is/PjGzW>; accessed February 21, 2020.

[i]

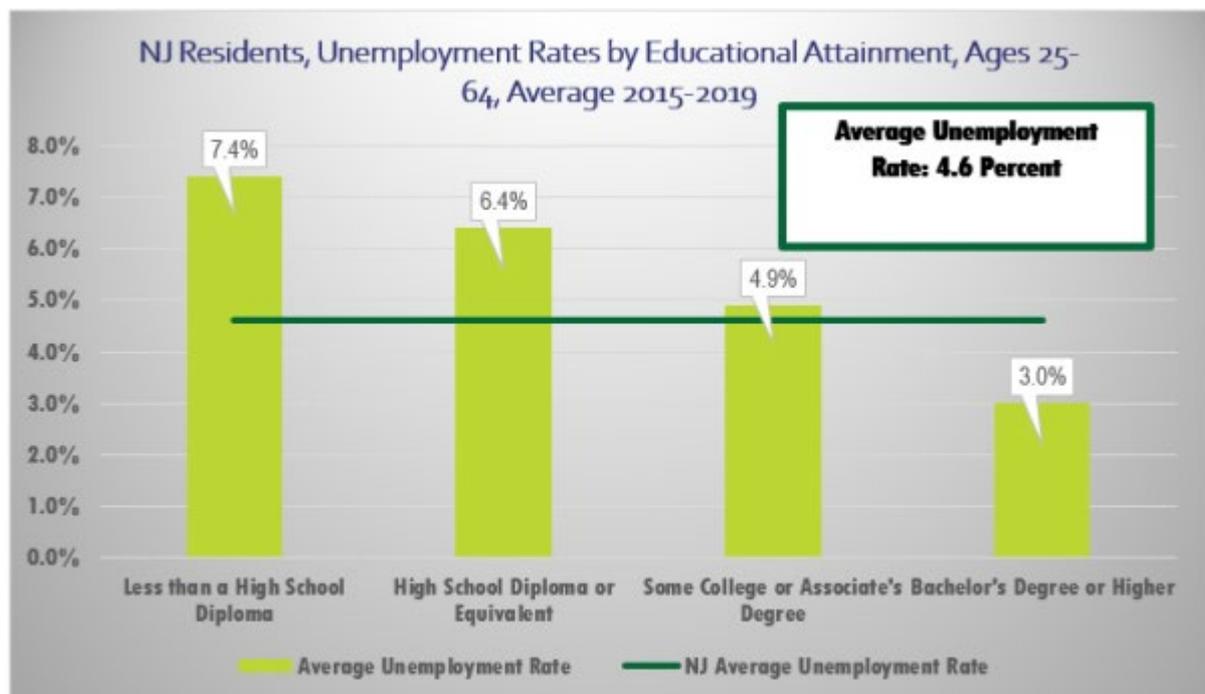
In 2019, over nearly 40 percent of New Jersey residents, 25 and older, possessed a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared with just over 32 percent for the US as a whole. The high median income in the state directly ties to this high level of educational attainment. Those with higher levels of educational attainment are more likely to be employed and earn more; degrees are particularly valued by New Jersey employers. The charts below tell this story.



[i]U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample, 2019, 2019 Current Educational Attainment of New Jersey Residents 25+



Source: NJDOL, Office of Research, Analysis of American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample, 2019



Source: American Community Survey, 2019 5-Year Estimates

New Jersey, along with the United States as a whole, has seen a shift in its proportion of goods producing/service producing jobs. In 1990, nearly one-fifth of the employment in the state was goods producing; by 2020, that proportion had been reduced to one-tenth.

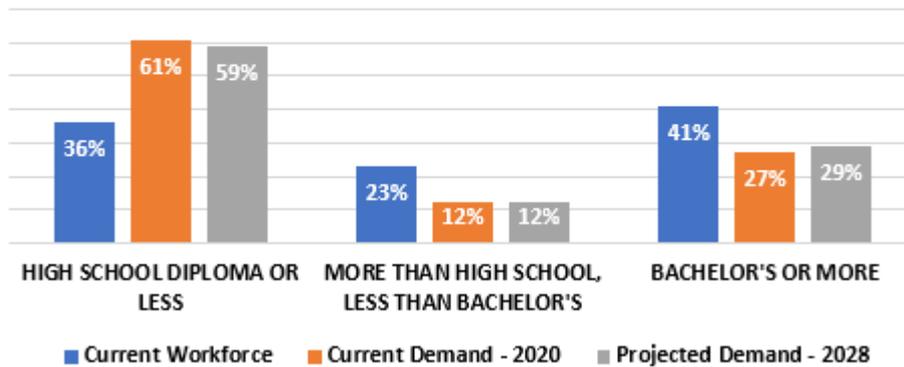
	1990	2018
New Jersey		
Goods-Producing	18.7%	10.1%
Service-Producing	81.3%	89.9%
United States		
Good-Producing	21.7%	14.1%
Service-Producing	78.3%	85.9%

Source: Current Employment Statistics, Annual Averages

As reflected in the occupational projections presented earlier in this section, many of the fastest growing jobs do not require advanced levels of educational attainment. That said, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that New Jersey will have an average of 537,000 open jobs annually, with over 90 percent of those as a result of people leaving their current jobs. Therefore, the open positions in New Jersey will have widely varying education and skill requirements that cannot be projected solely based on occupational growth.[i]

In fact, as show in the chart below, New Jersey’s workforce appears to be overeducated. The natural next step to understanding the nuances of skill demands is the launch of New Jersey’s revamped Industry Partnerships, which will further inform how the state invests to ensure its resources support individual success and business productivity and growth.

Comparison: Educational Attainment of the NJ Workforce with Current (2020) and Projected (2028) Labor Market Demand



1. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018-2028 Industry and Occupational Employment Projections.
2. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Survey, June 2020 Estimates, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

3. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information
4. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information
5. Burning Glass Technologies Inc., Labor Insight, Prepared by New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, February 2022
6. 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.
7. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics
8. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 5-year estimates, Selected Economic Characteristics
9. NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information, Division of Economic and Demographic Research, Characteristics of New Jersey's Unemployment Insurance Claimants, annual average
10. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019 5-year estimates, Age by Employment Status for the Population 16 years and over
11. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019 5 year-estimates, Age by Employment Status for the Population 16 years and over
12. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Age by Veteran Status by Employment Status for the Civilian Population 18 to 64 years
13. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 5-year estimates, Employment Status by Disability Status
14. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 5-year estimates, Work Experience by Disability Status
15. New Jersey Legislature: "An Act raising the minimum wage and supplementing and amending P.L. 1966, c. 113," 2019.
16. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 5-year estimates, Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months of Individuals by Sex by Employment Status
17. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 5-year estimates, Selected Social Characteristics in the United States
18. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 5-year estimates, Educational Attainment and Employment Status by Language Spoken at Home for the Population 25 Years and Over
19. Website: New Jersey's Economy: Planning for the Future of Work in the Garden State, <https://arcg.is/PjGzW>; accessed February 21, 2020.

20. J.U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample, 2019, 2019 Current Educational Attainment of New Jersey Residents 25+
21. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018-2028 Industry and Occupational Employment Projections.

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 ⁶ and optional one-stop delivery system partners.⁷

[6] Required one-stop partners: In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.

[7] Workforce development activities may include a wide variety of programs and partners, including educational institutions, faith- and community-based organizations, and human services.

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.

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

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

(a) 2. The 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.

On average, New Jersey's core workforce programs enroll and serve over 120,000 customers per year. These programs, supported by approximately \$140M in annual federal funding,

deliver a full range of workforce development services to New Jersey residents and employers. Federal funds also support the physical infrastructure mandated for service delivery, New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center system, which includes 30 sites across the state; the technology and data systems required to operate a system of this scope and scale; and policy, technical assistance and monitoring activities to ensure full compliance with the regulations governing these federal funds and to support high quality practices across our and in our local areas.

The following is an overview of the Core Programs under the four program-specific titles of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

WIOA Title I: Workforce Development Activities

This Title includes provision for services to adults, dislocated workers, and youth; establishes the One-Stop delivery system as the way to access services under the law, and outlines governance and accountability systems. In New Jersey, WIOA programs are governed at the state level by the State Employment Training Commission – SETC and at the local level by workforce development boards. Most programs in WIOA are operationally managed at the state level by NJDOL's Division of Workforce Development. In PY 2018 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019), over 11,000 individual customers were enrolled in WIOA Title I. . Due to the COVID pandemic, the numbers served were reduced for the final quarter of PY 2019 and the entire year of PY 2020. In WIOA Title I programs, there were more than 8,600 customers served in PY 2019 and more than 5,800 served in PY 2020.

WIOA Title II: Adult Education and Literacy

Adult Education and Literacy programs help learners increase their literacy levels in order to gain or retain employment; enter a postsecondary, credential, or other occupational training that will lead to employment or wage gains; or attain a high school diploma or its equivalent. In PY 2018 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019), nearly 19,000 learners were served in the allowable activities detailed below:

- Adult Basic Education (ABE) is literacy instruction aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards to eligible individuals with educational functioning levels (EFLs) at a particular literacy level as listed in the NRS EFL table as ABE 1, 2, 3 or 4. Workforce Preparation activities (as described below) can be provided concurrently with ABE instruction.
- Adult Secondary Education (ASE) is literacy instruction aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards to eligible individuals with educational functioning levels (EFLs) at a particular literacy level as listed in the NRS EFL table as ABE 5 or 6. ASE activities are also designed to lead to the attainment of a secondary diploma (or its equivalent) and transition to postsecondary education/training or employment. Workforce Preparation activities (as described below) can be provided concurrently with ASE instruction.
- English Language Acquisition (ELA) is English language instruction designed to help eligible learners achieve proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening; and that leads to attainment of a secondary diploma (or its equivalent), transition to postsecondary/training, or employment. To meet the requirement of leading to the attainment of a secondary diploma (or its equivalent), transition to postsecondary education/training, or employment, the ELA program must: 1) align to Adult Education

Content Standards, 2) offer college/career counseling services, and/or 3) be part of a career pathway.

- Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) are education services provided to English language learners to achieve competence in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens. Services must include, 1) instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, and 2) instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. Services may include workforce preparation and workforce training.
- Workforce Preparation is instruction provided concurrently with ABE, ASE, or ELA/IELCE activities that is designed to help eligible individuals acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills. Participation in workforce preparation activities also must be designed to lead to employability skills and the development of competencies in using resources and information, working with others, and understanding systems to successfully transition to and complete postsecondary education/training and employment.
- Integrated Education and Training (IET) is a service approach to providing adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Required IET components are: 1) adult education and literacy, 2) workforce preparation activities, and 3) workforce training. Instruction is based on occupationally relevant materials for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Participation is intended for eligible individuals at all skill levels, including adults with low academic skills.
- Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals: NJDOL will award funds to providers who are serving individuals currently institutionalized or likely to leave the correctional institution within five years.
- Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE): NJDOL uses federal funds provided under WIOA Section 243 to establish an integrated English literacy and civics program for English language learners. IELCE services are allowable activities that must include the IELCE educational services (described above in Allowable Activities and in WIOA §463.33) and must be delivered in combination with IET activities (described above in Allowable Activities and in WIOA §463.36).

WIOA Title III: Wagner-Peyser

Wagner-Peyser is the federal labor exchange program, started in 1933 to assist job seekers connect with employers in the Depression. Today, this program is integrated into New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center system and served over 76,000 residents in PY 2018. . In PY 2019, more than 49,800 were served and in PY 2020, just over 37,000 were served.

WIOA Title IV: Vocational Rehabilitation

This program ensures that individuals with disabilities receive the high-quality services they deserve to connect to and retain employment, including assistive technology and other resources as needed. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is within NJDOL; the

Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is within the New Jersey Department of Human Services. In the last program year where data has been compiled (PY 2017), nearly 16,000 residents received vocational rehabilitation services to assist them in connecting to careers.

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) programs provide educational and training opportunities for customers that may include funding and supports for secondary education and training programs. VR counselors assist customers interested in further education or training in identifying programs that align with their vocational goals. The vocational guidance provided includes how education and training can be incorporated into a career pathway framework that matches the customers, interests, skills, and abilities.

Partner Program: Jobs for Veterans State Grant

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) provides federal funding to hire dedicated staff to provide individualized career and training-related services to veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment and to assist employers fill their workforce needs with job-seeking veterans.

Partner Program: Trade Adjustment Assistance

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program provides reemployment services to workers who have been adversely affected by foreign trade. TAA participants are WIOA co-enrolled in the One-Stop Career Centers and are offered WIOA services, as well as being provided with an individualized career plan by a Trade Act Representative. Participants are assessed for any employment barriers and skill gaps that are preventing reemployment.

The Trade Act Representative works with the participant to identify the best retraining plan that will develop the participant's skill level and increase their marketability; this supports the goal for the participant to be reemployed at the same or higher wage and skill level from his/her previous trade-affected employment. In most cases, retraining is provided at one of the state's two- or four-year higher education institutions, in order to obtain a post-secondary degree or an occupational credential that will lead to reemployment.

Customer Characteristics

The State Employment and Training Commission launched its WIOA Dashboard in 2017 to provide full transparency regarding participant services, the cost for services, service outcomes, and customer characteristics. The following is an overview of customers, by funding stream, for the last program year where data is available.

For all programs with the exception of vocational rehabilitation, the data is for PY 2020, which ended June 30, 2021. For vocational rehabilitation, the data is for PY 2019, which ended June 30, 2020. Data for all prior years is available on the SETC Dashboard, which can be found at njsetc.net/njsetc/performance.

As a benefit of co-enrollment policies, participant data for partner programs is often reflected in the core programs covered in this section. However, a far more in depth discussion of programs as well as additional service and performance information can be found in Sections VI and VII of this Combined Plan.

Overview by Program Service Numbers

	Title I Adult	Title I Dislocated Workers	Title I Youth	Title II (Adult Education)	Title III (Wagner - Peyser)	Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation)
Number Served	1,249	2,494	2,143	11,853	37,259	14,295
Number Exited	706	1,597	1,686	6,394	25,337	4,654

Customer Characteristics

Just over half of all registered customers identify as female; however, Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, Title II Adult Education and Literacy, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation all serve significantly more female customers than men. Low income and literacy/cultural barriers are the most prevalently reported barriers to employment across all funding streams.

	Title I Adult	Title I Dislocated Workers	Title I Youth	Title II (Adult Education)	Title III (Wagner - Peyser)	Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation)
Gender						
Female	644	1,260	1,023	7,897	19,076	6,154
Male	592	1,225	1,112	3,956	17,933	8,131
Ethnicity						
Hispanic/Latinx	219	654	671	7,433	7,729	2,365
Black or African American	651	710	862	2,322	12,589	4,459
White	431	1,417	697	1,414	22,251	8,894
Asian	87	291	66	589	5,904	606
American Indian	58	172	27	26	3,737	435
Other/More than One Ethnicity	64	178	50	33	3,728	295
Selected Barriers						
Low Income	763	293	1,422	1,499	6,152	5,916
Literacy/Cultural	247	405	1,539	11,853	5,482	3,239
Single Parent	285	290	194	440	3,624	704
Homeless	42	17	42	23	454	116
Ex-Offender	144	80	75	441	796	1,190
Disability	29	33	251	92	1,122	14,295

	Title I Adult	Title I Dislocated Workers	Title I Youth	Title II (Adult Education)	Title III (Wagner - Peyser)	Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation)
Long-Term Unemployed	44	79	24	272	502	4,998

The State Employment and Training Commission has worked with its partners to bring this data to keep this data available and transparent through the availability of its Dashboard. The dashboard may be found

at: <https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiNDJmMjgwOTItNWUyYi00ZTAwLThiNmQtOTY1Y2U5YjVhOGE0IiwidCI6IjUwNzZjM2QxLTM4MDItNGI5Zi1iMzZhLWUwYTQxYmQ2NDJhNyI9> where one may find data by program, year and, where appropriate, local program partner.

(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’s workforce system has benefited, since 2018, from a Governor that has put workforce development at the center of his agenda. On the economy and jobs, his primary focus is building a stronger and fairer economy that works for every New Jersey family, including a focus vocational training and apprenticeship programs to ensure workers have the skills they need to meet employers’ requirements. On education, Governor Murphy is committed to ameliorating disparities within the public school system and ensuring money is not a barrier to attending a postsecondary institution. In October 2018, the Governor published *State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey*, codifying these ideals. In January 2020, he released Jobs NJ, which provided a specific framework for the ways in which the State’s workforce development and educational ecosystems are expected to align in support of this vision. In February of 2022, the aforementioned Future of Work Task Force released its Road Map and Recommendations (<https://fowtf.innovation.nj.gov/>) which provide additional insight into the State's perspective moving forward.

New Jersey’s workforce system brings many assets to this body of work, including high quality programs that improve every year. Through close collaboration with state and local partners, memoranda of understanding, operational protocols, and policies and practices are in the process of being modernized. With a stronger economy, New Jersey’s workforce system has the capacity to focus its attention on populations with particular barriers to employment – such as returning citizens and those in recovery – and assess ways in which it can be assured they and all vulnerable populations have access to the resources they require to become part of New Jersey’s economic mainstream. Covid-19 has also has profound impacts on our workforce systems and labor market. As the needs of employers, interests and pressures on jobseekers, and the world of work all shift, we continue to explore opportunities for targeting specific populations and developing new service strategies as a state and with our local areas.

The workforce system has not necessarily always focused as much on services to employers as it has on services to individuals. The last two years have seen many enhancements on this front. Apprenticeship programs have increased by more than 50 percent, and significant state investments are bolstering their expansion as well as ensuring all New Jerseyans, regardless of

background, have access to those programs. Also, NJDOL recognized its former Talent Network program was not the proper model to fully engage with employers. As a result, that program was phased out and, in 2020, the New Jersey Industry Partnerships initiative was launched. Furthermore, at the state-level and through our Title I and WFNJ programs, among others, we continue to expand a variety of work-based learning opportunities, increasing funding, training, and policy resources around On-the-Job training opportunities and other work experiences that pair education and training to better meet and match the specific needs of employers and jobseekers.

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

New Jersey's workforce system has the proven capacity and capability to deliver high quality services to customers of all backgrounds to support them in achieving their career goals.

- NJDOL and the State Employment and Training Commission are close collaborators to ensure the appropriate balance between operations and governance, and that policies support both compliant delivery and continuous service improvement. This relationship extends to the NJ Department of Human Services, which operates the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- Over the past two years, there has been a renewed focus on intentionally engaging with stakeholders and partners to inform programmatic priorities, which has resulted in many of the innovations and program enhancements outlined in the operational sections of this Combined Plan. During this period the State has incorporated and expanded its footprint in Apprenticeship and looks forward to continuing its efforts in work-based learning.
- Statewide leadership initiatives, such as the Jobs and Economic Opportunity Council and the Future of Work Task Force, are providing for the continued alignment of Federal programs and State resources to create a stronger and fairer economy for all. The Future of Work Task Force recently shared its findings and recommendations (<https://fowtf.innovation.nj.gov/>), which are closely aligned with NJDOL priorities to strengthen its programs and tools to benefit all workforce customers and New Jersey residents. This includes the creation of Lifelong Learning Accounts, alignment of individuals' education with their desired career pathways and in-demand jobs; and strengthening enforcement of the State's existing laws on misclassification of workers.
- NJDOL's Office of Research and Information, in collaboration with the New Jersey Governor's Office of Innovation, is working to create better and more customer-focused technology tools to increase program access for all who wish to advance their careers, as well as for employers who require new talent to thrive in the Garden State.
- Leadership of the various programs ensure that staff and contracted providers, where applicable, have the training and technical support they need to provide exceptional services. This includes the further development of the NJ Training Explorer website, discussed later in this Plan, a new tool that revitalizes New Jersey's Eligible Training Provider List.

These are just some of the many ways in which New Jersey is ensuring its workforce development system continues to provide high quality services to employers and individuals, and continues to evolve in the context of a rapidly changing economy.

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 employment⁸ and other populations.⁹

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

[8] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

[9] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

Using the tables provided within each Core Program section, 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.)

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.

(1) Vision

Governor Murphy's vision, as outlined in *The State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey* is "to reestablish New Jersey as an economic and innovation leader, as a place where diverse talent, companies, and ideas flourish, where real pathways exist to the

middle class, where all residents can prosper, and where environmental stewardship, fiscal prudence, and high labor standards are promoted and encouraged....[t]o unlock long-term, resilient economic growth, we must create a New Jersey economy that is both stronger and fairer.”

With regard to the state’s workforce development system, a stronger and fairer New Jersey means achieving two mutually supporting goals:

- Ensure all career-seeking New Jerseyans have the education and training necessary to access high-quality employment.
- Ensure businesses and employers that are offering high-quality employment in New Jersey can quickly and efficiently fill their talent needs.

(2) Goals

Governor Murphy recognized that a focus on **talent-based economic development** requires leveraging the whole of state government. Shortly after his 2018 swearing in, Governor Murphy created the cross-agency Jobs and Economic Opportunity Council. The JEOPC includes 11 members from the Governor’s Administration, including representatives from the Governor’s Office, the Lt. Governor, Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, NJ Economic Development Authority, the Departments of Labor, Education, Transportation, Banking and Insurance, and Treasury, plus the Rutgers University John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development.

On October 1, 2018, the Governor unveiled his economic master plan, developed in partnership with the JEOPC, entitled *The State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey*. The plan’s overarching goal is to “recapture our state’s role as both a leader in the national and global economy and a center of innovation.” While the plan cites innovation and diversity as keys to New Jersey’s competitive advantage, it acknowledges that **not all populations or regions of the state are thriving**. The Governor made the plan’s **Priority #1** to “**invest in people to help all NJ residents find work that supports and sustains families.**”

Key workforce initiatives tied to this included the creation of the New Jersey Apprenticeship Network; a Computer Science for All initiative; the development of state-of-the-art digital tools to help job seekers under the NJ Career Network; and the creation of a NJ Future of Work Task Force.

Recognizing that a critical pillar of achieving a Stronger/Fairer New Jersey is expanding access to and support for higher education, in February 2019, the Governor released *Where Opportunity Meets Innovation: A Student-Centered Vision for New Jersey Higher Education* – which included a Student’s Bill of Rights and plans for the Community College Opportunity Grant (CCOG) offering free community college for low income NJ students of all ages. Since that time, more than 7,500 qualified students have begun working toward an associate’s degree – tuition-free – under the Community College Opportunity Grant program, including many adult career seekers.

In January 2020, Governor Murphy took the next step toward building a Stronger/Fairer New Jersey with the release of *Jobs NJ: Developing Talent to Grow Business in the Garden State* – a comprehensive talent master plan, developed by the JEOPC, to ensure NJ has the workforce to meet the demands of the 21st century talent market.

To achieve the two key goals of Jobs NJ—ensuring all NJ career seekers, including those from historically disadvantaged populations, have the education and training they need to access quality jobs, and ensuring NJ businesses that are offering quality jobs can efficiently fill their

talent needs, the state is pursuing three broad strategies, each of which has implications for the WIOA State Plan:

Strategy 1: Expand Access to Opportunity

Increase educational attainment among underrepresented minorities and other target populations and ensure equal access to opportunities in all regions of the state.

Aspirations tied to this strategy are, by 2025, to:

- Ensure 250,000 additional Black, Latinx, and Native American individuals attain post-secondary credentials;
- Close the racial and gender wage and employment gaps by employing 42,000 more women and minorities and increasing wages by \$15,000-\$23,000; and
- Raise the post-secondary credential attainment in all counties to at least 45 percent.

Strategy 2: Train Individual for In-Demand Jobs

Connect education and training programs to industry needs and lead the region in programs that prepare adults for high-quality jobs throughout their entire careers.

Aspirations tied to this strategy are, by 2025, to:

- Increase the number of post-secondary graduates employed in high-demand industries by 10 percent and
- Ensure at least 25,000 additional adults enroll and graduate with a high-quality credential.

Strategy 3: Match Talent to Jobs

Ensure access to up-to-date job information, celebrate employers that provide high-quality jobs, and create a dedicated team to craft individualized solutions to complex access-to-labor problems.

Aspirations tied to this strategy are, by 2025, to:

- Complete Talent Action Roadmaps for at least 100 companies;
- Celebrate 200 Governor Choice employers; and

Annually publish materials on high-demand jobs and pathways to rewarding careers.

(3) Performance Goals

The performance goals for Core Programs can be found in Appendix 1 of this Combined Plan.

(4) Assessment

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. To provide full transparency to all system stakeholders, the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), the state's workforce development board, will continue to maintain its WIOA performance dashboard for core programs, which can be accessed at njsetc.net/njsetc/performance/.

As described in the following "State Strategy" section, New Jersey's work toward a stronger and fairer economy goes far beyond the programs in this Combined Plan. The SETC – which

includes state, industry, labor and community leaders – and its committees will monitor New Jersey’s workforce development system to assess progress toward the strategic vision and goals outlined in Jobs NJ. The SETC will collaborate closely with all state partners and the local workforce development system to identify the most promising efforts, provide additional assistance for those that require it, and recommend mid-course correction where appropriate.

Further, Jobs NJ outlines a set of specific aspirations. NJDOL’s Office of Research and Information, in collaboration with the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University, is developing a set of metrics to measure progress toward these aspirations.

In February of 2022 the **Future of Work Task Force** released its **roadmap and recommendations** for New Jersey. It focuses on three core areas:

The Task Force’s recommendations focus on three core areas:

1. INVEST IN WORKERS: Support lifelong learning and skill building to make workers resilient to the changes technology will bring.
2. EMPOWER WORKERS: Innovate to safeguard, enforce, and deliver worker rights and benefits.
3. PROTECT WORKERS: Use new technology to protect worker health and safety.

For purposes of this plan, we will focus on area one:

INVEST IN WORKERS: Support lifelong learning and skill building to make workers resilient to the changes technology will bring.

- a. Create Lifelong Learning Accounts for all New Jerseyans and fund the accounts of low-wage workers, and encourage and provide mechanisms for employers to match funds for lifelong learning.
- b. Further develop the State’s Training Explorer to help workers make informed decisions about lifelong learning and training.
- c. Encourage all employers to invest in worker training, lifelong learning, and reemployment and create financial incentives for small and medium-sized employers.
- d. Support innovation and skills collaboratives and other ongoing initiatives to align New Jersey’s education and workforce systems, and align individuals’ education with their desired career pathways.
- e. Continue to expand low-cost opportunities to access degree programs (including access to community colleges), career and technical education, and training, apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeships

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 in Section (a).

1. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT, INCLUDING INDUSTRY OR SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS RELATED TO IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS AND CAREER PATHWAYS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA SECTION 101(D)(3)(B), (D). “CAREER PATHWAY” IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(7) AND INCLUDES REGISTERED

APPRENTICESHIP. "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)

In the section above, Governor Murphy's vision, strategies, and aspirations were described. In this section, specific initiatives and progress to date are described.

Strategy 1 is to expand access to opportunity by increasing education attainment among underrepresented minorities and other targeted populations, with a focus on achieving equal access to opportunities for all regions of New Jersey. This includes new resources relating to college access, completion, and affordability including for low income and minority students, immigrants, unemployed and underemployed job seekers, individuals with disabilities, formerly justice-involved citizens, and individuals recovering from addiction. In particular, the Opioid Recovery Employment Program is a \$5M competitive grant that supports training and employment opportunities for 600 individuals in 6 targeted counties whose workforce conditions or trajectories have been impacted by the opioid epidemic.

Under Strategy 2, NJ aspires by 2025 to increase number of postsecondary graduates working in high-demand industries by 10 percent, and to ensure that an additional 25,000 adults enroll and graduate with a high quality credential that will enable them to advance in their careers. Significant progress has been made on several fronts, including over 8,500 New Jerseyans who are participating in one of 988 recognized apprenticeship programs under the NJ Apprenticeship Network, learning the skills they need for good-paying, primarily union, jobs. Since its inception, NJAN launched two grant programs: GAINS – Growing Apprenticeship in Nontraditional Sectors, which has greatly expanded apprenticeship opportunities in new occupations, and PACE – Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education; together these programs have doubled the participation rates of Black, Latinx, and female apprentices.

In addition to the progress of the NJ Apprenticeship Network, other important achievements tied to Strategy 2 include an expanded Career Accelerator Internship Programs to help high school and college students connect to paid internships in STEM fields and demand industries, and the expansion of the state's longitudinal data system, NJ Education to Earning Data System (NJEEDS), which will help evaluate and monitor workforce and talent development programs and provide information to help guide students and career seekers.

Further, New Jersey intends to expand other work-based learning models, including on-the-job training and experiential learning opportunities. To tie work-based learning and higher education closer together, the state is revitalizing the NJ PLACE (Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education) to help promote the concept of "degree apprenticeships."

To increase opportunities for employer engagement and ensure workforce programs are responsive to employer needs, New Jersey is launching in 2020 its new Industry Sector Partnerships, beginning with the manufacturing sector.

Under Strategy 2, New Jersey also is making a commitment to supporting rapid re-employment and lifelong learning. This includes re-imagining Unemployment Insurance as Reemployment

Insurance, with a focus on early intervention and active reemployment strategies to help job seekers quickly connect to new opportunities. This effort will complement the RESEA program. It will also benefit from the state's new legislation calling for expanded advance notice for plant closings and layoffs, to 90 days up from 60, and for mandatory severance payments. Later in 2020, the NJ Future of Work Task Force will release its recommendations, which will include innovative strategies to make lifelong learning a reality for New Jerseyans, critical in an era where automation, AI, and other technologies are changing skill needs for those entering or already members of the workforce.

Strategy 3 is all about employers and matching talent to jobs to support the growth of business and opportunity in New Jersey. The state aspires to creating Talent Action Roadmaps for at least 100 companies; identifying at least 200 "Governor's Choice" employers demonstrating hiring best practices and offering quality jobs; and improving access to labor market information and career pathways to help New Jersey job seekers prepare and connect to careers with those employers.

To help guide and connect these efforts, New Jersey recently created its first Office of Economic Transformation (OET) within the NJ Economic Development Authority. OET is partnering with NJDOL, the Department of Education, and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education to tackle talent problems in both legacy sectors like manufacturing as well as in emerging sectors such as sports wagering technologies and offshore wind. NJDOL has also been expanding employer customized training for incumbent and new workers under the Upskill grant, which provided funding to over 220 employers in 2019.

New Jersey is one of only three states participating in the Data for the American Dream (D4AD) initiative, which will provide support to help the state modernize how it provide information to career seekers and students, including developing quality measures for education and training providers.

In January 2020, New Jersey released the beta version of the New Jersey Career Network (<https://njcareers.org/>), a digital platform to help guide job seekers through their search, emphasizing high impact techniques and customized recommendations based on where they are in the process. NJ Career Network will work closely with D4AD and integrate expanded access to labor market information.

New Jersey continues its work to strengthen alignment of its Title I and Title II programs. This effort began with a task force formed by the NJ State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) that included state and local agency representation. It was determined that inconsistencies existed in service delivery between and within local workforce areas. The task force information has formed the basis of a more extensive evaluation of the coordination of the two programs, undertaken by the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development on behalf of NJDOL and the State of New Jersey. The evaluation effort will include literature and process reviews, and development of best practices and technical assistance focused on strategies to improve coordination and cooperation between the Title I and Title II programs. The resulting alignment is expected to expand opportunities for clients, through a better braiding of service delivery. This same philosophy supports discussions to better align WIOA and welfare-related efforts. Strategically, we know that by considering multiple sources of funds for individuals, we also expand potential resources. Simply stated, someone who is TANF eligible may also be Title I, Title II and SNAP eligible. The consideration of comprehensive needs may support improved customer access to services and assistance, with more opportunities for growth and better chances for success. This effort, if successful, could expand to consider all programs and clients,

including partner programs, such as the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) activities.

Working through its State Council for Adult Literacy Services, the SETC continues to build bridges between Adult Literacy Services and our Community Colleges. Following the Title I/II task force, the effort expanded into what was termed ***Moving Along Career Pathways Toward Family Sustaining Wages***. The goal was to create a segue between the two efforts. Numerous meetings were held and a virtual conference held this past summer. The planning group included representatives from State and local organizations which included workforce development, adult literacy, education, higher education, the community and employers. The virtual conference registered almost 200 people interested and featured presentations from the President of WorkingNation and the Chair of the Georgia Workforce and Literacy Commissions. Workshops featured each of the partner groups speaking to what they saw as strengths/weaknesses in the system.

With the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, we are entering the next stage where we will have a small group of local practitioners develop models based on existing Integrated Employment and Training efforts and hope to use these to pilot program that would form the bridge and expand opportunities for degrees and certifications for those most in need.

As New Jersey moves and reacts to current circumstances, the consideration of collective efforts also allows for the creation of program content that could be made available across the service spectrum. This will be an important consideration for the virtual content needed to support individuals returning to work or embarking on new career pathways.

Reinforcing Governor Murphy's commitment to a Stronger/Fairer New Jersey that works for all its residents, the state has made great strides in improving job quality for many New Jerseyans through several innovative legislative accomplishments. In addition to introducing severance payments and expanding advance notice for dislocated workers, New Jersey has passed laws to increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour and to expand the state's Paid Family Leave program. Further, recommendations of New Jersey's Misclassification Task Force, led by the NJDOL, will also strengthen protections for workers who should be classified as employees instead of as independent contractors, helping ensure they have access to workplace benefits such as workers' compensation, unemployment benefits, and family and sick leave.

There are two other interrelated and particularly notable efforts underway that provide particularly important building blocks for New Jersey's talent-centered economic development strategy. The first is the work within the NJ Department of Education – particularly as reflected in its Perkins V Plan, which addresses Career and Technical Education programs. The other is Vision 2028, which was released in October 2019 by the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, the association of the state's 18 community colleges. They are aligned, as is this Combined Plan, around access to opportunity, training that is relevant and in-demand, and matching the individuals they serve to careers. There is a great deal of collaboration ongoing to ensure that workforce development customers benefit from these education-focused efforts and that students benefit from the rich offerings of the programs that are reflected in this Combined Plan.

New Jersey's workforce system touches each of the initiatives described above in different ways: from direct operations and oversight in many of these programs to close collaboration and referral agreements and much in between. The way in which core programs connect and support this work is described in Section III, which outlines the state's workforce operations,

and Sections VI and VII, which provides a detailed description of each program in this Combined Plan.

All data in this section was compiled by NJDOL, Office of Research, unless otherwise noted.

[i] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, 2019 Annual Averages on 2018 Benchmark, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[ii] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Survey, June 2019 Estimates, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[iii] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[iv] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[v] Burning Glass Technologies Inc., Labor Insight, Prepared by New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, January 2020

[vi] 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.

[vii] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

[viii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-2018 5-year estimates, Selected Economic Characteristics

[ix] NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information, Division of Economic and Demographic Research, Characteristics of New Jersey's Unemployment Insurance Claimants, annual average

[x] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2018 5-year estimates, Age by Employment Status for the Population 16 years and over

[xi] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2018 5 year-estimates, Age by Employment Status for the Population 16 years and over

[xii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-2018 5-year estimates, Age by Veteran Status by Employment Status for the Civilian Population 18 to 64 years

[xiii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-2018 5-year estimates, Employment Status by Disability Status

[xiv] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-2018 5-year estimates, Work Experience by Disability Status

[xv] New Jersey Legislature: "An Act raising the minimum wage and supplementing and amending P.L. 1966, c. 113," 2019.

[xvi] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-2018 5-year estimates, Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months of Individuals by Sex by Employment Status

[xvii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-2018 5-year estimates, Selected Social Characteristics in the United States

[xviii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-2018 5-year estimates, Educational Attainment and Employment Status by Language Spoken at Home for the Population 25 Years and Over

[xix] Website: New Jersey's Economy: Planning for the Future of Work in the Garden State, <https://arcg.is/PjGzW>; accessed February 21, 2020.

[xx] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample, 2018, 2018 Current Educational Attainment of New Jersey Residents 25+

[xxi] Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016-2026 Industry and Occupational Employment Projections.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an Operational Planning Elements section that supports the State's strategy and the system-wide vision described in Section II(c) above. Unless otherwise noted, all Operational Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. This section must include—

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).

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:

- The development, implementation, and modification of the State plan;
- 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;
- The development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in the State, including:
 - The identification of barriers and means for removing them to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system;

- 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;
- 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;
- 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;
- 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;
- 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
- The development of strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system;
- 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);
- The identification and dissemination of information on best practices, including best practices for:
 - 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;
 - 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
 - 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;
- 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:

- Objective criteria and procedures for use by local boards in assessing the effectiveness and continuous improvement of one-stop centers described in such section;
- Guidance for the allocation of one-stop center infrastructure funds under section 121(h); and
- 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;
- 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:
 - 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”);
 - Accelerate the acquisition of skills and recognized postsecondary credentials by participants;
 - Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals; and
 - Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas;
- 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;
- 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);
- The preparation of the annual reports described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 116(d);
- 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. 491-2(e)); and
- 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 private- and public-sector 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.

State Board Operational Structures

The SETC composition meets the requirements set forth under WIOA at 20 CFR 628.210 and 20 CFR 628.215. Under state statute *N.J.S.A. 34:15C*, updated in 2019, the SETC is composed as follows: majority representation from business and industry sectors; representation from the State Legislature, state agencies, general local government and local education agencies, including the Governor, 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; representation from organized labor and community-based organizations; and other members as appointed by the Governor.

The updated New Jersey legislation includes a requirement that not less than five members of the SETC shall be representatives of labor organizations, who have been nominated by a labor organization, and not less than three members shall be representatives of community-based organizations. The legislation also requires diverse and distinct representation, in that members of the SETC shall represent diverse geographic areas of the State, including urban, rural, and suburban areas. Specific membership requirements are as follows, drawn from and specifying the representation required in the WIOA legislation:

- The Governor;
- A member of each chamber of the State legislature, appointed by the appropriate presiding officers of such chamber; and
- Members appointed by the Governor, of which—
 - A majority shall be representatives of businesses in the State, who—
 - - 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);
 - 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

- are appointed from among individuals nominated by State business organizations and business trade associations;
 - not less than 20 percent shall be representatives of the workforce within the State, who—
 - - shall include representatives of labor organizations, who have been nominated by State labor federations;
 - 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;
 - 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
 - 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
 - the balance—
 - - shall include representatives of government, who—
- shall include the lead State officials with primary responsibility for the core programs; and
- shall include chief elected officials (collectively representing both cities and counties, where appropriate); and
- - - may include such other representatives and officials as the Governor may designate, such as—
 - 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);
 - State agency officials responsible for economic development or juvenile justice programs in the State;

- individuals who represent an Indian tribe or tribal organization, as such terms are defined in section 166(b); and
- State agency officials responsible for education programs in the State, including chief executive officers of community colleges and other institutions of higher education.
- State program leads for its Title II and Title IV WIOA programs.

The SETC leadership is working with the Office of the Governor, the Commissioner of the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, partner agencies, and business, industry and organized labor groups to identify a slate of new members for appointment to the Commission in 2020.

The SETC has worked with the Office of the Governor, the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, partner agencies, business/industry groups and organized labor to identify a slate of members for appointment to the Commission. In 1989 New Jersey approved its own legislation regarding its workforce development system which while it somewhat mirrors federal law, requires appointment and legislative consent for membership.

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

SETC Council / Committee	Mission and Responsibilities
	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.
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 <i>N.J.S.A. 34:15C-8</i> . The committee reviews outcomes for federally mandated performance measures for the State and local areas; reviews recommendations from NJDOL 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 Shared Youth Vision Council recommends service, policy and program components that serve youth at the local level in the workforce system and recommends or assists in the programs and services that focus on youth workforce policy that best serve the needs of clients. With a focus on ensuring quality services for NJ's youth, we will define success by the creation of a highly skilled, motivated, and conscientious workforce to help strengthen New Jersey's economic future. 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

SETC Council / Committee	Mission and Responsibilities
	and other youth related stakeholders around a singular shared youth vision: that is, providing and guiding youth to education, employment, retention of employment, and nationally recognized credentials.
Apprenticeship Pathways Committee	The Apprenticeship Committee was created in 2019 to review and coordinate current policies and practices relating to registered apprenticeships. The Committee will develop, expand, support, validate and coordinate policies and practices that create a better understanding of registered apprenticeships to: Market the benefits of registered apprenticeship to all stakeholders; Ensure equitable access to registered apprenticeship opportunities for all NJ residents; Expand occupational offerings within “demand” industries; Engage with employers to develop & incentivize a realistic approach; Expand relationships with both Career and Technical Education (CTE) and comprehensive high schools; Ensure repeatable structure exists between industry sectors; Support career pathways that provide for growth on all levels for the individual (including financial); Strengthen partnerships with Higher Education to progress a model that include college credit for skills training acquired during apprenticeship, experiential learning based on past (formal) skills improvements, and stackable credentials that applies to county colleges and four-year schools.

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.

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.

- 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.”]
- 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).”]
- 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;
- 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;
- 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;
- Perform the duties assigned to a State Workforce Investment Board [now Workforce Development 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*];
- 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

- Establish guidelines to be used by the Workforce Investment Boards [now Workforce Development 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. These are the State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) and the Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education (GPC).

The pandemic has had an impact on the Board and its committees. We moved from a system that included primarily in-person meetings to one that became exclusively dependent upon virtual tools. That has impacted the Commission, but we are rebuilding that which was impacted and hope to come back stronger.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in Section 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.

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

Covid-19 has led to dramatic shifts and changes in our state and local workforce systems, as both state and local services adapt to restructuring labor markets, new jobseeker interests and pressures, and the incorporation of virtual technology and communications into our everyday world. We are still in the middle of these changes and the ultimate impacts of the broad-based economic and social shifts that Covid-19 has catalyzed are still unknown.

New Jersey's state plan focuses on three core goals for our One-Stop Career Centers:

1. Coordination and integration of partners and services in our One-Stop Career Centers
2. Service delivery models that support individualized and customized strategies for jobseekers and employers through our One-Stop Career Centers
3. Strong local governance of One-Stop Career Center operations

Through state coordination and investments in common information and resources, professional development and staff training, and virtual technologies, the state seeks to support

a network of One-Stop Career Centers that can meet the dynamic needs of jobseekers and employers.

Integration of Partners and Services

Services are delivered by state and local government, as well as through competitive opportunities for funding. These services are accessible through 30 One-Stop Career Centers, with at least one center located in each of its 21 counties

Our One-Stop Career Centers integrate partners aligned with WIOA's partnership requirements, as well as specific New Jersey partners like NJBUILD and New Jersey Youth Corps. Additionally, our network of Career Centers leverages the strength of anchor institutions and organizations in our local communities, including community colleges, libraries, community and faith-based organizations, labor unions and educational institutions. By weaving together the supports, services, and funding that exist across these entities, we seek to ensure that jobseekers and students, **at all levels**, have access to high-quality career guidance, training opportunities, and job search and networking support.

Local WDBs provide leadership and oversight in establishing the structure of the One-Stop Career Center and the roles and responsibilities of different partners and staff operating within the local workforce system, including through the procurement of One-Stop Operators, career services, youth services, and TANF and SNAP employment and training services.

Although formal authority is spread across several agencies, New Jersey's workforce strategy is to promote a system where staff from different agencies and programs come together to support a common set of services, approaches, and functions within local One Stop Career Centers. We believe that support of selected co-enrollment and integrated staffing structures, including functional alignment of partner staff performing similar functions, can transform One-Stops from a loosely connected group of partners operating in silos to an efficient and coordinated collection of staff each focused on what they do best, to provide optimal service delivery for both jobseekers and employers.

For example, Title I and ES counselors that may have worked in parallel with a customer in the past, now work to integrate service delivery, reduce duplication of services, and establish differentiated roles and responsibilities that represent the strengths and expertise that different programs bring to the One Stop Career Center. In some cases, this might represent a hand-off from one role or program to another, in other cases co-enrollment and differentiated engagement across roles and programs may serve a jobseeker best.

As part of this integrated approach, customers are referred based on their needs and who can best help them. Functionally aligned staff have the same tools in their toolbox so there is no wrong door approach. Aligning partner staff by their function such as those providing counseling, interviewing, or group activities results in the ability to provide customers a better range of services when they need them, leading to improved efficiency and, most importantly, improved customer service and outcomes.

The table below outlines the full range of partners and programs that WIOA brings together and the specific government agencies and entities that help to guide, govern, and implement the work of these different partners in our One-Stop Career Center system.

New Jersey WIOA Partners and Responsible Entities

Required Partners	WIOA Program Partners	Governing Agency
Core Partners	Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth	Local WDBs (NJDOLE Division of Workforce Development oversight)
	Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy	Competitive Contracts (NJDOLE Division of Workforce Development oversight)
	Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (ES)	NJDOLE Division of Workforce Development
	Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation Services	NJDOLE Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services AND NJ Department of Human Services, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Additional Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title I NFJP (National Farmworker Job Program)/MSFW (Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker) Workforce 55+ (Senior Community Service Employment) TAA Program (Trade Adjustment Assistance) Jobs for Veteran State Grants Business Services REO (Reentry Employment Opportunities) NJ BUILD (New Jersey Builders Utilization Initiative for Labor Diversity) Federal Bonding Program National Dislocated Worker Grants 	NJDOLE Division of Workforce Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title III Unemployment Compensation 	NJ Division of Income Security
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WorkFirst New Jersey (TANF Employment & Training) SNAP Employment & Training 	Local WDBs (NJDOLE Division of Workforce Development and Department of Human Services oversight)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CTE (Career technical education programs) at postsecondary level - Carl D. Perkins Act 	New Jersey Department of Education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Rental Assistance Program (SRAP) HUD Employment and Training programs HHS Employment and training activities carried out under Community Services Block Grant 	New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title I Job Corps Title I YouthBuild 	United States Department of Labor

In addition to the partners highlighted in the table above, WIOA encourages engagement of Small Business Administration (SBA) Programs, Public Libraries, Transportation Agencies, and Mental Health Agencies in One-Stop Career Center operations. Additional NJ-based programs targeting specific special populations such as Helmets to Hardhats (H2H) and New Jersey Youth Corps (NJYC) also may serve as additional partners enhancing the opportunities available to jobseekers locally.

The development of local level Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) are a critical tool for supporting the integration of services across

these required and additional optional partners – including specific opportunities for (1) coordinating career and training services across required partner programs, (2) leveraging expertise and resources of partners to support the success of unique populations, and (3) facilitating outreach and connection to specific prioritized groups. The development and refinement of MOUs and IFAs serve as a planning process and centering point for ongoing communication regarding service coordination and resource sharing. MOUs/IFAs, at their best, help to bring abstract partnerships into concrete plans for an integrated model of service delivery within One-Stop Career Centers.

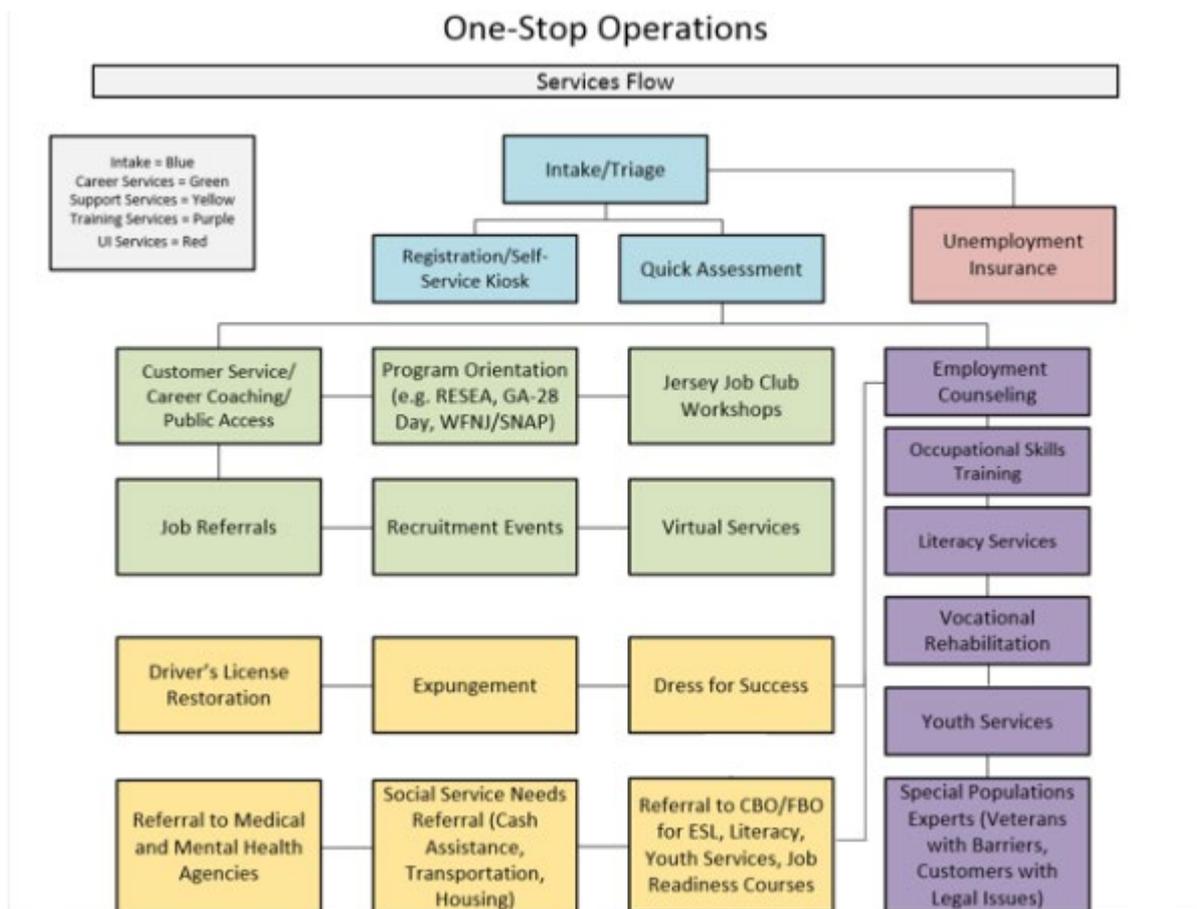
Individualized and Customized Strategies for Jobseekers and Employers

The figure on the next page provides an overview of the different pathways and service flows available from initial intake in New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center network. 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.

On-site customer flow begins with intake. When a customer enters the One-Stop Career Center, they are greeted by designated intake professionals composed of core partner staff knowledgeable about all One-Stop service offerings among core and additional partners. Scheduled customers pre-selected for participation in programs such as RESEA and TANF/GA/SNAP programs are directed to the appropriate orientation. Likewise, customers with one-on-one appointments are directed to the appropriate staff.

Intake staff serve a critical role in quickly assessing the needs of walk in customers, ensuring that they are registered in the One-Stop case management system, and routing those customers to the most appropriate partner or service based on the customers' needs. Ensuring that intake staff are adequately trained on the various career and training service available across partners and programs promotes the WIOA objective that services can be provided in any order based on customer need, e.g., job preparation activities might take place before and/or after completion of training services.

Additionally, as part of the customer flow highlighted in the pages below, One-Stop Career Centers also provide information to customers about rights and protections afforded to workers under state and federal law. This expands a long-standing NJDOL policy of protecting jobseekers from unscrupulous employers by explaining, for example, minimum wage and overtime rules, differences between an employee and independent contractor, and laws around family leave and earned sick time.



Depending on the outcome of the initial quick assessment performed by intake staff, an individual may be directed to individualized career and training services available through WIOA Title I programs, additional Wagner Peyser services, and/or programs of other One-Stop Career Center partners.

Across programs, a set of universal service delivery components help to ensure the ongoing individualization and customization of supports for jobseekers, including the opportunity to engage in:

1. **Assessments** that offer an evaluation of needs, assets, and, interests,
2. The development of **individualized service plans** based on assessment results,
3. Engagement in **career, training, and follow-up services** that meet individual goals and interests, including supportive services that reduce barriers to employment

These service delivery components are critical in serving individuals with specific needs and barriers, including individuals with disabilities, veterans, and youth, and ensuring that service offerings best support the success of the individual jobseeker.

Assessment

After initial intake, One-Stop Career Center services often start with additional assessment of academic and occupational skills, as well as supportive service needs. Key assessment tools available for use across New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center network include:

- CASAS – Measures basic skill and academic achievement in reading, listening, math, writing, and related areas. 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 addition to these assessments, many other high-quality assessment tools are available to ensure that participants have a chance to learn and explore more about their own academic skills, occupational skills and interests, and supportive service needs. As much as possible, the state seeks to support a use of common tools across different Title I, II, III, and IV programs and local areas, however, our approach also offers flexibility for integrating different tools based on the unique needs of individuals.

Plan Development

Whether called an Individual Employment Plans, Individualized Service Strategy, an Employability Development Plan, or something else, these service plans all offer the opportunity to develop an individualized plan that translates assessment outputs and results into specific educational and employment goals and service plans for meeting these goals. This serves as an agreement between One-Stop Career Center staff and customers about what to expect, and a tool to return and reflect on and service plans. Furthermore, these plans may incorporate service elements that cross over specific programs and funding streams, outlining a specific plan for co-enrollment in services.

Service Engagement

Individualized career services, training services, supportive services, and follow-up services all offer opportunities for supporting the successful connection and success of jobseekers to sustained career pathways and employment.

Individualized Career Services: Job preparation and job placement supports offer opportunities for providing customized career support to individuals – whether supporting the development of an individual’s resume, or utilizing that resume to build specific job leads and connections for an individual. WIOA allows for these types of services to precede or follow training services, or to stand alone in the support of an individual. As a state, we will work with our local areas to continue to deepen individualized career services available to individuals in our One-Stop Career Centers – providing customized support, coaching, and guidance to navigate connection to employment.

Training Services: 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 that support match and support both the needs of jobseekers and employers.

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 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, labor demand occupations, and in keeping with the customer's IEP.
- *On-the-Job Training (OJT)*: Business Services staff at each One-Stop may work with customers and area businesses to develop On-the-Job Training (OJT) agreements when appropriate. New Jersey continues to promote greater use of OJT as it is a method of ensuring that employers gain a workforce with the exact skills and training desired.
- *Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship*: The New Jersey Apprenticeship Network is focused on driving economic development through skills and educational attainment by concentrating efforts on sector-focused, demand-driven training programs that lead to meaningful employment; attainment of advanced credentials; diversity and inclusion; and sustainable linkages between employer needs, training providers, and the workforce. 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 NJDOL 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 another customer-level manner.
- *Other Work-Based Training* including Internships, Job Shadowing, Job Coaching, Mentoring and a number of customized training and related services 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.

For individuals in need of additional skill development, our objective as a state is to direct jobseekers to training opportunities through ITAs and work-based learning opportunities that help individuals to secure credentials and employment that provide entry and advancement in

career pathways. The New Jersey Department of Labor is in the process of updating its labor demand occupations list. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the list is used to identify occupational skills training programs that are eligible for Individual Training Accounts (ITA), as well as provide direction and guidance to local areas regarding the credentials that offer the most value to jobseekers in New Jersey's labor market.

Given the dynamic changes in New Jersey's labor market due to Covid-19 and resulting economic factors, while the state works on updates to this list, we will also work hand-in-hand with local areas to assure that the credentials offered and obtained by job seekers are of value to industry and support career development and success. The current list of labor demand occupations is available on the New Jersey Career Connections website at: http://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/prepare/skills/credentials/industry_value_d_credentials.shtml.

Supportive Services: Supportive services offer a holistic set of supports for addressing a wide variety of barriers to employment to help meet the unique circumstances and needs of individuals and open up opportunities for achieving their employment and education goals. Supportive services may include, assistance with childcare, housing, accommodations for unique needs, legal services, training-related costs, and a range of other services needed to address barriers individuals face to succeeding in WIOA programs, training and/or employment, including needs-related payments. Supportive services must be coupled with long term plans for sustaining barrier reduction. Local WDBs must consider and develop specific plans and policies for robust provision of supportive services.

Follow-up Services: Follow-up services offer targeted support to individuals based on identified needs. Follow-up services support transitions and the success of individuals in employment or education placements. These services are critical to sustaining growth and progress achieved during an individual's engagement in One-Stop Career Center services.

Service Integration Priorities

As we move forward, some key priorities will guide our investments and work as a state and with our local areas. As highlighted above, local WDBs and One Stop Operators are responsible for developing and executing local plans that emphasize the organization of state and local resources to support individualized access and engagement in One-Stop Career Centers. This includes leveraging:

- 1. *Business Services:* Building capacity to match and fill gaps between employer needs and jobseeker skills and interests through state and local business service functions, particularly in developing and operationalizing work-based learning opportunities**
- 2. *Virtual Services:* Increasing access and engagement through investments in tools that support virtual intake, assessment, and service delivery – including virtual self-services and staff-assisted virtual services**
- 3. *Career Services:* Emphasizing work readiness and career advisement across WIOA services, including in Wagner Peyser and Title I programs specifically.**
- 4. *Supportive Services:* Leveraging resources across required partners and additional community partners to reduce barriers to employment beyond specific training-related needs**

The table below highlights specific state actions that New Jersey is taking to support these efforts and the development of these capacities locally:

Business Services	New Jersey is moving towards more coordination and integration of business services across the State and with local areas to ensure that offerings are coordinated and maximized to meet the needs of New Jersey’s businesses and connect jobseekers to the best opportunities. In particular, NJ seeks to build our state and local workforce system capacity to develop and support work-based learning opportunities that connect jobseekers directly to employers and ensure that training builds targeted skills most critical to specific positions and industries.
Virtual Services	New Jersey has made a variety of investments in online resources to support the work of local One-Stop Career Centers and seeks the integration of these tools into customer service flows. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job preparation and search tools through Job Source • Virtual appointment system to schedule online and in-person One-Stop appointments • DocuSign to secure signatures and documents virtually • SkillUp NJ, a platform that offers over 6,000 training courses to jobseekers statewide • Upgrades to AOSOS to support integrated case management and connection to other resources; as well as continued exploration of a new WIOA system of record • Single sign-on for Unemployment Insurance
Career Services	Core workshops supporting job readiness and related career advising work have become increasingly important in today’s dynamic labor market and as individuals and families balance multiple pressures. Topics include résumé writing, interview skills, networking, social media in job search, job search assistance, and orientation to other available services. The state, in working with local areas, seeks to continue expanding specific workshops for various populations and about specific programs.
Supportive Services	Given the inequitable impacts of Covid-19 on our communities and jobseekers, New Jersey is focused on expanding supports available for reducing barriers to employment through programs and funding available across our One-Stop Career Center partners. The state’s recent <i>Supportive Services Technical Assistance Guide</i> offers a thorough overview of the types of supports that can be provided to individuals to support successful transitions and retention in employment. New Jersey will continue to work with our local areas to build the partnerships at the state level and locally to more seamlessly address and support the barriers to employment that are often structural in individuals’ lives.

Local Governance of One-Stop Career Centers

The state’s plan moving forward also focuses on local governance of One-Stop Career Centers through New Jersey’s local WDBs. Local WDBs are responsible for critical functions related to the procurement of career services through One-Stop Operators, youth service providers, and other vendor contracts, as well as oversight and monitoring of these procured contracts, including certification of local One-Stop Career Centers.

The SETC is committed to supporting local WDBs through its Local Workforce Board Certification and Capacity Building processes. The Commission has built 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.

In New Jersey's WIOA system, each One-Stop Operator serves to integrate partner services, 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.

One-Stop Operators promote 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. The staff at each One-Stop includes a mix of NJDOL and local government staff, as well as those from other partners such as national SCSEP grantees.

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. NJDOL envisions the One-Stop Operator as the entity who promotes an integrated, customer-focused delivery system that maximizes each partner's strength and reduces redundancies. 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. In addition to designing the expectations of this role, local WDBs must ensure the procurement and ongoing monitoring of the One-Stop Operator and the operations of all One-Stop Career Centers based on identified roles.

The One-Stop Operator roles are to:

- Provide an integrated delivery system;
- Ensure hardest to serve populations are prioritized;
- Coordinate service delivery among partners;
- Coordinate service delivery among physical and electronic sites; and
- Coordinate services across the local workforce area.

Other responsibilities are to:

- Maintain a common intake system among core partners;
- 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 through 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;
- Provide of basic services such as orientations, information on careers and labor markets, and resource rooms;
- Submit annual staffing plans and operational budgets;
- Following federal and state regulations pertaining to handling of EEO responsibilities, customer complaints, and physical and programmatic accessibility;
- Implement board policies; and
- Report to the Board on operations, performance accountability, and continuous improvements.

Each local board selects the One-Stop Operator through a competitive process. Any Request for Proposal shall 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 and federal 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 no less than every two years. Local areas may offer no more than two one-year extensions to successful One-Stop Operator contracts. A successful One-Stop Operator meets or exceeds local area and state performance standards, as applicable; satisfies the requirements of the One-Stop Career Center Certification, provided in SETC Policy Resolution #2016-14, included in Appendix 3 of this Plan. Further, the local Workforce Development Board (WDB) must have determined that neither its One-Stop Operator, nor any of its sub-contracted entities, has engaged in fraud or abuse, as those terms are used within 29 U.S.C. 3122 (c)(3)(A), and that neither the One-Stop Operator, nor any of its sub-contracted entities, 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 local area grant recipient retains the financial and administrative responsibility to ensure that the procurement and resultant system is appropriate, aligns with area needs and service structure, and is consistent with the local plan as approved by the local Workforce Development Board.

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

- Discloses any potential conflicts of interest arising from the relationships of the operators with particular training service providers or other service providers;
- 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
- Complies with Federal regulations, and procurement policies, relating to the calculation and use of profits.

On September 20, 2016, the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) adopted Policy Resolution #2016-14, creating the One-Stop Career Center Certification Process. New Jersey’s One-Stop Career Center Certification process had an effective date of July 1, 2017. It considers the requirement that a competitively selected One-Stop Operator should be in place in each local Workforce Development Area. Under this policy, local Workforce Development Boards are

to establish a local process of review that may include a qualified group of non-conflicted local board members or a qualified third-party entity. All local areas will have the responsibility to ensure that the group established locally is qualified and able to perform such work. Pre-requisites to One-Stop certification are necessary. This recognizes essential elements of programming and services that must be in place prior to certification. The pre-requisites include accessibility standards, establishment of a grievance/complaint system for customers, a certified local Workforce Development Board (WDB), and a local memorandum of understanding (MOU) that includes the local WDB and its partners. SETC Policy Resolution #2016-14 is provided in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

Through the early stages of the pandemic the SETC and NJDOL hosted weekly meetings designed to share with local partners ideas, practices and information with the intention of related to the ongoing situation. Sessions included presentations regarding Unemployment Insurance, Labor Market Information and employer perspectives. Presenters included the Heldrich Center For Workforce Development, Future Works and the NJDOL.

In addition, 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.

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 local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) are at the heart of the workforce development ecosystem within their jurisdiction or area. In this pivotal role, they also serve as critical partners in the implementation of the Governor's Jobs NJ strategy.

NJDOL and its counterpart state agencies manage a range of federal and state programs that support workforce development activities but are not part of this combined plan; NJDOL and the SETC are collaborating with local Workforce Development Boards to determine the most effective strategies to ensure alignment at all levels to maximize benefit to job seekers and employers alike.

In addition to the workforce funds directly administered by the local boards, the state has established a system where other workforce-related funds that flow into local areas are coordinated with the local board. For example, Carl D. Perkins funding, which supports Career and Technical Education (CTE), requires applicants to consult with the local WDB in the development of the grant applications to ensure the grant application conforms and supports local workforce strategy. This transparent process ensures that any such grants received in the local area are appropriately supported within the local workforce system, which includes but is not limited to referrals, connection to employers, and sharing of the latest labor market intelligence.

Additionally, employment and training supports that are delivered by state NJDOL staff, such as WorkFirst and SNAP Employment & Training, are developed and delivered in consultation with local Workforce Development Boards. These relationships are established in state-level Memoranda of Understanding to ensure continuity of service and efficiencies for individuals connecting to One-Stop Career Center services and opportunities.

Commitment to alignment is also reflected in two major hallmarks of the Governor's vision for a fairer and stronger economy: apprenticeship and industry partnerships.

Registered Apprenticeships

As described in Sections II and VI of this plan, expansion of apprenticeships is central to the state's workforce strategy. In fact, there are more than 750 Registered Apprenticeship programs and nearly 8,000 apprentices in the state, fueled by candidate referrals from local One-Stops. Further, the Governor is committed to increasing access to these programs as well as expanding the model to the full range of the state's growth industries. To these ends, he has launched the Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE) and Growing Apprenticeship in Nontraditional Sectors (GAINS) competitive grant programs. The former offers stipends to participants and access to supportive services such as childcare and transportation, as well as promotes diversity and inclusion by encouraging the hiring on underrepresented groups and those facing economic barriers to career advancement. The latter are competitive grants designed to provide experience and expand the skilled workforce in high-demand industry sectors such as health care, information technology, clean energy, and more. Both these programs are administered by NJDOL.

The impact of these programs is further amplified by the NJ Pathways Leading Apprenticeships to a College Education (NJ PLACE) initiative, which focuses on having college credits awarded to Registered Apprenticeship programs.

Industry Partnerships

NJDOL, in collaboration with local Workforce Development Boards, is currently modernizing its work with key industry sectors. Embracing the Next Generation Industry Partnerships model, a coalition of state agencies is developing regional groups of business leaders from targeted industries to collaborate with workforce development, economic development, education, and community-based organizations and other public partners to address shared workforce and other competitive needs of the sector. Among the benefits of this work is the opportunity to gain true labor market intelligence to inform work with customers in the One-Stops, as well as ensure the investments in skill development are in line with the current and projected needs of New Jersey's industries.

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 (e.g. transportation), to individuals, including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B), and individuals in remote areas. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Coordination with Partners

The primary vehicle for delivering One-Stop partner workforce services in New Jersey are its One-Stop Career Centers. There are centers in each of the state's 21 counties and have been sited to maximize public access via New Jersey's public transportation infrastructure.

One-Stop Career Centers are overseen by operators, who are responsible for creating Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with each partner. The primary purposes of these MOUs are (1) to define partner responsibilities and contributions to the local delivery system and (2) to codify processes that facilitate seamless service delivery to customers from multiple partners when necessary to support the best possible outcomes. Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) complement and build on the MOUs to ensure funding supports the One-Stop Career Center infrastructure.

Furthermore, New Jersey is taking several steps to increase the effectiveness of our current case management and participant tracking system – America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS) – to allow for the seamless provision of services to the same customer by multiple partners. A new AOSOS interface will be launching that offers more ease in accessing and entering data in AOSOS via the web. Additionally, NJDOL is working to coordinate and establish common standards of AOSOS data entry for our One-Stop Career Centers, to ensure accurate reporting on our programs, as well as offer a higher quality of information for supporting case management and program oversight.

Finally, NJDOL has begun to explore procurement of a new data system that will enhance and offer new opportunities for tracking enrollment, progress, and outcomes across programs and partners contributing to our One-Stop Career Center network. Over the next two years, NJDOL will focus on increasing the quality of the program data available to our state and local teams to inform continuous improvement of service delivery.

In addition to an increased focus on MOUs and IFAs and data systems and quality for enhancing the integration of partners in our One-Stop Career Center network, we are also focused on specific strategies and approaches for integrating core programs into our One-Stop Career Centers. These strategies are highlighted below.

Coordination and Co-Enrollment with WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy

The purpose of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Title II is to create a partnership among the Federal Government, States, and localities to provide, on a voluntary basis, adult education and literacy activities, in order to—

- (a) Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency;
 - (b) Assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain the education and skills that—
 - (1) Are necessary to becoming full partners in the educational development of their children;
- and

- (2) Lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family;
- (c) Assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and in the transition to postsecondary education and training, through career pathways; and
- (d) Assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in—
 - (1) Improving their—
 - (i) Reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in English; and
 - (ii) Mathematics skills; and
 - (2) Acquiring an understanding of the American system of Government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

The State expects that a significant number of individuals accessing Title II services will also be accessing WIOA Title I workforce development services concurrently, 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 Title I services. However, where appropriate, in cases where the person requires the Title II services, New Jersey will co-enroll them into the two programs simultaneously and work to build a coordinated program of services between the two programs.

Adult Basic Education (ABE) is literacy instruction aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards to eligible individuals with educational functioning levels (EFLs) at a particular literacy level as listed in the NRS EFL table as ABE 1, 2, 3 or 4. Workforce Preparation activities (as described below) can be provided concurrently with ABE instruction.

Adult Secondary Education (ASE) is literacy instruction aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards to eligible individuals with educational functioning levels (EFLs) at a particular literacy level as listed in the NRS EFL table as ABE 5 or 6. ASE activities are also designed to lead to the attainment of a secondary diploma (or its equivalent) and transition to postsecondary education/training or employment. Workforce Preparation activities (as described below) can be provided concurrently with ASE instruction.

English Language Acquisition (ELA) is English language instruction designed to help eligible learners achieve proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening; and that leads to attainment of a secondary diploma (or its equivalent), transition to postsecondary/training, or employment. To meet the requirement of leading to the attainment of a secondary diploma (or its equivalent), transition to postsecondary education/training, or employment, the ELA program must: 1) align to the College and Career Readiness Standards, 2) offer college/career counseling services, and/or 3) be part of a career pathway.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) are education services provided to English language learners to achieve competence in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens. Services must include, 1) instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, and 2) instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. Services may include workforce preparation and workforce training.

Workforce Preparation is instruction provided concurrently with ABE, ASE, or ELA/IELCE activities that is designed to help eligible individuals acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills. Participation in

workforce preparation activities also must be designed to lead to employability skills and the development of competencies in using resources and information, working with others, and understanding systems to successfully transition to and complete postsecondary education/training and employment.

Integrated Education and Training (IET) is a service approach to providing adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Required IET components are: 1) adult education and literacy, 2) workforce preparation activities, and 3) workforce training. Instruction is based on occupationally relevant materials for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Participation is intended for eligible individuals at all skill levels, including adults with low academic skills.

Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals (Section 225)

Up to 20% of funding made available to New Jersey under Section 222(a)(1) may be used to fund programs for corrections education and other institutionalized individuals as described in Section 225. DOL will award funds under Section 225 using the same process and timeline as described in this grant application. Priority will be given to programs serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years. Applicants applying to provide services under Section 225 must indicate so in the submitted application and responses to narrative questions must address the provision of services to incarcerated individuals. All assurances and requirements described in this contract will apply to grantees funded under Section 225.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE; Section 243) DOL uses federal funds provided under WIOA Section 243 to establish an integrated English literacy and civics program for English language learners that is consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR part 463 Subpart D, §§463.70, 463.71, 463.72, 463.73, 463.74, 463.75. IELCE services are allowable activities that must include the IELCE educational services (described above in Allowable Activities and in WIOA §463.33) and must be delivered in combination with IET activities (described above in Allowable Activities and in WIOA §463.36). Please note that the provision of services for English language learners not including the incorporation of IET must be provided using funds awarded under Section 231. Applicants may apply for Section 243 IELCE funds under this application process through the submission of additional application responses that are specific to Section 243 requirements. Section 243 funds are allocated and accounted for in a separate funding stream in the SAGE system.

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.

Title II funds can be used for activities assisting eligible adults (16 years and older) with obtaining postsecondary education, training, or employment. Specifically, the funds serve people with barriers to employment, including English language learners, low-income individuals, and immigrants. All programs are taught in English and rely on 21st century learning, such as the infusion of technology into programs. Additionally, all NJ Title II programs utilize curricula which is aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards.

The performance goals of WIOA Title II are an educational functional level increase (minimum one grade level) in reading and math scores based on a pre-test and post-test with an NRS

approved test listed as part of New Jersey's Assessment Policy which is approved by the US Department of Education (USED) on an annual basis.

New Jersey's Adult Education system will be firmly connected to Title I to help 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 credential programs.

Title II Funding

Title II grants are made to entities in each county of the state for delivery of ABE and ELL services for all educational functioning levels. The current formula for allocating Title II funding to local area is based primarily on the local high school dropout rate in the local area's public-school system(s). New Jersey will work to investigate and infuse more state dollars into the overall state Literacy Plan (see Section VI of this Combined Plan) in order to accommodate those the WIOA Title II funding cannot reach.

Available Funding

The total funding available for fiscal year 2022 (FY22) for the Consolidated Adult Basic Skills (ABS) and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Grant Program is \$16,589,00.00. This award amount is tentative and contingent upon final approval from the United States Department of Education (USED). For each successive fiscal year of the grant award the approved applicant will be notified by DOL of the available funds as confirmed by USED. State will work to match the required 25% or higher for all Title II grantees beginning with the current state fiscal year.

Allocation of Funding (S)

The projected allocations of federal AEFLA funds for each of New Jersey's 21 counties are determined using data from the most recent American Community Survey (ACS).

Coordination and Co-Enrollment with WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act Services

Appropriate co-enrollment of Wagner-Peyser participants is based on customers' needs and informed by system-wide common intake and common assessment tools. Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I partners share a common case management system (AOSOS). Strategic co-enrollment of WIOA partner program participants has helped transform One-Stop service delivery from a sequence of service model to a career services model under WIOA, enabling jobseekers to immediately access the services, including training, most beneficial to their employment needs. Further, improved communication between partner data systems helps minimize duplication of services, better manage referrals between partners, informs individualized customer action plans across partner agencies, and provides a more comprehensive and seamless delivery experience for customers.

Each One-Stop Career Center has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between required and additional partners, which outlines partners' responsibilities. Common intake and assessment protocols, as well as staff cross-training, further ensure appropriate services are delivered to customers. Those with significant barriers to employment may be served by Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I funded staff dedicated to assisting with the needs of special populations such as customers with disabilities, veterans, older workers, the long-term unemployed, ex-offenders, and public assistance and other low-income individuals. Sharing of information, skill levels and employment development plans assists in providing

comprehensive services. Referrals to literacy and disability services have been accelerated through improved system-wide intake protocols and the use of common assessment tools.

As reflected on the One-Stop Operations flowchart earlier in this Section, 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. Wagner-Peyser provides dislocated workers and other jobseekers with labor exchange services virtually and at the bricks and mortar One-Stop Career Centers. Online services are offered on NJDOL supported websites, as described in Section II of this Plan.

NJDOL has a “Single Sign-On” system that allows customers to access their UI account, receive information on job opportunities, and certify their continued need for benefits. NJDOL expects to integrate the single sign-on system with a new online labor exchange system in CY2020.

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 NJDOL (DVRS), for any individuals with disabilities. A portion of funds is segmented and delivered to the separate Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) 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.

DVRS collaborates with all WIOA partners, and all but one of its 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.

CBVI 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 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.

DVRS and CBVI have information on their respective website, developed collaboratively and that is standard and reciprocal across the two programs. That information also provides common language and references to services and programs delivered by NJDOL that the populations served by the two organizations can access.

DVRS and CBVI services are detailed in Section VI of this Combined Plan.

Coordination and Co-Enrollment: WorkFirst New Jersey & SNAP Employment & Training

The NJ Department of Human Services' Division of Family Development (DHS/DFD) is the agency responsible for overseeing the WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ), the state's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), which also includes the state's General Assistance (GA) program, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). WFNJ, GA, 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.

NJDOL 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 NJDOL 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 New Jersey Department of Labor guiding the close collaboration between the two entities in the delivery of WFNJ and SNAP services. The Memorandum of Understanding outlines the way in which WFNJ- and SNAP-eligible customers will receive workforce-related services, how those activities will be tracked and reported, and the flow of funding of federal and state TANF, GA, and SNAP E&T funds to support these effort, as well as all other required provisions to ensure continuity of benefits along with the best possible workforce outcomes.

Services available to eligible customers with WFNJ, GA, and SNAP Employment and Training include:

- Career guidance and job search assistance
- Employability assessment and career planning
- Case management
- Vocational/job skills training
- Work-based learning opportunities, including community work experience
- Basic skills/literacy
- Referral to support services, as appropriate; and
- All other workforce services generally available to One-Stop system customers.

In addition, WFNJ customers are eligible for participation in the Smart Steps program. Under this program, NJDOL 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 NJDOL funds and stops the five (5) year TANF eligibility clock while the TANF participant is pursuing their college level degree.

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 NJDOL 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 with the 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 ensure that the 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 NJDOL 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.

The service model closely parallels the WIOA Title I service menu and processes. WFNJ counselors are co-located and managed alongside the WIOA service staff, and client flow is consistent with the processes in the local One-Stop.

WFNJ and SNAP work registrants normally receive funded employment and training services through WFNJ allocated dollars. However, where appropriate customers are co-enrollment, in particular when a customer's employment goals will be advanced through a unique training opportunity being delivered by the WIOA system.

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 NJDOL as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding, are appropriated to NJDOL at the beginning of each fiscal year. The amount appropriated is 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 are utilized before any other nonfederal source and the General State Fund is the payer of last resort for State funds. NJDOL provides a final expenditure report to DFD by September 30 of each year.

Coordination and Co-Enrollment with Trade Adjustment Act

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 WIOA Dislocated Worker and Trade Act programs, meeting the WIOA requirement of coordination and integration with core and partner programs. To better assist with coordination and integration of TAA, NJ TAA staff have visited other states' TAA programs to learn their best practices. Among the states that NJ visited was Oregon, which has created and implemented a TAA process that is now being successfully used by 3 other states and being considered by several others, including New Jersey. The model adds additional TAA field staff, referred to as TAA Navigators, within the One-Stops to work in tandem with the current TAA field staff. The TAA Navigators would partner with the local Workforce Development Boards, Business Service Representatives, employers and local community

organizations to proactively seek out trade affected employers, essentially serving as the public face of the TAA program.

Currently, TAA Field Representatives are housed within One-Stop Career Centers and work with local One-Stop Career Center staff to insure efficient coordination between TAA and core and partner programs. 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 more seamlessly access resources such as TANF, DVR and other supportive services offered in the community if needed.

There are currently seven TAA field representatives in the State. These seven representatives rotate between One-Stops to meet and service clients. In addition to the services they provide, outlined in the required MOUs, they also contribute to One-Stop operations funds through the Infrastructure Funding Agreements. Currently 10 percent of TAA funding is for staffing costs, with the remaining 90 percent allocated for upskilling participants. This commitment to training funding has proven successful.

The process for a dislocated worker receiving One-Stop services begins with a group orientation with TAA staff where staff discuss options available for the dislocated workers and show customers how to create an account in the online Trade Act Data Application (TADA). In addition to the Orientation Notice, the customer receives their Letter of Eligibility for TAA and a TAA benefits booklet. After the orientation, the customer creates an account in TADA and schedules an 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 given information on the wide range of resources available to them as customers of New Jersey's workforce system, including, but not limited to the resources in their local One-Stop Career Centers, the state's network of registered apprenticeship programs, and appropriate labor market information to assist them in making informed choices about the way in which they will utilize training funds (paid to training vendors via a Purchase Service Contract) and other resources to support their career transitions. Customers are assisted by staff to codify their choices in a workforce plan, which is then supported by the appropriate partners.

Supportive Services Provision and Coordination

New Jersey is committed to a stronger and fairer economy to all, and central to that vision for our future is providing the support services our most vulnerable jobseekers need to succeed in the labor market.

In addition to the state-level partnerships and memoranda of understanding described in this section and elsewhere in this plan, NJDOL encourages local Workforce Development Boards to develop partnerships to provide a variety of services they identify as required to help their customers make the successful transition to employment and supports them in securing these

partnerships. The State requires local WDBs 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.

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 and to achieve the goals of industry or sector partners in the state. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

A key strategy of Jobs NJ is to match talent to jobs. A cornerstone of this effort is the launch of NJ Talent Solutions in 2020 to help employers address their challenges head-on by bringing together multiple government agencies to use innovative hiring and training strategies to help businesses solve pressing talent challenges. As envisioned, this program will create a Roadmap to address employer talent needs, which could include support to access existing workforce program, development of new training, the creation or modification of credential programs or activating to address structural barriers to hiring. This initiative will be supported by, as well as enhance, the employer-focused services currently in underway be the programs in this combined plan, described below.

The Business Relations teams at each One-Stop may include state and staff funded through WIOA Title I, staff of the local One-Stop Operator, staff funded through Wagner-Peyser 10 percent funding, Local Veterans' Employment Representative (called Veteran's Business Representatives, or VBRs in New Jersey), Rapid Response staff, and Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) funded staff. Regardless of the funding source or employer of record, all work in coordination under the guidance of the local Workforce Development Board and One-Stop Operator management, collaborate closely, and collectively have knowledge of the priority sectors in the local area. Where appropriate, one or more staff even specialize in a key industry sector based on local needs and requirements.

With the deployment of the Salesforce client relationship management (CRM) platform in May 2017, New Jersey has been able to better coordinate the business services work within each region. All members of the Business Relations teams have access to the system and can enter and view contact notes, status updates, job orders and other interactions with each business customer. The goal is to work closely with the employer to understand their specific needs and work environment. When job orders are posted, the system allows for a lead team member to review jobseeker résumés coming from throughout the system and deliver the qualified candidates to the business.

Coordination of Business Services with Vocational Rehabilitation

The business services unit from DVRS liaisons with the Business Relations team within the One-Stop system. They 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. Through these

activities, and with information about job orders, DVRS staff identifies potential qualified candidates to be considered in the applicant pool.

Additionally, DVRS staff works directly 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 support other members of the Business Relations team in helping companies develop better accessibility plans and make reasonable accommodations when hiring individuals with disabilities.

All Vocational Rehabilitation business services staff has full access to the Salesforce platform and the One-Stop system statewide.

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.

Coordination of Business Services with Veterans Programs

New Jersey currently deploys its Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) funding in a non-traditional format which allows for better coordination and services to employers related to veteran placement assistance. This revised model has been highlighted by USDOL as a model for replication in other states. The federal JVSG grant is intended to fund two positions. This is seen in most states as Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program staff (DVOPs) and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) and funding of the LVER position traditionally allows for only part-time service. New Jersey has chosen to concentrate funding into full-time staff roles. These full-time Veteran Business Services Representatives work as part of a larger state team focused on business outreach and engagement. Coordination occurs when the Veteran Business Representatives (VBRs) collaborate with various state and local peers, allowing the team members to maximize their time and effort in serving employers and the veteran community.

New Jersey is at the 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 (called Veterans Business Representatives, or VBRs in New Jersey) 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, NJDOL dedicates a lead business representative (usually one of the VBRs) 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.

VBRs now work within the same NJDOL 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 of staffing resources, there is not full-time representation at every One-Stop Career Center. However, VBRs

are mobile and strategically sited across New Jersey's workforce regions and provide customized services to companies out of any of the One-Stop locations across New Jersey.

Coordination of Business Services with Trade Adjustment Act

The Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) is fully integrated with WIOA Title I and therefore utilizes the WIOA-funded Business Representatives for placement support.

Coordination of Business Services with the Office of Apprenticeship

In March 2018, Governor Murphy announced the development of the first Office of Apprenticeship in New Jersey, as well as the creation of the New Jersey Apprenticeship Network (NJAN). The Office of Apprenticeship works closely with the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) and serves as the one-stop shop for employers, nonprofits and secondary and post-secondary institutions interested in apprenticeship opportunities. The office serves to:

- Facilitate interactions among businesses, workforce intermediaries, apprentices, educators, and the United States Department of Labor.
- Increase diversity and inclusion in registered apprenticeship programs in the state.
- Create formal linkages to employers, secondary and higher education systems so that more New Jerseyans receive opportunities in career pathways with upward mobility and sustainable wages.
- Help apprentices earn college credits, access robust career counseling for middle- and high-school students and increase diversity and inclusion in apprenticeship programs.

The Office of Apprenticeship serves as a liaison with the Business Relations teams within the One-Stop system to assist employers who have identified workforce hiring or pipeline development needs and are looking for a proven model to attract and retain talent. The office provides technical assistance to organizations that express interest in developing an apprenticeship program and provide the appropriate referral to USDOL for program development. The office also coordinates between and among educational partners, Workforce Development Boards, and county/state agencies to facilitate training and/or funding opportunities. Office of Apprenticeship also uses the Salesforce client relationship management (CRM) platform to engage and record all business engagements, as well as tracking key data such as occupational information, regional trends by industry/counties and status of engagement. In addition, apprenticeship resource information and marketing materials can be found at www.apprenticeship.nj.gov.

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).

Governor Murphy's commitment to a stronger and fairer economy has resulted in a new level of collaboration between the New Jersey Departments of Labor and Education. Jobs NJ, released in January 2020, outlines that vision in terms of the workforce development ecosystem. Specifically, its objectives are to ensure that all job seekers have the education and training necessary to access high-quality employment and that all businesses and employers that are offering high-quality employment can quickly and efficiently fill their talent needs.

Over the last two decades, myriad practices have become embedded into fabric of how the state's workforce development system, community colleges, and area career and technical education programs collaborate and operate to increase the number of New Jerseyans with pathways to economic success.

In addition to regular communication protocols, data sharing, and cross-referral, these relationships have been augmented by special projects and state investments. For example, in 2017 NJDOL launched seven (7) Talent Development Centers to expand the capacity of the state's community colleges and universities to meet industry needs. Using state workforce development funds, Talent Development Centers were designed to build and implement new career pathways to meet employer needs and all individuals to earn industry-valued credentials, enter an apprenticeship program, and earn college credits that can be used to complete an Associate's or Bachelor's degree. Each Talent Development Center received an implementation grant of \$1.2M to develop the program, serve as an anchor partner for their specialized area, and train dislocated, disadvantaged, and incumbent workers. The following institutions received awards Camden County College for Advanced Manufacturing; NJ Institute of Technology (NJIT) for Construction & Utilities; Rowan College at Gloucester County for Financial Services; Rutgers University for Health Care; Rutgers University for Life Sciences; Fairleigh Dickinson University for Retail, Hospitality & Tourism; and Rowan College at Burlington County for Transportation, Logistics & Distribution.

Another example of close collaboration yielding innovation is New Jersey's Career Connections interactive job seeker portal, which was developed with guidance and input from the state's community colleges and other key partners. The career navigation framework consists of expert insights and actionable guidance, and follows three steps: **Plan, Prepare, and Succeed**. This model simplifies career planning, job search, and training identification. The website is optimized for mobile use and designed to enable a fluid user experience.

Jobs NJ has set a new standard, however, for these collaborations and established two 2025 goals:

- Better connect education and training to industry needs by increasing the number of post-secondary graduates employed in high-demand industries by 10 percent and
- Ensure at least 25,000 additional adults enroll and graduate with a high-quality credential that helps them advance their careers.

To achieve these goals, the NJDOL is leading three major initiatives that will facilitate an enhanced level of collaboration between the state's workforce system and talent development system.

Next Generation Industry Partnerships

New Jersey is transitioning from Talent Networks, its legacy sector initiative, to the Next Generation Industry Partnerships model. Industry Partnerships are the NJDOL's vehicle for building sector partnerships that facilitate public-private collaborations to meet workforce and economic challenges.

An Industry Partnership is a regional partnership of business leaders from a targeted industry who work together with workforce development, economic development, education, community-based organizations and other public partners to address the shared workforce and other competitiveness needs of the sector. New Jersey has embraced the nationally-recognized Next Generation Sector Partnership model to build industry-driven partnerships across the

state and will begin launching partnerships in 2020, starting with manufacturing. NJDOL will prioritize work with community colleges and early college high schools to build career pathways that allow students to gain credits in non-degree programs and continue on to degree programs.

New Jersey Apprenticeship Network (NJAN)

In 2018, Governor Murphy created the first Office of Apprenticeship in New Jersey, which is housed in NJDOL, Division of Workforce Development, and launched NJAN to improve New Jersey's apprenticeship offerings. The Network has implemented the Growing Apprenticeships in Nontraditional Sectors (GAINS) and Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE) programs, which have distributed more than \$7M in grants to fund training to date. Thus far, these funds have supported 1,200 apprentices and pre-apprentices in programs ranging from auto mechanic to dementia care to computer support specialist.

In addition to direct funding for programs that align education and workforce at the state and local levels, NJAN is focused on driving economic development by concentrating efforts on sector-focused, demand driven training and education programs that lead to better-paying careers, advanced credentials, and skill attainment. NJAN is charged to develop sector and occupation apprenticeship pipelines by aligning state and federal pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs. The NJ Department of Education's Expanding Pre-Apprenticeship in a New Direction (ExPAND) grant also is coordinated with and supports these efforts by helping high school students develop career-focused competencies and skills in New Jersey's key industries.

NJ Pathways Leading Apprentices to College Education 2.0 (NJ PLACE 2.0)

NJ PLACE was developed in 2004 to remove barriers between academic content of vocational education and other forms of postsecondary education. A decade ago, the state legislature formally established NJ PLACE as a function of NJDOL. The program has been reimaged as a Degree Apprenticeship program, a fairly new model that combines postsecondary education with paid on-the-job learning experiences through Registered Apprenticeship programs. In January 2020, NJDOL released a \$2M notice of grant opportunity (NGO) to support this updated model.

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 can be accessed through the NJ Training Opportunities website (NJTOPPS.org). As noted elsewhere in this plan and required under WIOA, Registered Apprenticeship programs are automatically approved on the ETPL and remain valuable strategies for New Jersey.

New Jersey is developing revised guidance to clarify local spending expectations on Individual Training Account (ITA) grants by moving from a maximum amount available to an average amount available model. This will promote investments in training leading more customers to economic self-sufficiency through training in higher skill, higher pay occupations such as in HVAC, automotive repair, and the skilled building trades while simultaneously providing a

pipeline of skilled workers to replace aging baby boomers exiting the workforce. The guidance will also define the “reasonable” proportion of WIOA funding that should support grants, staff salaries, and infrastructure.

It should be noted that Industry Partnerships and the New Jersey Apprenticeship Network, described in the previous section, are designed to engage all interested education and training providers in state.

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).

Jobs NJ lays out a blueprint that expands access to educational opportunity and ensures those invests yield skills required for New Jersey’s in-demand jobs. Key efforts launched since 2018 to leverage resources to educational access in serve to better employment outcomes include the following:

Community College Opportunity Grants (CCOG)

This commitment enables low- and moderate-income students to attend any of the state’s 18 community colleges tuition- and fee-free after accounting for all other grants and scholarships received. More than 7,000 students received CCOGs in the most recent semester, and thousands more were found eligible for other federal and state grants that fully covered their tuition and fees.

Securing Our Children’s Future Bond Act

This act increased State support for vocational-technical schools and community colleges.

Expansion of the Educational Opportunity Fund

This fund provides financial assistance and services such as counseling, tutoring, and developmental coursework to students from educational and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Since 2018, the Administration has added \$3.75M to the fund to support 650 more students at over 40 participating institutions.

Opioid Recovery Employment Program

A component of the Governor’s opioid strategy, this program is a \$5M competitive grant to support training and employment opportunities for 600 individuals in 6 targeted counties whose workforce conditions or trajectories have been impacted by the opioid epidemic.

NJ PLACE 2.0

In January 2020, NJDOL announced \$2M in new funding for New Jersey’s Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education (NJ PLACE) program. The “Degree Apprenticeship” model transitions this long-standing program to a new approach that advances the integration of work-based learning (through Registered Apprenticeships) with post-secondary education. The programs supported by these funds will allow student apprentices to earn college credits and an appropriate wage simultaneously, thus removing the choice between working to support themselves or attending class to further their career.

NJDOL and other key state departments are continuing their collaboration with the Governor and other state leaders to create even more opportunities for access to education, with a focus

on targeted populations that include veterans, individuals with disabilities, immigrants, and justice-involved individuals.

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.

As reflected in previous sections of this plan, New Jersey has a deep commitment to improving access to postsecondary credentials. Simply put, creating a stronger and fairer economy means that all New Jerseyans must have the opportunity to earn a postsecondary credential, regardless of their age or background. As reflected in previous sections of this plan, Governor Murphy has made this a priority of his Administration. In fact, in Jobs NJ codified the following aspirations by 2025:

- Ensure 250,000 additional Black, Latinx, and Native American individuals attain postsecondary credentials.
- Raise postsecondary credential attainment in all counties to at least 45 percent.

Below are three key efforts, two led by NJDOL and one led by the NJ Department of Education, that reflect this commitment. All three are informed by cross-cutting state initiatives that are identifying high-opportunity industries; exploring the implications and opportunities that are coming as the nature of work evolves; and extrapolating insight from employers and industry leaders to create actionable, real-time labor market intelligence.

Data for the American Dream (D4AD)

The Data for the American Dream (D4AD) initiative supported innovative efforts that expand access to education and career data to help students and jobseekers – especially low-income, lower-skilled, underemployed, and unemployed Americans – make better career decisions in a changing economy. New Jersey was one of three states that received seed funding as D4AD's inaugural grantees for an 18-month period, from Sept. 2019 through Feb. 2021.

New Jersey received a grant to build an interactive website containing smart disclosure tools that will help jobseekers make informed decisions about training. The NJ Training Explorer website (currently in beta) will be targeted at customers of the state's human services programs and other disadvantaged populations and will replace our current Eligible Training Providers (ETP) website. The newly available data will help jobseekers obtain information about their desired employment and earnings outcomes; help employers find better-qualified employees; and will allow regulators to use data-driven information to weed out fraudulent and low-quality training programs. The project is led by NJDOL and operates in partnership with several other state agencies and organizations from the non-profit sector, private sector, and academia.

As an overarching guide to New Jersey's training efforts, the State has developed a policy with an intent toward maintaining a high proportion of industry-valued credentials in publicly funded training. New Jersey adopted its first Industry-Valued Credentials List in October 2016 and will continue to support the attainment of industry-valued credentials through analysis of labor market data, feedback from employers and stakeholders, and other available information. The original list is available on the New Jersey Career Connections website at:

<https://www.nj.gov/labor/career-services/tools-support/industry-valued-credentials/>

NJDOL is working with partners including Credential Engine to strengthen credential data collection and reporting, and with the New Jersey Council of Community Colleges to include high-value quality credentials in career pathway mapping initiatives with post-secondary education institutions around the state. NJDOL is currently seeking a technology solution that will enable its data collection to remain refreshed.

NJ Pathways Leading Apprentices to College Education 2.0 (NJ PLACE 2.0)

NJ PLACE was developed in 2004 to remove barriers between academic content of vocational education and other forms of postsecondary education. A decade ago, the state legislature formally established NJ PLACE as a function of NJDOL. The program has been reimaged as a Degree Apprenticeship program, a fairly new model that combines postsecondary education with paid on-the-job learning experiences through Registered Apprenticeship programs. In January 2020, NJDOL released a \$2M notice of grant opportunity (NGO) to support this updated model. The programs supported by these funds will allow student apprentices to earn college credits and an appropriate wage simultaneously, thus removing the choice between working to support themselves or attending class to further their career.

Higher Education Transformation

In addition to addressing higher education affordability through initiatives such as Community College Opportunity Grants and supporting completion through expansion of the Educational Opportunity Fund – and all the other various investments described in this plan – the NJ Department of Education is embarking on its own transformational pathway. While higher education is not part of this Combined Plan, the efforts by that Department to improve access and outcomes of state postsecondary institutions is integral to NJDOL’s goals related to credential attainment. Further, NJDOL’s efforts to organize sectors through Industry Partnerships, for example, are critical to ensuring that NJDOE’s efforts are synchronized with the evolving needs of employers.

In March 2019, the NJ Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) published *Where Opportunity Meets Innovation: A Student-Centered Vision for New Jersey Higher Education*, articulating that every New Jersey resident, regardless of life circumstance, should have the opportunity to obtain a high-quality credential. Among other things, the plan commits to the expansion of best practices that include early exposure to postsecondary education, experiential learning opportunities, and the greater ease in earning credits for learning outside the classroom. These steps are essential for the credential attainment goals connected to the programs within this Combined Plan, and thus NJDOL is working hand in hand with the US Department of Education (USED) to both support their success and to ensure workforce system customers benefit from the enhancements to New Jersey’s postsecondary education system.

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.

In 2019, the New Jersey Department of Labor adopted the nationally recognized Next Generation Industry Sector Partnership model to build industry-driven partnerships across the state. The New Jersey Industry Partnerships succeed the Talent Networks as the NJDOL’s approach for building sector partnerships. These new partnerships consist of business leaders as well as workforce development, economic development, education, and community organizations working together to strengthen New Jersey industries. The goal of Industry Partnerships is to support business growth, strengthen regional economies, build career

pathways, increase credential attainment, and address workforce and other competitiveness needs of New Jersey businesses.

To support the development and implementation of Industry Partnerships, NJDOL has established and trained three regional support teams—one in northern New Jersey, one in southern New Jersey, and one in central New Jersey—as well as one statewide support team. Each team includes representatives from education, workforce development, and economic development organizations, such as the Department of Education, Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, Economic Development Authority, Department of Labor, local workforce development boards, and the Business Action Center. Regional teams are responsible for launching and supporting business-led, sector-specific partnerships in their regions, while receiving technical support and guidance from the state team. New Jersey will use the Industry Partnerships to further regional coordination, create meaningful employer-led partnerships, and better address the current and future talent needs of the state’s strategic industries.

Over the next four years, the focus will be to continually enhance and expand the network of Industry Partnerships in New Jersey. Through the provision of funding, resources, and technical assistance, Industry Partnerships will lead the state’s efforts in building career pathway systems to address the critical workforce needs of New Jersey’s key industries. Workforce, K-12, technical schools, community colleges, state universities, and economic development partners will work together to create opportunities for New Jersey’s businesses and citizens. Industry Partnerships 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 strengthening regional economies in New Jersey.

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—

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:

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.)

New Jersey Career Network

The New Jersey Career Network (<https://njcareers.org/>), is an initiative under development in partnership with the New Jersey Office of Innovation and the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University to create 21st century in-person services and digital tools that enable job seekers, students, and those interested in changing careers to identify, prepare for, and obtain employment. The New Jersey Career Network will grow to include a modern, mobile-responsive website that will connect job seekers to career services

and digital tools such as virtual career coaching, lifelong learning, and career management tools, as well as a system to connect users to the programs and services most relevant to them based on where they are in their job search journey. Professional career coaches will provide users with personalized guidance and information that is catered specifically to their job search needs, which will help them to stay focused on the right activities that lead to results.

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); New Jersey'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.

Job Source

New Jersey is in the process of completing their new job board and self-service website for job seekers. The new site will allow job seekers to not only create a profile and perform effective job searches, it also contains many valuable tools for the job seekers to use. The site has various assessment tools to help the seeker identify characteristics in themselves that then can be matched to industries, positions, and even educational opportunities. The site offers several applications that can guide the user through creating a resume, professional letters, job applications, reference lists, and much more with helpful tips to consider. The site offers suggestions for interviewing, social media usage and researching companies. The site has links to NJDOL's calendar of events, job fairs, apprenticeship opportunities and labor market information. It allows for the seeker to use many of the functions without registration but also offers the opportunity for them to create a free account to have more capabilities and save documents to their account for easy retrieval even from their mobile device.

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 businesses and jobseekers. NJDOL and its partners have recently adopted Salesforce as a tool to support the Business Services Unit. Launched in May 2017, the Salesforce application is available to members of the business services team and will be rolled out to include additional user groups over time, to key representatives/liasons from the following programs: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I; WIOA Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act; Jobs for Veterans State Grants; Trade Adjustment Act (TAA); New Jersey's Workforce Development Partnership Program (WDP); WorkFirst New Jersey (TANF, Food Stamps, and General Assistance); Senior Community Services Employment Program; Division of

Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and more recently, the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI). Salesforce collects data on businesses and workforce partners (which consist of colleges, libraries, trade organizations, and community and faith-based organizations). Having all partners use the same Salesforce platform provides a comprehensive picture of all workforce-related activities and various touch points, and promotes strategic planning, resource sharing and communication through the network.

B. DATA-COLLECTION AND REPORTING PROCESSES USED FOR ALL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THOSE PRESENT IN ONE-STOP CENTERS

Data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers.¹⁰

[10] For the PY 2016 state plan, descriptions of data collection and reporting processes need only include currently known indicators.

New Jersey uses the following systems for its data collection and reporting.

- AOSOS
- LACES (Literacy, Adult and Community Education System)
- AWARE Vocational Rehabilitation Case Management System – DVRS/CBVI
- FACTS - System 7 Case and Information Management System – CBVI
- New Jersey Consumer Report Card and the Data for the American Dream Project
- New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System (NJEEEDS)
- State Wage Interchange System (SWIS)
- Salesforce
- New Jersey Career Network
- Job Source

These systems are described below.

America's One-Stop Operating System

As noted previously in this Plan, AOSOS supports a number of federal and state workforce development 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); New Jersey'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.

An updated AOSOS will be launched in PY21 that allows for use of AOSOS across different web browsers and will offer a more streamlined system. Additionally, NJDOL has prioritized efforts to provide additional tools and resources and clear guidance that supports quality data entry in AOSOS. The development of the AOSOS Technical Guide for Title I Services provides guidance on data entry that aligns with Title I program expectations. Moving forward, NJDOL will

continue to expand and develop common tools for guidance that include Title III and WFNJ programs specifically.

Workforce Modernization

The NJDOL has begun the process of researching best practices from other states in order to modernize the AOSOS system. This modernization effort looks to include all DOL programs, local WDBs, stakeholders and partners in the evaluation of AOSOS, the research of other viable systems, and the development of a modernized case system in OSCCs.

LACES

The primary tool that is utilized by the NJDOL 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, NJDOL 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

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 NJDOL, a dashboard approach is used to track the employment outcomes monthly, at minimum.

FACTS - System 7 Vocational Rehabilitation Case Management System – CBVI

In March of 2012, CBVI adopted System 7 Framework by Libera, Inc. to replace a legacy system at the agency. The system has been given the acronym of FACTS (Fully Accessible Case Tracking System) and provides a comprehensive solution for case and information management at CBVI. The FACTS system is a web-based solution, allowing staff to access case information remotely, to better serve consumers through an itinerant model of service provision. In addition, the FACTS system allows for the creation of PDQs (Pre-Defined Queries) that allows for the creation of various data reports.

FACTS has the capability to complete all reports required under WIOA, including:

- RSA-113: Cumulative Caseload Report
- RSA-911: Case Services Report
- RSA-2: Cost Report
- RSA-15: Vending Facility Programs (Randolph-Sheppard Programs)
- RSA-7-OB: Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind Annual Report

Libera, Inc. is gradually moving out of the business providing case management software for State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies. CBVI is currently in the process of transitioning to the AWARE case management system provided by Alliance Enterprises, Inc.

In addition, the agency will also utilize the Salesforce application, as mentioned above, to track all services provided by the agency to business and industry.

New Jersey Consumer Report Card and the Data for the American Dream Project

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.

The Data for the American Dream (D4AD) initiative supports innovative efforts that expand access to education and career data to help students and job seekers – especially low-income, lower-skilled, underemployed, and unemployed Americans – make better career decisions in a changing economy. New Jersey was one of three states that received seed funding as D4AD’s inaugural grantees for an 18-month period, from September 2019 through February 2021.

New Jersey received a grant to build an interactive website containing smart disclosure tools that will help job seekers make informed decisions about training. The NJ Training Explorer website (currently in beta) will be targeted at customers of the state’s human services programs and other disadvantaged populations and will replace our current Eligible Training Provider (ETPL) and Consumer Report Card (CRC) website. The newly available data will help job seekers obtain information about their desired employment and earnings outcomes, help employers find better-qualified employees, and will allow regulators to use data-driven information to weed out fraudulent and low-quality training programs. The project is led by the NJDOL and operates in partnership with several other state agencies and organizations from the non-profit sector, private sector, and academia.

New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System (NJEEDS), the State’s Longitudinal Data System.

The initial development of NJEEDS was supported by two competitive federal grants: a U.S. Department of Education State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grant in 2012 and a U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant in 2012 and 2014.

The data system now contains Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records, One-Stop Career Center implementation data, training provider enrollment and completion data, and higher education enrollment and completion data. Partners in NJEEDS now include NJDOL, the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, and the Department of Education. New Jersey was awarded a third grant under Round VII of the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) to build out system infrastructure, add data sources, improve researcher access to data system, and supplement and develop internal Labor research

and evaluation capacity. This system will further encourage program improvement by robust outcome measures and improved evaluations.

State Wage Interchange System (SWIS)

Additionally, New Jersey is a member of the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS), which allows for the evaluation of long-term employment and earnings outcomes of participants in all WIOA titles and for the aggregate analysis of outcomes in other adjacent workforce and education programs. New Jersey used the Wage Record Interstate System (WRIS) through December 31, 2019. NJDOL entered into the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) Data Sharing Agreement in November 2019. As of January 1, 2020, New Jersey will utilize SWIS Clearinghouse to facilitate the exchange of interstate wage data.

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 businesses and jobseekers. NJDOL and its partners have recently adopted Salesforce as a tool to support the Business Services Unit. Launched in May 2017, the Salesforce application is available to members of the business services team and will be rolled out to include additional user groups over time, to key representatives/liaisons from the following programs: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I; WIOA Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act; Jobs for Veterans State Grants; Trade Adjustment Act (TAA); New Jersey's Workforce Development Partnership Program (WDP); WorkFirst New Jersey (TANF, Food Stamps, and General Assistance); Senior Community Services Employment Program; Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and more recently, the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI). Salesforce collects data on businesses and workforce partners (which consist of colleges, libraries, trade organizations, and community and faith-based organizations). Having all partners use the same Salesforce platform provides a comprehensive picture of all workforce-related activities and various touch points, and promotes strategic planning, resource sharing and communication through the network.

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New Jersey has completed their new job board and self-service website for job seekers. The new site allows job seekers to not only create a profile and perform effective job searches, it also contains many valuable tools for the job seekers to use. The site has various assessment tools to help the seeker identify characteristics in themselves that then can be matched to industries, positions, and even educational opportunities. The site offers several applications that can

guide the user through creating a resume, professional letters, job applications, reference lists, and much more with helpful tips to consider. The site offers suggestions for interviewing, social media usage and researching companies. The site has links to NJDOL's calendar of events, job fairs, apprenticeship opportunities and labor market information. It allows for the seeker to use many of the functions without registration but also offers the opportunity for them to create a free account to have more capabilities and save documents to their account for easy retrieval even from their mobile device.

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, PROVIDE THE STATE'S GUIDELINES FOR STATE-ADMINISTERED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO A ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

Governor Murphy's Economic Plan, State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer Economy in NJ and his Jobs NJ: Developing Talent to Grow Business in the Garden State (both described in Section II, Strategic Planning Elements, State Strategy, above) are the core documents guiding state workforce development policy.

The following policies are in place, and will, as appropriate, be updated and/or revised as warranted as New Jersey's workforce and partner systems move toward full alignment around the Governor's vision for the state's economy and people.

- Policy on **Industry-Valued Credentials** (SETC Policy Resolution #2016-11) and update of an Industry-Valued Credential List, forthcoming in PY 2020, 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. This strand of work will be continually improved based on intelligence gains from and actions taken as a result of New Jersey's emerging Industry Partnerships and NJDOL will continue to support the attainment of industry-valued credentials, through analysis of labor market data, feedback from employers and stakeholders, and other available information. The original list is available on the New Jersey Career Services website at: <https://www.nj.gov/labor/career-services/tools-support/industry-valued-credentials>. NJDOL is working with partners including Credential Engine to strengthen credential data collection and reporting, and with the New Jersey Council of Community Colleges to include high-value quality credentials in career pathway mapping initiatives with post-secondary education institutions around the state. NJDOL is currently seeking a technology solution that will enable its data collection to remain refreshed.
- 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 (SETC #2018-02) 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 to support the operation of local systems are in place regarding **local WDB Budgeting** (SETC #2016-03), **One-Stop Roles and Responsibilities** and **One-Stop Certification** (SETC #2016-14), each with expectations for effectiveness, efficiency, collaboration (both across programs and regionally) and high performance.

- One-Stop operating policies regarding utilization of the **NJ Intake and Assessment Form** to facilitate co-enrollment, particularly between, but not limited to, WIOA Titles I and III when appropriate. New Jersey's One-Stop system partners all utilize the NJ Intake and Assessment Form and have access to a shared group of assessment tools to facilitate co-enrollment between and among programs when appropriate. This process will continue under this Plan.
- **Regional Planning** guidance providing expectations for regional Memoranda of Understanding to support regional collaboration.
- **Local Area MOU and Service Delivery guidance:** The Workforce Innovation Notice (WIN) WD-PY19-2 provides guidance on the One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the One-Stop Operating Budget and Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA). Its purpose is to improve quality and efficiency in the creation of MOUs and IFAs by local workforce areas. The WIN was released in October 2019 and was supported by three webinars, an in-person training, and technical assistance. The WD-PY19-2 policy document is provided in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

NJDOL is intentionally working with its stakeholders to review and revise policies to strengthen the State's workforce development system. It is anticipated that certain of the policies listed above will be updated during the period of this Plan, and that others may be added. Any such changes will be in alignment with the guiding vision of this Plan and will the full and appropriate input of all parties.

In addition, NJDOL has plans in place to update key policies in the near future, these include offering policies and resources that further clarify specific expectations and provide support around:

1. **Local Workforce Development Board governance** – Policies will highlight local WDB functions and the importance of ensuring the existence of firewalls between strategy/governance activities and operations. The development of strategic plans, procurement of One-Stop Career operators and services, and fiscal and program monitoring and oversight are functions that must be conducted by local WDBs.
2. **One-Stop Partnership development** – Additional resources and supports around the creation of MOUs and IFAs will support the integration of services and partners to expand career and training service opportunities available through One-Stop Career Centers, better meet the needs of unique populations, and support greater outreach and access of jobseekers to One-Stop Career Centers.
3. **Title I Procurement and Monitoring** – Additional resources around procurement and monitoring will support leveraging these functions to implement quality career services that drive impact for individuals and employers.
4. **Expanding Title I eligibility to meet local needs** – Policies around Priority of Service and youth Requiring Additional Assistance will allow for data-driven identification of specific populations for WIOA services, offering opportunities expand eligibility
5. **Work-based learning** – Additional resources will be developed to continue to build capacity around various work-based learning opportunities across our One-Stop Career Center network – including providing additional opportunities for unique populations and across adult, dislocated worker, and youth services.

In addition to the development of policies and resources, the state strategy emphasizes support through technical assistance and monitoring to help local areas build capacity and develop new practices aligned with the expectations highlighted in these resources. Policy, technical assistance, and monitoring teams work as a system of supports for working with local areas to implement opportunities and activities that align with the state's vision and priorities highlighted across this plan.

State-Level Memoranda of Understanding

Further, several Memoranda of Understanding between State agencies also provide key policy guidance that supports New Jersey in fully realizing the goals set out *Jobs NJ* and *State of Innovation*. These, too, may be updated and/or expanded should the need arise, and new MOUs added.

- MOU between New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJ DHS) and NJDOL guiding the WorkFirst New Jersey program and its coordination with the WIOA system.
- MOU between the NJDOL Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the NJ DHS, Division of Developmental Disabilities, 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 NJDOL and the Department of Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities in support of the above MOU.
- MOU among NJDOL, 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.
- MOU among NJDOL, the Department of Education, Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, and Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University to create the New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System (NJEEDS), a statewide longitudinal data system to include Pre-school to grade 12 “P-12” education, higher education and labor/workforce data intended to enhance the ability of the State of New Jersey to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, and use education, higher education and employment and workforce data. NJEEDS is designed to help the State of New Jersey, districts, schools, participating postsecondary institutions, educators, workforce development professionals and other stakeholders make data-informed decisions to improve student learning and workforce outcomes, as well as to facilitate research to increase student achievement and positive labor market outcomes.

As articulated above, NJDOL is intentionally working with its stakeholders to strengthen the State' workforce development system. As opportunities arise for greater collaboration, those agreements will be codified via additional Memoranda of Understanding as appropriate, either through revision of an existing MOU or the negotiation of a new MOU. Any such changes or additions will be in alignment with the guiding vision of this Plan and will the full and appropriate input of all parties.

Specific State Performance Measures

To reflect the strategic priorities of the State, the NJDOL adopted an additional set of performance measures and applied these measures, and those required by the WIOA to a broader number of programs. The State adopted these additional measures to address gaps in the existing data and to provide more timely information to stakeholders on the characteristics of the workforce development system's participants. The additional performance measures are as follows:

Measures for WIOA Title I and WIOA Title II

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

With regard to these measures for WIOA Titles I and II, the state continues to collect data in an effort to examine yearly changes and make comparisons across program years. For WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) customers, NJDOL needs to initiate talks with NJ Department of Human Services (NJDHS) to explore ways for further data collection in support of performance measurement, either through NJDHS joining the state longitudinal data system or through a bilateral data sharing agreement.

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 (NJDOL) 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). 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. NJDOL and the SETC work jointly with 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 NJDOL. 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.

NJDOL 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)
- WIOA Title III, Wagner-Peyser Act (Employment Service)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment & Training
- Chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (Trade Act Programs)
- WIOA Title IV, 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, NJDOL and New Jersey's local network of Workforce Development Boards and One-Stop Career Centers/American Job 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:

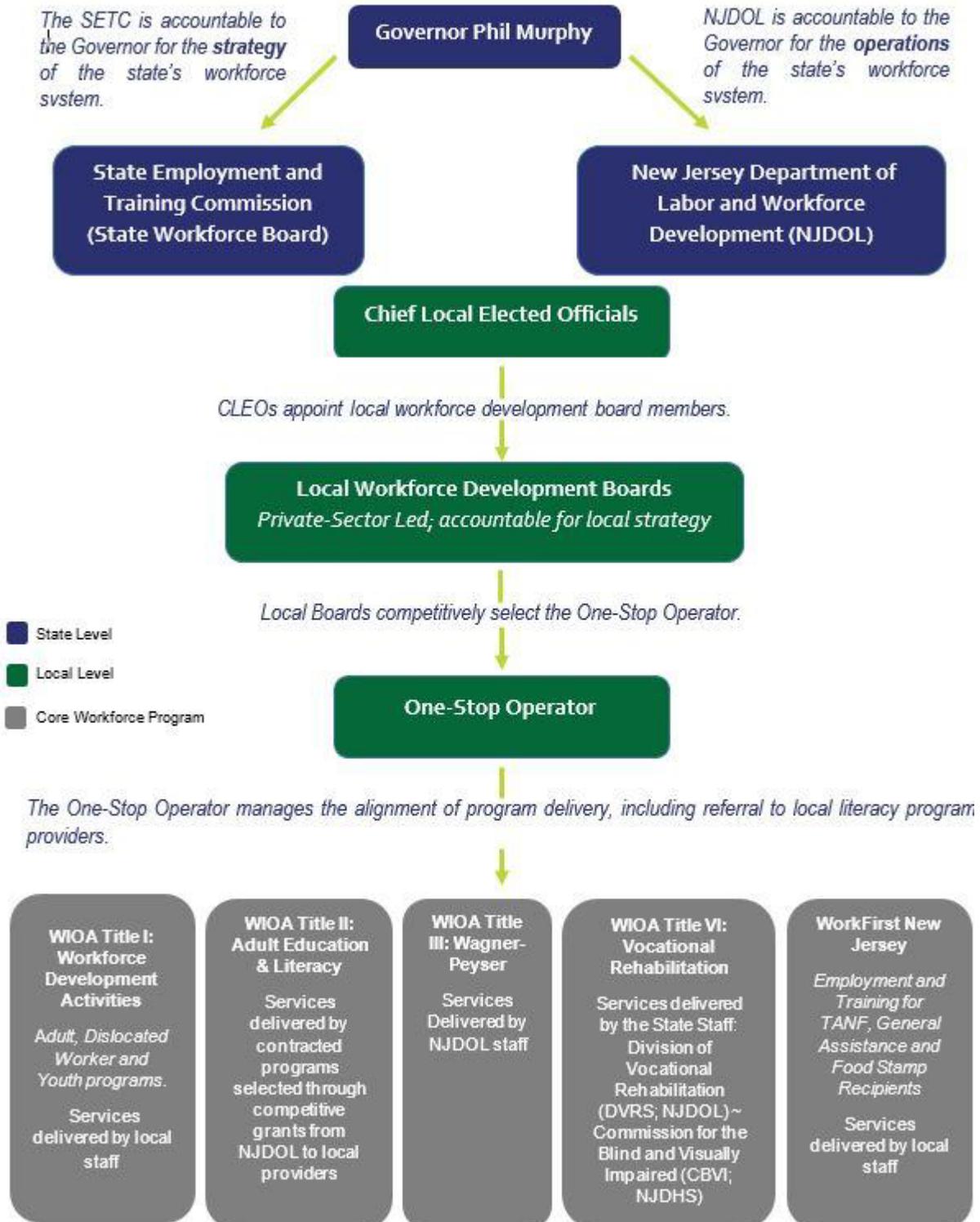
Department of Education (DOE)

- Secondary Vocational Education programs (Perkins V/Secondary)

- Postsecondary Vocational Education programs (Perkins V/ 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



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 30 One-Stop Career Centers.

Workforce Development Area	One-Stop Career Center Location
Atlantic County	Pleasantville, NJ
	Atlantic City, NJ
Bergen County	Hackensack, NJ
Burlington County	Westampton, NJ
Camden County	Cherry Hill, NJ
Cumberland-Salem-Cape May Counties	Vineland, NJ
	Salem, NJ
	Wildwood, 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
	Morris Plains, NJ
	Newton, NJ
	Phillipsburg, NJ
City of Newark	Newark, NJ
Ocean County	Toms River, NJ (2)
Passaic County	Paterson, NJ
	Passaic, NJ
Greater Raritan (Somerset – Hunterdon Counties)	Flemington, NJ
	Somerville, NJ

Workforce Development Area	One-Stop Career Center Location
Union County	Elizabeth, NJ
	Plainfield, NJ

B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

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. As defined in this statute, the composition of the SETC meets the requirements of a state workforce development board under WIOA Section 101(b).

Membership

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 Education, Department of Human Services, and Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Secretary of Higher Education, and the CEO of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority. All members serve without compensation. The diverse, bipartisan membership of the SETC ensures that all concerned parties can fully participate in developing an effective workforce system for New Jersey.

The membership composition of the SETC was amended in state statute *N.J.S.A. 34:15C*, through new legislation enacted in 2019. The Governor appointed his representative to the Commission in September 2019. The SETC leadership is working with the Office of the Governor, the Commissioner of the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, partner agencies, and business, industry and organized labor groups to identify a slate of new members for appointment to the Commission. In consideration of recent discussions, submissions include the program leads of New Jersey's title II and IV WIOA programs. As per State law, once nominated by the Governor's Office, appointments require the consent of the NJ State Senate.

I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

The current SETC membership roster, as of January 2, 2020 is below.

State Employment and Training Commission Membership

- Dennis M. Bone, **Chairman** – Lead Director, Board of Directors, Investors Bancorp, Inc.
- Robert Asaro-Angelo – Commissioner, NJDOL (*represents Title I-Adult, Dislocated worker and Youth programs and Title III-Wagner-Peyser, Title II-AEFLA, and Title IV-Vocational Rehabilitation (DVRS) programs*)
- Allison M. Blake, Ph.D., LSW - Flemington, NJ

- Kevin M. Brown – Cherry Hill, NJ
- Michael J. Carey – Warren, NJ
- John G. Donnadio, Esq. – Executive Director, NJ Association of Counties
- Teri Duda – Senior Vice President, Government Affairs, Berkeley College
- Brian Bridges– NJ Secretary of Higher Education
- Anthony Ferrera – Township Administrator, Hillsborough Township
- John B. Franklin – Chief Executive Officer, United Way of Northern New Jersey (retired)
- Nicholas P. Gacos – President, Colorado Café Associates
- Stephen C. Hornik, Sr. – President Emeritus, Monmouth-Ocean AFL-CIO
- Sarah Adelman– Commissioner, NJ Department of Human Services (*represents WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (CBVI) programs*)
- Catherine D. Milone – Director of Development, Junior Achievement
- Sally J. Nadler, SPHR – Piscataway, NJ
- Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver – Commissioner, NJ Department of Community Affairs
- Clifford R. Reisser – Lambertville, NJ
- Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed. D. – Acting Commissioner, NJ Department of Education
- Senator Ronald L. Rice – NJ State Senate
- Tapas K. Sen – President, Transformation Strategies International, Inc.
- Tim Sullivan – CEO, NJ Economic Development Authority
- Carolyn Carter Wade – President, Communication Workers of America, Local 1040
- McKenzie A. Wilson - Senior Counsel, NJ Office of the Governor
- Assemblyman Benjie E. Wimberly – NJ State Assembly
- Robert P. Wise, FACHE – Lebanon, NJ
- Charles Wowkanech – President, New Jersey State AFL-CIO

It is the intent of New Jersey to comply with the state board membership requirements as outlined in WIOA legislation and regulations. The membership composition of the SETC was amended in state statute *N.J.S.A. 34:15C*, through new legislation enacted in 2019. The SETC leadership has worked with the Office of the Governor, the Commissioner of the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, partner agencies, and business, industry and organized labor groups to identify new members for appointment to the Commission. In compliance with federal regulations, the SETC has included in the slate of members, a representative of the WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy program and a representative of the WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation program, who each have optimum policy-making authority.

The process to re-structure the state board will include a number of steps: the proposal of a slate of members to the Governor and the Governor's Appointments Office, which oversees NJ

Boards, Commissions and Authorities; creation of seat assignments and member terms with the Governor's Appointments Office; appointment of members by the Governor to the SETC; and confirmation of member appointments by the NJ Senate. The anticipated timeframe has been impacted by the ongoing pandemic.

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 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. These are the State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) and 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.

NJDOL understands that to achieve a stronger and fairer economy, valid and transparent data is required for decision making. To this end, the SETC has created a WIOA performance dashboard (njsetc.net/njsetc/performance) to ensure program data is 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.

Primary Indicators of Performance

New Jersey will assess its core programs, provided under WIOA Title I, Title II, Title III and Title IV, 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. Entered Employment Rate (6 months): percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment, second quarter after exit from the program;
2. Entered Employment Rate (1 year): percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
3. Earnings: Median earnings of participants, who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
4. Credential Attainment Rate: 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. Measurable Skill Gains: 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. 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 and USED.

New Jersey co-enrolls WIOA Title I and Title III (Wagner-Peyser) participants, as appropriate, based on individual customer assessment results; both programs utilize the common NJ Intake and Initial Assessment Form.

Primary Indicators for Eligible Youth

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

- 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;
- 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
- The primary indicators of performance described in subclauses (III) through (VI) of subparagraph (A)(i).

B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS

Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I and WIOA Title II

- Number of program participants served by the program
- Number of program participants exited from the program
- Percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment as follows:
 - Disability
 - Ex-offender
 - No high school diploma
 - Previously or currently in foster care
 - Homeless
 - Limited English Proficiency or Low-Level Literacy
 - Long-Term Unemployed (continuously unemployed for at least 12 consecutive months)
 - Public Assistance customer
- Percentage of program participants responding to survey who are satisfied with their training/counseling after exiting from the program.
- With regard to measures 1 through 4 for Titles I and II, the state continues to collect baseline data in an effort to examine yearly changes and make comparisons across program years.
- For WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) customers, NJDOL needs to initiate talks with NJ Department of Human Services (NJDHS) to explore ways for further data collection in support of performance measurement, either through NJDHS joining the state longitudinal data system or through a bilateral data sharing agreement.
- Additional measures for Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation programs may be explored in future.

- The Jobs for Veterans State Grant program and the Senior Community Service Employment Program are described in Section VII of this Plan, and may also be considered for additional performance measures in future.

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 assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs 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, as all states, formally began the transition to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) on July 1, 2016. In preparation for the transition, the NJDOL sought to determine performance measures and sustainability issues relevant to local areas, NJDOL, USDOL, the US Department of Education (USED) and other stakeholders. This process presented several challenges for the state’s performance accountability system, but also provided several opportunities for our workforce development system overall. The challenges include the necessity to incorporate new and revised performance measures and to update systems of record to comply with WIOA. In addition, testing new systems requires time and effort and necessitates changes in how we work and related business requirements. The opportunities included the ability to set baseline targets for programs, enhance the functionality of data systems, clean up old data, and create better service models. The WIOA transition period, directly affected the accuracy and completeness of PY 2017 and PY 2018 outcome data. We are working diligently to bring America’s One Stop Operating System (AOSOS) into technical compliance with WIOA and USDOL continues to revise their reporting mechanisms on a regular basis which affects data integrity. Software errors are reported to our case management vendor and USDOL as needed for corrective action. These activities will continue into the foreseeable future.

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Adult Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	73.3%	60.8%	82.9%	Not Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	66.3%	62.4%	94.1%	Met
Median Earnings	\$5,250	\$4,935	94.0%	Met
Credential Attainment Rate	57.3%	48.3%	84.3%	Not Met
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	13.6%		

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Dislocated Worker Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	77.0%	56.5%	73.4%	Not Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	74.0%	59.5%	80.4%	Not Met
Median Earnings	\$6,876	\$6,612	96.2%	Met
Credential Attainment Rate	56.4%	51.9%	92.0%	Met
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	16.2%		
Youth Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	69.0%	62.3%	90.3%	Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	41.0%	56.7%	138.3%	Exceeded
Median Earnings	Baseline	\$2,272		
Credential Attainment Rate	73.5%	23.8%	32.4%	Not Met
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	15.3%		
Wagner-Peyser Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	49.9%		
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	50.7%		
Median Earnings	Baseline	\$5,142		

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Adult Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	73.3%	65.5%	89.4%	Not Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	71.2%	67.3%	94.6%	Met
Median Earnings	\$5,300	\$5,449	102.8%	Exceeded
Credential Attainment Rate	58.7%	59.5%	101.4%	Exceeded
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	43.0%		

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Dislocated Worker Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	77.0%	67.2%	87.3%	Not Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	74.1%	63.4%	85.5%	Not Met
Median Earnings	\$6,900	\$7,857	113.9%	Exceeded
Credential Attainment Rate	63.5%	67.1%	105.7%	Exceeded
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	40.0%		
Youth Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	65.0%	61.1%	94.0%	Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	41.0%	58.3%	142.1%	Exceeded
Median Earnings	Baseline	\$2,306		
Credential Attainment Rate	64.0%	53.7%	83.9%	Not Met
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	68.1%		
Wagner-Peyser Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	50.0%	53.5%	107.0%	Exceeded
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	55.0%	54.3%	98.7%	Met
Median Earnings	\$5,200	\$5,518	106.1%	Exceeded
Adult Education and Literacy				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	45.0%		
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	43.2%		
Median Earnings	Baseline	\$4,783		
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	27.9%		
Measurable Skill Gains	51.0%	58.5%	115.0%	Exceeded
Vocational Rehabilitation				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	3.2%		

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Median Earnings	Baseline	\$6,122		
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	31.2%		

Program Year 2019

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Adult Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	74.0%	70.1%	94.7%	Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	72.0%	71.4%	99.2%	Met
Median Earnings	\$5,500	\$5,619	102.2%	Exceeded
Credential Attainment Rate	59.0%	64.6%	109.5%	Exceeded
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	43.5%		

Dislocated Worker Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	77.5%	73.8%	95.2%	Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	75.0%	74.9%	99.9%	Met
Median Earnings	\$7,000	\$8,658	123.7%	Exceeded
Credential Attainment Rate	64.0%	71.3%	111.4%	Exceeded
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	50.2%		

Youth Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	66.0%	64.6%	97.9%	Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	50.0%	65.2%	130.4%	Exceeded
Median Earnings	Baseline	\$2,629		
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%	55.2%	84.9%	Not Met
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	64.1%		

Wagner-Peyser Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	55.0%	59.6%	108.4%	Exceeded
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	56.0%	60.3%	107.7%	Exceeded
Median Earnings	\$5,300	\$5,905	111.4%	Exceeded

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
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Adult Education and Literacy				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	43.6%		
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	45.7%		
Median Earnings	Baseline	\$5,931		
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	30.6%		
Measurable Skill Gains	52.0%	44.1%	84.8%	Not Met

Vocational Rehabilitation				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	2.9%		
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	2.6%		
Median Earnings	Baseline	\$5,200		
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	8.7%		
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	52.0%		

Program Year 2020

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
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Adult Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	65.5%	61.6%	94.0%	Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	67.3%	58.1%	86.3%	Not Met
Median Earnings	\$5,549	\$5,393	97.2%	Met
Credential Attainment Rate	59.5%	67%	112.6%	Exceeded
Measurable Skill Gains	40%	64.1%	160.3%	Exceeded

Dislocated Worker Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	67.2%	56.8%	84.5%	Not Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	64.4%	61.2%	95%	Met
Median Earnings	\$7,555	\$9,062	119.9%	Exceeded
Credential Attainment Rate	67.1%	71.2%	106.1%	Exceeded
Measurable Skill Gains	40%	66.1%	165.3%	Exceeded

Youth Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	61.1%	56.7%	92%	Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	50.1%	59.3%	118.4%	Exceeded
Median Earnings	\$2,306	\$2,399	104.0%	Exceeded
Credential Attainment Rate	67.1%	52.7%	78.5%	Not Met
Measurable Skill Gains	40%	79.1%	197.8%	Exceeded

Wagner-Peyser Program				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	52.8%	44.2%	83.7%	Not Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	54.3%	47.7%	87.8%	Not Met
Median Earnings	\$5,518	\$5,501	99.7%	Met

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Adult Education and Literacy				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	45.0%	38.2%	84.9%	Not Met
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	43.0%	39.3%	91.4%	Met
Median Earnings	\$4,783	\$6,370	133.2%	Exceeded
Credential Attainment Rate	27.0%	34.2%	126.7%	Exceeded
Measurable Skill Gains	53.0%	47.2%	89.1%	Not Met

Vocational Rehabilitation				
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	25.6%		
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	9.7%		
Median Earnings	Baseline	\$5,435		
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	27.9%		
Measurable Skill Gains	32.0%	26.6%	83.1%	Not Met

The State used the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) primary indicators performance measures to negotiate goals and report outcomes for the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs; Title III Wagner-Peyser programs; Title II Adult Education and Literacy programs; and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation programs, for Program Years 2020 and 2021. This will continue for Program Years 2022 and 2023.

Performance outcomes for WIOA Titles I, II, III and IV are reported to USDOL and USED. These published reports are shared with the NJ State Employment and Training Commission, the state board, and NJDOL partners and stakeholders through the WIOA Dashboard. The WIOA Dashboard is published on the SETC website at <http://njsetc.net/performance>. Local program performance outcomes are provided by NJDOL to the 18 local workforce areas and to Title II providers in New Jersey. The Dashboard and the provision of local area reports support program analysis, identification of trends and consideration of potential program and delivery improvements by NJDOL, the SETC, local area program providers and other agency partners. Discussion and further exploration of program outcomes and needed improvements are held at regular SETC meetings and meetings hosted by NJDOL with core program staff and local providers.

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.

The NJDOL is creating a multi-year plan for our research and evaluation activities which includes capacity building at the state level. Our State longitudinal data system, the NJ Education to Earnings Data System (NJEEDS), will be a key component in this effort as well as leveraging Round VII Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) resources of which NJ is a recipient. The NJDOL will use longitudinal and other data to evaluate the performance of federally- and State-supported education and job training programs by laying out a plan to conduct evaluations and reinforce a culture within the State to make data-informed decisions. In addition, NJDOL proposes to conduct multiple evaluations to leverage the relatively new administrative data sources focusing on outcomes related to job training, transition services for persons with disabilities, Unemployment Insurance claimants' post-benefit outcomes, and use of apprenticeships.

The State has a longstanding research partnership with the Heldrich Center at Rutgers University. Since 1998, by way of contracts and data-sharing agreements with the NJDOL, the Heldrich Center has been authorized to analyze workforce data. Since that time, through

multiple federal Workforce Data Quality Initiatives (WDQIs) and State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grants, the State established a multi-agency data-use agreement to establish the New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System (NJEEDS), a SLDS housed at the Heldrich Center. NJEEDS includes data not only from the NJDOL, but also the NJDOE, NJ Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, and the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA).

Recent, past projects include the Evaluation of the Employment and Training Components of WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) Employment and Training and the Evaluation of Workforce Services for the State. Overall, our team aims to instill a culture within the NJDOL that values program evaluation and uses evaluation findings to improve program outcomes.

In 2020, the Heldrich Center produced a workforce feedback report titled *New Jersey College Graduates' Employment and Earnings Outcomes: 2008-2018*. To examine the characteristics of the State's workforce, this initial report was developed focusing on workforce educational attainment over a period of 10 years. This report, developed using longitudinal data from NJEEDS, presents workforce data in two areas of importance: an inventory of degrees earned by the State's workforce between 2008 and 2013, and the workforce outcomes in terms of quarterly wages and percentage employed within the state. A dashboard accompanies this report so that stakeholder can examine outcomes by postsecondary institution.

A second report in 2020, titled *Where Students Go: Postsecondary Student Migration In and Out of New Jersey* examines the movement of high school graduates leaving and coming into the state. For those that attend NJ institutions, workforce outcomes are examined. The report provides a snapshot of the labor supply by examining the education systems in the surrounding states and how it impacts New Jersey. It shows that for those attending NJ postsecondary institutions, nearly 7 in 10 students remain in the state.

As of 2017, the State has evaluated its Title I and Title II programs to identify barriers and best practices for serving customers across these two core programs. Toward that end, the SETC passed Policy Resolution #2017-02 to support the improved coordination of these programs, based upon the recommendations of the State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) council.

Subsequently, a Title I / Title II Coordination Workgroup (Workgroup) was formed comprised of local Workforce Development Board (WDB) representatives, local adult education providers, and the NJDOL adult education and workforce staff. The Workgroup met regularly throughout the year where it: 1) created a ranked list of focus areas; and 2) explored the focus areas to identify challenges and opportunities for improvement. The Workgroup efforts continued through the Fall of 2018. At the March 2019 meeting of the SETC, members were given a presentation of the summary of findings of the Title I / II Workgroup. The recommendations included: 1) working to achieve better system integration; clarification of the OSCC role; and 2) more research regarding the legality of information-sharing among partners; basing design upon customer need; and economizing the information process.

In 2017, the SETC began implementation of a dashboard to display high-level performance data to support evidence-based policy decisions. The dashboard enables the SETC members to better understand the scope of State programs and their related populations. Additionally, the dashboard helps the SETC explore data trends, highlight potential program issues, and coordinate with other State Agencies to advance New Jersey's workforce needs. (The dashboard is publicly available on the SETC website at: njsetc.net/njsetc/performance).

The SETC continues to work with the NJDOL on enhancing the value of its dashboard so that it displays high-level performance data to support evidence-based, policy decision-making. At regular meetings, the SETC members were given presentations on the updated, enhanced dashboard which now includes data regarding the six core programs within four WIOA titles.

For its PY 2019 evaluation, NJDOL implemented a process evaluation of the integration of Title I (Workforce Development) and Title II (Adult Education and Literacy) Services in New Jersey. The goal of this study was to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the degree to which services under WIOA Title I and Title II are integrated in New Jersey, and to identify the challenges local areas face when implementing various forms of Title I and Title II services integration. The evaluation included preliminary work to unpack the significance of the WIOA requirement that adult literacy education and job training be “concurrent and contextual,” even though the two Title areas are rooted in divergent agendas, have separate funding streams, and differ in eligibility criteria. Preliminary steps also included developing a working definition of what it means for Title I and Title II services to be integrated in practice. That definition categorized ways in which curriculum can be integrated and ways in which service delivery to consumers can be integrated. Based on defining the problem in this manner, evaluators investigated what local areas in New Jersey are doing to integrate WIOA Title I and Title II services.

Research Questions:

1.
 - a. What are the most promising strategies to WIOA Title I and Title II services integration in local New Jersey workforce development areas and literacy consortia and what are the key components needed for those integration strategies to be implemented statewide?
 - b. What are the most common challenges to integrating WIOA Title I and Title II programs in New Jersey?
 - c. How has the COVID-19 public health crisis affected local WIOA Title I and Title II service integration strategies and what do local areas need in order to implement them during the current COVID-19 public health circumstances?
 - d. What programmatic or policy changes are needed, at the local and state levels, to facilitate better integration of WIOA Title I and Title II services in New Jersey to make a more seamless service delivery system for the consumer and achieve improved educational and employment outcomes?

The PY 2019 evaluation report is expected to be released in Spring 2022. A research evaluation project is planned for PY 2020, focusing on the implementation of virtual services in New Jersey.

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.

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)

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.

The Governor reserves 15 percent of the funds from the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs to carry out statewide activities and up to 25 percent of the WIOA Dislocated Worker statewide allocation for Rapid Response Services. The remaining Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth program funds are distributed based on the WIOA formulas to the local WDBs.

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 110 percent 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.

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. NJDOL Business Services Representatives, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/General Assistance (GA) On-the-Job Training Contract Writers, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation business outreach staff, local job developers, and Local Veterans Employment Representatives 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.

(i) Youth Activities

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.

In accordance with WIOA Section 128(b)(3), New Jersey will use the Youth Discretionary Allocation, using the following formula in accordance with the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) #27-16 to allocate Youth activities.

- **33.3%** based on the relative number of **Disadvantaged Youth** in each local area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state;
- **33.3%** 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;
- **33.3%** based on relative **Excess Number of Unemployed Individuals** in each local area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state.

No local area shall receive an allocation percentage for a fiscal year that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the 2 preceding fiscal years. Amounts necessary for increasing such allocations to local areas to comply with the preceding sentence shall be obtained by ratably reducing the allocations to be made to other 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 percent 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 percent for the most recent 12 months.

II. ADULT 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.

In accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3), and TEGL #27-16, New Jersey will use the following formula to allocate Adult employment and training activities to local areas.

- **33.3%** based on the relative number of **Disadvantaged Adults** in each local area as compared to the total number of adults in the state;
- **33.3%** 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;
- **33.3%** 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.

No local area shall receive an allocation percentage for a fiscal year that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the 2 preceding fiscal years. Amounts necessary for increasing such allocations to local areas to comply with the preceding sentence shall be obtained by ratably reducing the allocations to be made to other local areas.

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.

WIOA New Jersey Weights, Indicators; and Explanations:

- **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;
- 0% based on plant closing and mass layoff data; an accurate source of data is not available at the state or local level.
- 0% based on farmer-rancher economic hardship data; an accurate source of data is not available at the state or local level.

No local area shall receive an allocation percentage for a fiscal year that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the 2 preceding fiscal years. Amounts necessary for increasing such allocations to local areas to comply with the preceding sentence shall be obtained by ratably reducing the allocations to be made to other local areas.

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 (NJDOLE) is the eligible agency that will provide 4-year grant opportunities for AEFLA Title II on a competitive basis to all eligible entities in the state of New Jersey through our Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) process. The NGO process is the public notice of available funds for the purposes of proposal submittals. All NGO announcements follow prescribed New Jersey statute publication requirements. Due to a continuation year from the effects of the Covid- 19 pandemic the NGO was released a year later than planned in March of 2021. The Title II NGO announcement was published and linked to the DOL website for an open, competitive process to all eligible applicants providing adult literacy services within the state. There was no break in service between previously awarded contracts and future service delivery. The newly awarded Title II provider contracts for year one of the grant award started July 1, 2021 and end June 30, 2022. Future contract awards will follow the current process of funding and are allocated by formula to local geographic sub-divisions, which are county-based and grounded on population, drop-out rate, and other weighted need factors. Applicants were required to apply in accordance with all US Department of Education (USED) requirements and NGO instructions, including alignment to local WDB literacy plans.

Demonstrated effectiveness is a WIOA Title II grant eligibility requirement. An eligible provider must demonstrate past effectiveness by providing performance data on its record of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains of reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services contained in the State's NGO application for funds. An eligible provider must also provide information regarding its outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training. Eligible providers were required to meet the State determined threshold for demonstrated effectiveness. This ensured all providers of adult literacy services are held to the same standard regardless of whether they are funded or not.

A panel, trained in WIOA statutes and DOL internal review polices, commenced in Spring of 2022. All applications deemed eligible and complete were reviewed for funding and recommendations were made to the DOL administration to start the contracting process.

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

NJDOL is committed to providing direct and equitable access to all eligible AEFLA WIOA Title II providers. The AEFLA WIOA Title II NGO was published as an announcement on the NJDOL website for public review. As part of the NGO process, NJDOL issued the application guidelines and held a technical assistance workshop to review the elements of the NGO, issue guidance on the System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE) for submittal of the applications, and to answer general questions. All general questions gathered were publicly posted on the NJDOL website for full transparency within a reasonable business timeframe from the technical assistance workshop.

NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy staff received all proposals by the published deadline through SAGE and carefully reviewed each application to determine if the provider applicant was an eligible provider. Applications were reviewed for completeness and all required data. Technical assistance via a webinar was provided to local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) to walk-through the local alignment review process and due dates. Any application that did not receive WDB feedback but was deemed eligible was not penalized and was moved forward to the internal DOL panel review.

The DOL internal panel consisted of three individuals from DOL and other outside agencies who were trained on the components of the NGO, the SAGE application system, and the scoring guidelines. Panel review members had weeks to read, review, and score applications and met virtually to discuss final scores and comments for funding. The State Director drafted a letter to the DOL administration with the outcome of the panel review and the recommendations.

The NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy manages the Title II contracts, billing, and conducts ongoing monitoring and technical assistance for every Title II provider. All applicants must demonstrate the capacity to equitably deliver services within the local areas that are county-based, 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 and the MOU and IFA must also reflect this effort.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

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 previously in this Plan, New Jersey utilizes an option to deliver Vocational Rehabilitation services through two distinct programs. The majority of services are delivered through Vocational Rehabilitation staff housed at NJDOL for any individuals with disabilities. A portion of allocation is segmented and distributed to the Commission for the Blind and Visually

Impaired (CBVI), housed within the New Jersey Department of Human Services; CBVI focuses on serving individuals who are blind, vision-impaired or deaf-blind.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) work under a Memorandum of Understanding 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; and
- Interagency meetings, exchange of materials, interagency liaisons.

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

- **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 proportion has been stable since the MOU was first signed in 2000.
- **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:
 - 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 weeks, in New Jersey'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.

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

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); New Jersey'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, NJDOL 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 NJDOL 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, NJDOL 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).

The Integrated Workforce Registration System is a national initiative to promote and enhance the partnerships and shared missions of the Unemployment and Workforce Development systems within NJDOL. This system has helped 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 NJDOL.

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 NJDOL and the other relevant state and local entities including the local WDBs.

Additionally, NJDOL has begun the process of researching best practices from other states in order to modernize the AOSOS system. This modernization effort looks to include all DOL programs, local WDBs, stakeholders and partners in the evaluation of AOSOS, the research of other viable systems, and the development of a modernized case system in OSCCs.

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

The State has created the New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System (NJEEDS). NJEEDS is a collaboration between the NJDOL, the NJDOE, the NJ Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, the NJ Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, and the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University. It is the State's centralized, longitudinal data system, developed through a US Department of Education grant. NJEEDS gathers data from New Jersey's P-12 system into a comprehensive, statewide system that maintains information for K-12 students from their exit from high school through entry into higher education and/or the State workforce. NJEEDS provides valuable information and data to State and local policymakers, the public, as well as practitioners in K-12 schools, higher education institutions, workforce programs, and career and technical training schools to help calculate outcomes.

III. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL ASSIST THE GOVERNOR IN ALIGNING TECHNOLOGY AND DATA SYSTEMS ACROSS REQUIRED 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

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 NJDOL and the other relevant State and Local entities including the local WDBs.

New Jersey, like many states, experiences the challenge of having legacy data systems operating contemporaneously with newly implemented data systems. New Jersey is committed to modernizing its technology and data systems to ensure the most efficient and effective utilization. For example, the current modernization strategy includes acquiring a system that combines the functionality to support multiple programs. With increasing demand to provide as many services and resources as possible to our career seeking customers, we need data systems that easily track services provided in as few systems as possible. We look forward to data systems that will track services and co-enrollment strategies across multiple funding streams. A data system that tracks services for WIOA customers, ideally, would also track service delivery for WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ – TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients, Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) customers, ex-offenders, other customers of the One-Stop delivery system. This approach will improve quality of the service delivery to our customers and ease the burden of our workforce professionals by eliminating the use of multiple systems.

The NJDOL Data for the American Dream (D4AD) initiative supported innovative efforts that expand access to education and career data to help students and job seekers – especially low-income, lower-skilled, underemployed, and unemployed Americans – make better career decisions in a changing economy. New Jersey is one of three states that received seed funding as D4AD’s inaugural grantees for an 18-month period, from September 2019 through February 2021. New Jersey’s project received a grant to build an interactive website containing user-facing online smart disclosure tools that will help job seekers make informed decisions about training. The website will be targeted at customers of the state’s human services programs and other disadvantaged populations and will replace our current Eligible Training Provider (ETPL) and Consumer Report Card (CRC) website. The newly available data will help job seekers obtain information about their desired employment and earnings outcomes, help employers find better-qualified employees, and will allow regulators to use data-driven information to weed out fraudulent and low-quality training programs. The project is led by the NJDOL and operates in partnership with several other state agencies and organizations, including the state board, from the non-profit sector, private sector, and academia.

The SETC, the NJ state workforce board, functions in a consultative and advisory role, as NJDOL continues to strengthen its technology and data systems to support programs and customer service delivery. The SETC and its Performance Committee, whose members include representatives from all WIOA titles and partner programs, provide feedback on proposed technology systems integration and will continue to explore areas for future alignment.

IV. DESCRIBE THE STATE’S PLANS TO DEVELOP AND PRODUCE THE REPORTS REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 116, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM. (WIOA SECTION 116(D)(2))

The State’s Common Data System, AOSOS, is used to track program progress, especially with respect to performance targets. NJDOL 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 NJDOL for federal reporting);
- Quarterly or monthly reports (depending on the specific measure) documenting performance outcomes for the New Jersey; and
- 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 Years 2019 and 2020, New Jersey continued to 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; these indicators are being incorporated for additional WIOA programs as well. This work will continue in Program Years 2021 and 2022. The primary indicators for the WIOA programs are as follows:

Title I - Adult Measures

- Employment rate in second and fourth quarter post exit
- Median earnings in second quarter post exit
- Credential attainment rate
- Measurable skill gains

Title I - Dislocated Worker Measures

- Employment rate in second and fourth quarter post exit
- Median earnings in second quarter post exit
- Credential attainment rate
- Measurable skill gains

Title I - Youth Measures

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

Title III - Wagner-Peyser Measures

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

Title II - Adult Education and Literacy Measures

- Employment rate in second and fourth quarter post exit

- Median earnings in second quarter post exit
- Credential attainment rate
- Measurable skill gains

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Measures

- Employment rate in second and fourth quarter post exit
- Median earnings in second quarter post exit
- Credential attainment rate
- Measurable skill gains

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

- Employer Penetration Rate
- Repeat Business Customer Rate

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 used the Wage Record Interstate System (WRIS) to more accurately evaluate and determine program performance outcomes through December 31, 2019. NJDOL entered into the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) Data Sharing Agreement in November 2019. Effective January 1, 2020, New Jersey is utilizing SWIS Clearinghouse to facilitate the exchange of interstate wage data.

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.

NJDOL 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 policies have been developed and are being implemented. Additionally, the WDB Coordination and Support Team 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 U.S.C.S. 1221.

The DVRS Case Service Policy Manual, updated November 2019, covers privacy in Section 1.8, *Confidentiality and the Release of Information*. Training is provided to every counselor to ensure understanding of confidentiality and ethical standards and practices, especially related to new challenges in use of social media, new partnerships, and data sharing.

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is a division of the New Jersey Department of Human Services, and as such, is subject to comply with all privacy safeguards enumerated in Administrative Order: 2.01 (Confidential Information and Client Records) that was issued on March 17, 2016. This includes compliance with all privacy safeguards established in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). The Department of Human Services is considered a covered entity under HIPAA, and all divisions follow those stringent privacy protocols. Pursuant to N.J.A.C 10:91-5.6, participant information maintained by the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) shall not be released without the written consent of the participant, or upon Court Order. A participant may authorize the release of confidential information and medical records to or from the agency by signing the "Authorization to Disclose Information Form," consenting to the release of information.

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.

(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.

All covered persons receive priority of service in the One-Stop system. This includes moving to the front of the line when entering the One-Stop, receiving individualized career services, and when training considerations are made. Customers identifying as veterans and eligible persons are asked about length of service and potential barriers to employment as part of the intake process. Veterans and eligible persons meeting eligibility requirements and possessing a USDOL-VETS designated significant barrier to employment meet with a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specialist for services and case management.

Priority of service provisions for covered persons 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.

NJDOL has established guidance on how to determine covered persons and covered persons with significant barriers early in the triage and intake process within the One-Stop Career Centers. This involved cross training all One-Stop staff with particular emphasis on staff

responsible for triage. There is and will continue to be prominent signage in all One-Stop Career Centers informing customers that covered persons receive priority of service.

Through the Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists help veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment successfully navigate the job market and receive the support they need to return to the workforce. When a covered person 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 and/or eligible person should be referred to a DVOP for coaching.

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.

As our systems have adapted to Covid-19, accessibility has taken on new meaning – increasingly NJDOL is considering accessibility not just in terms of physical location but also with virtual technology and in the virtual world. This both opens up access in new ways and offers new barriers to individuals with disabilities. Many individuals with disabilities have been severely impacted by the pandemic and some may face higher barriers in returning to in-person activities. These are factors that we will continue to explore, using data to unpack the nuances and variety of experiences individuals with disabilities face, and address in our strategies moving forward.

NJDOL has created a system that is responsive to the needs of customers with disabilities. All One-Stop Career Centers are in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act standards. In NJDOL is fortunate to have integrated the WIOA Title IV Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) with WIOA Title I and WIOA Title III within the department. 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 State Employment and Training Commission (SETC). NJDOL uses the expertise and resources of DVRS to inform accessibility to One-Stop Career Centers and in service delivery to customers.

The 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. This relationship was formalized in SETC Policy Resolution #2016-08, included in Appendix 3 of this Plan. 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 is 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 is used as a foundational element of the One-Stop Career Center

Certification process established by the SETC Policy Resolution #2016-14 approved on September 20, 2016. Specifically, the One-Stop Certification policy maintains objective criteria and processes through which local boards will certify their One-Stops. New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center Certification by local WDBs includes as a pre-requisite that the WDB verifies the accessibility of its physical locations. This is not limited to physical accommodations; accessibility considers staff knowledge, technology, signage, marketing materials and access to programs and services, through the use of the One-Stop Accessibility Checklist. SETC Policy #2016-14 is provided in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

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

The 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 NJDOL efforts to coordinate services to all customers.
- Participation by DVRS leadership and staff with NJDOL Office of Research and Information committees that identify key industry sectors, in order to ensure consideration of employment for people with disabilities in sector planning activities.
- Availability of Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI)'s first point of contact team to support efforts at the One-Stops. 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.
- NJDOL has a workgroup that includes representatives from the core partners (DVRS, Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Title I and Title II Adult Education) as well as TANF and CBVI. This workgroup will maintain 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. 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 (NJDOL) 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 NJDOL 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. Bi-lingual Spanish/English staff are available in nearly every One-Stop. Depending on the composition of the local population, staff bi-lingual in other languages are available to serve non-native English speakers. NJDOL also provides an on-demand translation tool through a vendor who provides bi-lingual translators in over 100 languages. NJDOL also provides written information in multiple languages for distribution at One-Stop Career Centers and through the department's website.

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 and the Aztec software system, 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 AEFLA related services including English as a Second/Other Language and related services.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

The foundation of this Combined Plan commenced with Governor Murphy's vision for a stronger and fairer New Jersey. Over the last two years, the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) and the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) have established more intentional and regular input and feedback mechanisms with the wide range of stakeholder groups and, where applicable, the associations/organizations that represent them. An example is GSETA, the Garden State Employment and Training Association, which invites all representatives from any professional organization that demonstrates a vested interest in the workforce development system to engage with them. In building a foundation for this plan, NJDOL and SETC also collaborated with and received input from the Governor's Jobs and Economic Opportunity Council and the NJ Future of Work Task Force; engaged with peer agencies/groups to inform their plans (e.g. the Perkin V Plan for Career and Technical Education).

The primary foundation of this Combined State Plan is Governor Murphy's *Jobs NJ: Developing Talent to Grow Business in the Garden State*, which was published in January 2020. Coinciding with its release, the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, under the auspices of the SETC, conducted eight stakeholder sessions with the purpose to gain insight and input to inform this Combined Plan from across five major stakeholder groups:

- Practitioners: Literacy, youth, social service and supports, and disability services provider sessions were designed to encourage those communities to consider ways to amplify their own impact in support of the Governor's agenda as well as surface recommendations for how the state might support those efforts. *These sessions were held on January 17 and January 24, 2020.*

- **Local Workforce Development Boards:** The session with the state’s local workforce board executive staff focused on the continuous improvement of the One-Stop system, strengthening partnerships, and expanding the impact of business services within the Jobs NJ framework. The boards also considered which, of the recommendations surfaced, would be appropriate for regional work. *The session was held on January 23, 2020; it was a part of the regularly scheduled monthly meeting between the state’s local boards, SETC, and NJDOL Division of Workforce Development.*
- **Employers and Business Associations:** This session was organized to look at ways the business community could become more engaged with – and benefit from – the public workforce system, as well as how the system might deliver services more efficiently to small and mid-sized companies. *The session was held on January 24, 2020.*
- **Education:** This session explored the state’s workforce programs could help them reach their goals, and how their assets might be leveraged in support of the goals of the programs in this Combined Plan. *The session was held on January 24, 2020.*
- **State Partners, including state government agencies, planning authorities, labor and industry organizations and community and faith-based groups:** The state partner session focused on the ways in which government, as an employer with needs across the spectrum of skill levels, and the programs covered under this Combined Plan, could best align and collaborate to serve the career aspirations of New Jersey residents. *The session was held on January 24, 2020.*

Invitations were directly sent to more than 250 individuals and associations and were distributed throughout their respective networks. All sessions were held in New Brunswick, New Jersey and included a video call-in option for those who could not attend in person. More than 75 individuals attended the sessions, which were structured facilitated discussions designed to solicit the maximum amount of actionable stakeholder input.

The sessions were focused broadly on the ways in which New Jersey’s workforce development ecosystem – including but not limited to the programs included in this Combined Plan – could be aligned and advanced to provide equal access to opportunity for all while supporting the growth of the State’s economy. They were anchored in the three strategies outlined in Jobs NJ: expand access to opportunity, train individuals for in-demand jobs, and match talent to jobs. Many of the themes and suggestions that came from these sessions are reflected in this Plan, and all were presented to the NJDOL Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner for Workforce Development and the SETC Executive staff for consideration moving forward.

Additionally, a public comment period was conducted for this Plan. The Plan was issued for public comment on February 27, 2020 and notice of the public comment period was sent to state agencies, partner organizations, advocacy groups, and interested parties. The comments received are summarized in Appendix 2.

For this modification, attention was focused on the work of system partners including their updated activities and changes made in response to the pandemic. The draft plan is also being made available for public comment with notification being shared as with the original document. A summary of that activity will be found in Appendix 2.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
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 represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
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;	Yes
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;	Yes
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 administering 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, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (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;	Yes
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 the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;	Yes
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);	Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	Yes
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;	Yes
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;	Yes
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);	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and	Yes
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.	Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

The State must address all program-specific requirements in this section for the WIOA core programs regardless of whether the State submits either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I-B

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B—

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 (WDB) 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.

Working in partnership with the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, 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, local WDB Chairs and Directors, One-Stop Operators, and Local Chief Elected Officials at meetings held throughout the state. The regional designations presentation was made available for written public comment. The SETC Governance Committee reviewed the workgroup recommendations, the feedback provided in the regional workforce meetings, and public comment received. The committee proposed and SETC subsequently approved SETC Policy Resolution #2015-04 which resolved that three (3) workforce planning regions be designated in New Jersey: North Region, Central Region, and South Region. These are highlighted in the Regional Designation map below.

New Jersey Local Workforce Development Areas

The 17 Local Workforce Development Boards(LWDBs) 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. Subsequent to the 2016 submission of the NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA, a local area designation was modified; Cape May County joined the Cumberland-Salem local area. The local area designation was approved by SETC Policy Resolution #2016-13, which can be found in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

North Region:

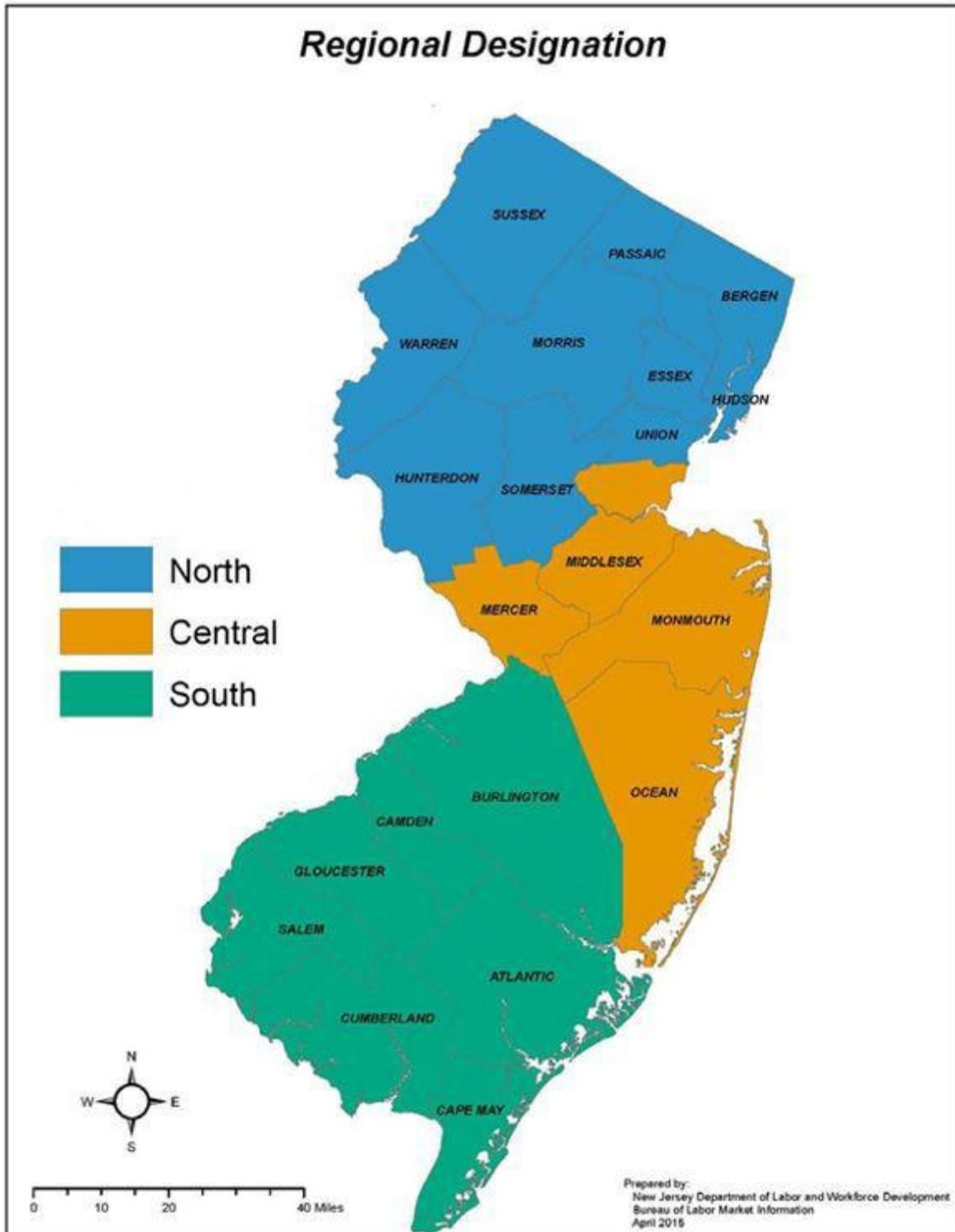
- Bergen County
- Essex County
- Hudson County/Jersey City
- City of Newark
- Passaic County
- Union County
- Greater Raritan (Somerset-Hunterdon Counties)
- Morris-Sussex-Warren Counties

Central Region:

- Mercer County
- Middlesex County
- Monmouth County
- Ocean County

South Region:

- Atlantic County
- Burlington County
- Camden County
- Gloucester County
- Cumberland-Salem-Cape May Counties



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. The process described below is outlined in SETC Policy #2015-02, which is provided in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

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 NJDOL verified local area performance and fiscal integrity for PY 2012 and PY 2013.

Performance Success

For the purposes of initial designation, an area was determined to have performed successfully if:

- 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 percent of the performance target

OR

- 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 mis-expended 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).

The SETC approved 18 local area requests and 17 Local Workforce Development Boards on March 29, 2016, under SETC Policy Resolution #2016-09, which is provided in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

The SETC also approved Policy Resolution #2016-02 outlining the process for subsequent local area designations; this resolution can be found in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

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), as follows:

- If a local area and/or local board disagrees with the corrective action and/or penalty determination of the Assistant Commissioner under N.J.A.C. 12:42-3.10, the local area and/or local board may submit an appeal to the Commissioner in writing no later than 30 days after having received notice of the corrective action and/or penalty determination being appealed.
- All appeals submitted to the Commissioner in writing under (a) above shall state the basis for the appeal and shall include any documentary evidence that the local area and/or local board would like the Commissioner to review prior to rendering his or her decision.
- The Commissioner shall review the documentary evidence presented by the local area and/or local board and shall request any additional information or conduct any investigation necessary to render a decision.
- The Commissioner's decision shall be based on the written record and shall be rendered within 30 days after receipt of the appeal.
- If a local area and/or local board disagrees with the decision of the Commissioner under (d) above, it may appeal that decision to the Secretary of the United States Department of Labor under 20 CFR 667.650(b) not later than 30 days after the local area receives the decision of the Commissioner.

D. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS REFERRED TO IN SECTION 121(H)(2)(E) OF WIOA RELATING TO DETERMINATIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

The SETC and NJDOL worked with the local Workforce Development Boards and One-Stop partners to create a State Funding Mechanism for Infrastructure Costs, SETC Policy Resolution #2017-03. The finalized policy details an appeals process in compliance with WIOA requirements. SETC Policy #2017-03 is provided in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

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

The SETC and NJDOL 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 NJDOL websites. With the implementation of WIOA, the SETC and NJDOL 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.

In January 2015, New Jersey launched a NJ WIOA website (<http://www.nj.gov/labor/wioa/>). The website provided a place where stakeholders could receive up-to-date national and New Jersey-specific WIOA information. The website continues to be a critical vehicle to both the SETC's and NJDOL's approach to keeping its stakeholders and the public at large informed.

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 at <http://njsetc.net/njsetc/policy/resolutions/> and notice of their availability is provided to local areas via e-mail. Information on new policies is also provided at regular meetings held by NJDOL and SETC with local area WDB Directors, One-Stop managers, and One-Stop partner staff.
- NJDOL has established the WDB Coordination and Support Team within the Division of Workforce Development Field Services. This office is responsible for ensuring that all new and revised state polices, as established by NJDOL 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 (WINS); 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.

The policies referenced in this Plan can be found in Appendix 3.

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 intent Jobs NJ, released in January 2020. In particular, these funds will be targeted toward efforts such as, but not limited to:

- **Expansion of Contextualized Learning Programs:** In order to ensure that all New Jerseyans have the opportunity to success in today's economy, New Jersey intends to expand contextualize learning programs serving adult basic education and English-language learners.
- **Increasing Work-Based Learning Opportunities:** Internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training all are proven strategies in support of long-term career success. Since January 2018, New Jersey has increased the number of registered apprenticeship programs by over 50 percent and intend to build on this success to expand offerings into emerging and non-traditional sectors, as well as round out the portfolio of work-based learning opportunities by creating more internships and on-the-job training programs in those industries. Further, NJDOL anticipates expanding its customized job training investments for upskilling frontline workers.
- **Launching Next Generation Industry Partnerships:** While New Jersey has long supported sector-based partnerships, this work has been reimagined for 2020. Led by NJDOL, Governor's set-aside funds will support the launch and implementation of new Industry Partnerships beginning this year, starting with manufacturing.
- **Supporting New Jersey Talent Solutions:** NJDOL, in collaboration with the State's Economic Development Authority and other key partners, is exploring a more dynamic approach for serving businesses or industries anticipating growth or major change. As currently envisioned, there would be a new cross-agency team that would be activated to develop a comprehensive action plan that would engage all the State's talent

development vehicles to both assist the business or industry, address barriers to business growth, and ensure New Jersey residents have access to the best employment opportunities.

Additionally, the State continues to invest in a range of technologies to improve case management tools, expand access to virtual service delivery for customers, and create more real-time workforce data tools for all system stakeholders and the public. New Jersey intends to utilize set-aside funding to support these types of efforts as funds are needed and available.

Rapid Response Funds

NJDOL'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 CareerConnections.nj.gov
- Referral to Jersey Job Clubs
- Résumé 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:

- Job Search Workshops

- Résumé Workshops
- Help with job solicitation campaigns
- Targeted Job Fair assistance
- Registration Forms Completion
- Help in deciphering federal/state plant closing requirements

NJDOL's goal is to respond to layoff events in a timely manner and relay actionable information to the affected workers. NJDOL 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.

Successful layoff aversion strategies employed by the Rapid Response Team have focused on using technology tools to seamlessly transition workers from downsizing companies to growing companies. Workers from downsizing companies are entered into the One-Stop case management system with an identified tying them to the layoff event. This creates a ready pool of qualified and dependable candidates for hiring companies to tap.

State funds supplement Rapid Response funds in New Jersey's layoff aversion efforts. For example, UPSKILL is a competitive grant program that reimburses employers for costs associated with training frontline employees. As noted in the previous section, it is anticipated that more state funds will be invested in to assist companies currently at a competitive workforce disadvantage due to changing technology, inefficient operations, and/or poorly trained staff.

Several Workforce Development Board areas partner on a regular basis with SCORE and Small Business Development Centers to offer training to business owners and entrepreneurs. Rapid Response Team members direct appropriate business owners to these resources, and also, when appropriate, advised downsized workers of the opportunity to use their industry expertise or proprietary knowledge to transition from employee to consulting or entrepreneurship.

The Rapid Response Team partners with NJDOL 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 & Industry Association
- NJ County College Consortium
- Small Business Development Centers
- State and Local Economic Development Agencies
- Trade Unions

NJDOL coordinates Rapid Response efforts and services to trade-affected businesses. Rapid Response provides services to workers for whom a Trade Act petition has been filed. The Trade program does not provide a Trade orientation at the time of the petition filing, but if the company later becomes Trade certified, a Trade orientation is provided to the workers. Once a company has been certified and a Trade orientation is scheduled, there may be additional dislocated workers who have not yet received Rapid Response services. In this case, the Trade Act Unit will request that a Rapid Response Business Representative attend the Trade orientation, so that a simultaneous Rapid Response and Trade Act event can be held for the workers.

The Rapid Response team leverages various partnerships to assist with further explanation or direction for the affected workforce. It is anticipated the intelligence gathered from the State's emerging Industry Partnerships will further inform and enhance these efforts. It is further expected that when New Jersey Talent Solutions, described in the previous section, is implemented, it will be coordinated with the existing Rapid Response and Trade Adjustment and may result in appropriate enhancements to the services described above.

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. NJDOL'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, NJDOL 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 NJDOL;
- The chief elected official of the municipality where the establishment is located;
- Each employee whose employment is to be terminated; and

- Any collective bargaining unit of employees at the establishment.

NJDOL receives federal 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 & 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 workday, 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.

Strategies that New Jersey plans to employ moving forward include co-enrollment of Trade Act and potential Trade Act affected workers under WIOA Dislocated Worker, in coordination with filing for Unemployment Insurance (UI). This will potentially shorten the time period for Trade Act affected workers to receive re-training, by jump-starting the process in anticipation of Trade Act certification.

In addition, the TAA Unit has dedicated one staff member to act as a liaison with the Rapid Response team to reach out to companies on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed. The liaison informs Rapid Response of filed petitions and coordinates a visit to the company. The liaison will attend the event with the Rapid Response team in order to answer potential questions regarding the filed petition. The liaison also attends Rapid Response events for companies that do not currently have a petition filed but which have a high likelihood of being trade affected. The liaison attends these sorts of events in order to investigate and question the company's leadership as well as the workers in order to determine if a petition should in fact be filed.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS 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.

Work-based training models are discussed in depth in other sections of this Plan.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., job center staff taking applications and conducting assessments).

Registered Apprenticeship initiatives have been and will remain an important component of New Jersey's workforce development strategy. In March 2018, Governor Murphy announced the development of the first Office of Apprenticeship in New Jersey, as well as the creation of the New Jersey Apprenticeship Network (NJAN). The Office of Apprenticeship works closely with the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) and serves as the one-stop shop for employers, nonprofits and secondary and post-secondary institutions interested in apprenticeship opportunities. The office serves to:

- Facilitate interactions among businesses, workforce intermediaries, apprentices, educators, and the United States Department of Labor.
- Increase diversity and inclusion in registered apprenticeship programs in the state.
- Create formal linkages to employers, secondary and higher education systems so that more New Jerseyans receive opportunities in career pathways with upward mobility and family-sustaining wages.
- Help apprentices earn college credits, access robust career counseling, and increase diversity and inclusion in apprenticeship programs.

The Office of Apprenticeship serves as a liaison with the other business representatives within the One-Stop system to assist employers who have identified workforce hiring or pipeline development needs and are looking for a proven model to attract and retain talent. The office provides technical assistance to organizations who express interest in developing an apprenticeship program and provide the appropriate referral to USDOL for program development, as well as liaison with various educational partners, local Workforce Development Boards and county/state agencies to coordinate training and/or funding opportunities. The office also uses the Salesforce client relationship management (CRM) platform to engage and record all business engagements, as well as tracking key data such as occupational information, regional trends by industry/counties and status of engagement. In addition, apprenticeship resource information and marketing materials can be found at www.apprenticeship.nj.gov.

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 residents 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 informed customer choices 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 New Jersey, 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 publicly 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 (CRC), and must be made publicly 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 and Workforce Development (NJDOLE) administers New Jersey's ETPL and Consumer Report Card, which are located online at www.njtopps.com.

Starting July 1, 2022, NJDOLE will implement Quality Assurance performance measures for all training programs listed on the ETPL that result in direct employment and wage outcomes. The motivating factors for this effort are: to protect career seekers from predatory training providers, improve the effectiveness and efficiency of state and federal public workforce funds to serve those who are traditionally underserved, low income, unemployed/under-employed, and create a culture of transparency and responsibility that encourages continued improvement and quality for post-secondary programs.

The Consumer Report Card, as currently structured, will be replaced by the Quality Assurance Training Provider Scorecard. The Quality Assurance Training Provider Scorecard will measure five domains: Labor Market Demand, Employment and Wage Outcomes, Education Outcomes, Financial Impact, and Equity for training programs included on the ETPL that result in direct employment and wage outcomes. Training providers will be required to submit evidence that they are serving and attaining equitable outcomes particularly for Male and Female, Black, Latinx, White, Asian, People with Disabilities, and People with other barriers to employment who may require different needs or treatments to achieve equity. Adjustments to the Quality Assurance scorecard measures may occur as NJDOLE continues to fine-tune the model.

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, which includes provider information as well as descriptions of each program of training services to be offered, information on whether the provider is in a partnership with a business, and information on how the provider's training programs align with in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Adding information addressing a factor related to WIOA performance indicators* (employment 2nd and 4th quarter after exit, median earnings 2nd quarter after exit, credential attainment) to the application will be explored. 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 exists (applicable

only for new providers). New providers will be added to the ETPL on a continuing basis as they are determined eligible. Beginning immediately, initial ETPL eligibility is valid for one year from the date of approval, while subsequent approvals (e.g., renewals and modifications) will be valid for two years.

Registered Apprenticeship sponsors and programs are not subject to the same application requirements as all other training providers. All Registered Apprenticeship programs that are registered with the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship, or a recognized state apprenticeship agency (New Jersey's Office of Apprenticeship), are automatically eligible to be included on the ETPL. Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors were informed of their automatic eligibility in January 2020, and provided an application (available in Appendix 3 and at

https://www.nj.gov/labor/forms_pdfs/coei/ETPL/ETPL%20Apprenticeship%20Application.pdf) to complete and submit to COEI to indicate their interest in being included on the ETPL.

Registered Apprenticeship programs will remain on the ETPL until they are no longer registered, until the Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor notifies the state that it no longer wants to be included on the ETPL, or the Registered Apprenticeship program is determined to have intentionally supplied inaccurate information or to have substantially violated any provision of WIOA Title I or WIOA regulations, including 29 CFR 38. Substantial violations are not further itemized but left to the discretion of the Commissioner of the Department of Labor. In its work through Data for the American Dream and the National Skills Coalition's Quality Postsecondary Nondegree Credentials Policy Academy, New Jersey will endeavor to develop clear guidance on this and other issues.

All providers are required to submit a renewal application to maintain their ETPL listing past the initial approval period. The renewal application collects information similar to the initial application, including how training services can be accessed throughout the state, the provider's ability to offer programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials, and how training programs are made accessible to individuals who are employed, individuals with barriers to employment, and individuals with disabilities. Adding performance information on WIOA performance indicators (employment 2nd and 4th quarter after exit, median earnings, credential attainment), and the provider's ability to offer industry-recognized certificates and credentials to the ETPL renewal application will be explored. As a part of the biennial review of eligibility, COEI must remove training programs from the ETPL that fail to meet criteria to remain eligible, which may include failure to meet established performance levels. Registered Apprenticeship programs may only be removed from the ETPL for the reasons listed above.

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 two years. Providers are liable to repay all adult and dislocated worker funds received during the period of non-compliance.

Providers removed from the ETPL will be provided the opportunity for a hearing in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, *N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq.*, and *52:14F-1 et seq.*, and the Uniform Administrative Procedure Rules, *N.J.A.C. 1:1*. All requests for hearings shall be filed with COEI's Training Evaluation Unit within 10 business days from the date of receipt of notification of removal. All requests for hearings shall be in writing and shall be directed to the following address:

NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Center for Occupational Employment Information
Training Evaluation Unit
PO Box 057
Trenton, NJ 08625-0057

All requests for hearings shall be reviewed by the Training Evaluation Unit and the provider's licensing/certification body in order to determine whether the dispute can be resolved at an informal settlement conference. If the review indicates that an informal settlement conference is warranted, such conference shall be scheduled. If a settlement cannot be reached, the case shall be forwarded to the Office of Administrative Law for a formal hearing.

Performance Standards

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.

As previously noted, in July 2022, the Training Provider Scorecard will replace The 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 six months, one year, and two years after exit;
- Average quarterly earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment six months, one year, and two years after exit; and
- Estimated annual earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment at six months, one year, and two years after exit.

Currently, the Consumer Report Card is used as a transparency tool on NJTOPPS, New Jersey's user-facing interface for training program opportunities. New Jersey is currently revamping this digital interface to incorporate multiple quality measures. As part of the Quality Assurance initiative, NJDOL is using 2021-2022 to phase-in the Quality Assurance regime, and conducting a test pilot with a small group of training providers to fine tune the quality assurance performance measures.

New Jersey participated in the Data for the American Dream and the National Skills Coalition's Quality Postsecondary Nondegree Credentials Policy Academy as opportunities to finalize these quality assurance measures for incorporation into the new tool, named The New Jersey Training Explorer.

Additional information that New Jersey collects from all training providers and their programs and highlights on NJTOPPS (to be carried forward to the new tool), include, but are not limited to:

- Program description;
- Availability to WorkFirst New Jersey (TANF) and SNAP customers;
- Credential at completion;
- Linkages to other postsecondary credentials;
- Public transportation accessibility and directions;
- Wheelchair accessibility;
- Hours;
- Languages offered; and
- Childcare offered.

NJTOPPS and the New Jersey Training Explorer (the new digital tool in beta and developed as part of Data for the American Dream described below) also indicate whether each program is aligned with the labor demand occupations list, and therefore eligible for WIOA subsidy. Currently, New Jersey does not require providers to include information on business partnerships or availability of programs through state and federal programs other than WIOA and those listed above; however, this information will be collected going forward and included in the new tool described below.

Data for the American Dream and Credential Engine Initiative

The Data for the American Dream (D4AD) initiative supported innovative efforts that expand access to education and career data to help students and job seekers – especially low-income,

lower-skilled, underemployed, and unemployed Americans – make better career decisions in a changing economy. New Jersey is one of three states that received seed funding as D4AD’s inaugural grantees for an 18-month period, from September 2019 through February 2021.

New Jersey’s project received a grant to build an interactive website containing smart disclosure tools that will help job seekers make informed decisions about training. The website will be targeted at customers of the state’s human services programs and other disadvantaged populations and will replace our current Eligible Training Provider (ETPL) and Consumer Report Card (CRC) website. The newly available data will help job seekers obtain information about their desired employment and earnings outcomes, help employers find better-qualified employees, and will allow regulators to use data-driven information to weed out fraudulent and low-quality training programs. The project is led by the NJDOL and operates in partnership with several other state agencies and organizations from the non-profit sector, private sector, and academia.

As part of the New Jersey D4AD Initiative, NJDOL has partnered with Credential Engine to integrate eligible training providers' data into the organization’s broader, national Credential Registry to help New Jerseyans make more informed education and career decisions. Credential Engine, a non-profit organization based in Washington D.C., partners with key agencies and organizations to identify and operationalize the use of transparent credential information that allow states, regions, and stakeholders to improve services, practices, programs, and policies for the benefit of students, workers, veterans, employers, educators, policymakers, and others to make more informed decisions in the marketplace of credentials and to significantly advance the publishing of credentials in those states and regions to the Registry. NJDOL will provide credentialing data to this new registry on behalf of New Jersey’s eligible training providers such as competencies, quality assurance measures, and labor market information through a web-based registry that uses a common language to allow for credential comparability.

Industry Valued Credentials List:

As an overarching guide to New Jersey’s training efforts, the state has developed a policy with an intent toward maintaining a high proportion of industry-valued credentials in publicly funded training. New Jersey will continue to support the attainment of industry-valued credentials through analysis of labor market data, feedback from employers and stakeholders, and other available information. The original list is available on the New Jersey Career Connections website at <https://www.nj.gov/labor/career-services/tools-support/industry-valued-credentials/>. NJDOL is working with partners, including Credential Engine, to strengthen credential data collection and reporting and with New Jersey Council of Community Colleges to include high-value credentials in career pathway mapping initiatives with post-secondary education institutions around the state. NJDOL is currently seeking a technology solution that will enable its data collection to remain refreshed.

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, OTHER LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND 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

Ensuring full access to opportunity, particularly among underserved populations and those with multiple challenges to economic self-sufficiency, is at the core of Governor Murphy’s vision for a stronger and fairer New Jersey. There are several ways this access is assured and measured by the State Employment and Training Commission in partnership with NJDOL.

As part of its One-Stop Career Center Certification process, New Jersey requires 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 reinforces these efforts through its use of 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.

WIOA Section 134 (c)(3)(E) details priority requirements for the use of Adult Title I funds. As detailed, the priority should be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Regardless of funding level, local workforce areas are to recognize and comply by prioritizing the population for services. While adult services are not restricted to the population, New Jersey has taken steps to oversee the provision of service to the target groups and provide local workforce areas the ability to do so as well.

Through work with the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, the SETC has developed a series of dashboards as a tool for monitoring and oversight of programs. The dashboards have been designed to provide state and local perspective regarding program measurements and services to special populations including income and literacy. Over time, it is anticipated these tools will be expanded to the other programs under WIOA Titles as well as other State-level programs.

The data utilized in the dashboard is provided through the state data reporting systems. NJDOL staff provides technical assistance and training materials to local workforce development partners to ensure data accuracy, and consistency and coordination in definitions. The dashboards are publicly available on the SETC website at njsetc.net/njsetc/performance.

The use of dashboards and definitions that span multiple workforce programs strengthens New Jersey's ability to target priority populations, and those most in need, and to take timely action if appropriate clients are underserved in workforce programs. The SETC will coordinate with state and local program staff to effectively address any concerns or challenges that may arise. Building on the collaborative partnerships that exist between the state and local entities that provide these services, New Jersey looks to provide increased opportunities for its residents who are most in need to gain employable skills and financial independence.

In addition to SETC's dashboards, New Jersey works closely with Futurework to support connection to reports reflecting near real-time data regarding WIOA Title I and III programs. Futurework's dashboards provide tools for tracking progress towards performance and rosters for following up with individual participants. Additional reports and tools are made available through the Office of Research and Information to local areas to further enhance understanding of service delivery and the success of participants. NJDOL is working across divisions to leverage these tools and develop higher standards for data entry and data sharing that better support the use of data to improve programs at the local and state levels. This includes drawing attention to the types of supports and mix of services available across One-Stop Career Center partners, as well as the diversity of populations that our system serves.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

NJDOL has established the criteria below for the local area transfer of funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

Dislocated Worker Funds Transfer to Adult:

The local Workforce Development Board must certify that it lacks sufficient funds from other sources to adequately serve the WIOA Title I Adult priority population:

- Public Assistance Recipients
- Other Low-Income Individuals
- Basic Skills Deficient Individuals

AND

- The local Workforce Development Board must certify that it has determined that there are no pending layoffs within their local area that will impact the Dislocated Worker program.

Adult Funds Transfer to Dislocated Worker:

The local Workforce Development Board must certify that the local workforce area has sufficient Adult funds (i.e., TANF, GA, WIOA Adult) to serve the WIOA Adult priority population, including public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals and basic skills deficient individuals.

These criteria were disseminated to the local areas in New Jersey WIN WD-PY21-2. This guidance is provided in Appendix 3 of this plan. The guidance is also made available online at https://www.nj.gov/labor/wioa/forms_pdfs/WD-PY21-2%20WIOA%20Adult%20and%20Dislocated%20Worker%20Transfer%20of%20Funds%20Procedure.pdf.

C. WITH RESPECT TO YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED IN SECTION 129 OF WIOA—

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 OR CONTRACTS 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 OR CONTRACTS.[11]

[11] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

The SETC and NJDOL encourage local Workforce Development Boards, with the full participation of their standing youth committees if one exists, to identify the particular services that need to be procured for which groups of youth (in-school/out-of-school) and to determine the appropriate funding and service levels. To do this, the State recommends the following steps before issuing WIOA Title I Youth requests for proposal:

- 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.
- 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); and
- 20 percent of all youth funds must be spent on work experience.
- Review records to estimate the total funds that will be spent on ITAs in the program year.
- Consider other relevant factors such as the local labor market.

Further, the SETC has established ten (10) criteria for the evaluation of youth service programs. These criteria, which are central to the provider and selection process, are listed below:

- The program will have a record of demonstrated effectiveness.
- The program will not discriminate in any way and will be in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The provider must have the capacity to identify issues that are hindering youth from succeeding in the program and recommend the appropriate support services.
- 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.
- The program will maintain a close working relationship with the local One-Stop Career Center.
- Programs with industry-valued credentials as a goal will make arrangements for participants to test for and obtain the credential.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Furthermore, local areas have the authority to develop a system of youth services that draws on several different service delivery mechanisms and a variety of partners. Local WDBs strategies may include (1) partnership agreements (MOUs) for the provision of specific program elements using non-WIOA funds, (2) direct delivery of program elements and framework services within One-Stop Career Centers, and (3) procurement of specific program elements and services. New

Jersey seeks to develop systems of youth services locally that connect to other One-Stop Career Center partners and pathways.

As with other populations, the changes brought on by Covid-19 and accelerated technology shifts are affecting youth engagement in our labor market. WIOA youth services offer an opportunity for expanding and innovating workforce opportunities for young people in our state. Our local WDBs and workforce systems are poised to serve as key centers for innovation around postsecondary options and pathways for young New Jerseyans and must serve as leaders in offering high-quality, alternative options for career development and training. These solutions will need to draw on new virtual technologies and mediums to reach and support young people with different interests, experiences, and skill levels. As a state we recognize the need to expand the reach and quality of services for youth with low literacy levels, as well as young people who have a secondary credential that are navigating transitions to employment and/or additional postsecondary training.

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.

We envision our One-Stop Career Centers as a central resource hub for directing youth to specialized opportunities and a broad base of supports to meet academic and occupational skill need and interests, as well reduce specific barriers impacting the potential for success in education or employment.

New Jersey requires that 75 percent of WIOA Title I Youth funds must be spent to serve Out-of-School Youth. This serves as a major source of funds and support for young people in our One-Stop Career Center network. Additional opportunities exist through our core partnerships with Title III, Title II, and Title IV programs, as well as WorkFirst NJ. New Jersey Youth Corps, Career and Technical Education partners, and Apprenticeship programs also offer additional opportunities for integrated services and the design of multiple pathways for youth through our One-Stop Career Centers.

New Jersey Youth Corps: 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 Accounts (ITAs) and work-based training opportunities in the same ways that Adult and Dislocated Worker participants may, through the opportunities listed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

WIOA Title I, II, III, and IV partners: Title I 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. Additionally, Title II programs coordinate and work in tandem with Title I programs to serve students age 16 years of older in need of basic skills. 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.

CTE and Apprenticeship: Partnerships with technical schools and community colleges through Career and Technical Education and other Apprenticeship programs also offer specific opportunities for collaboration and integration of service. As a state we are interested in further exploring the diversity of our Out-of-School youth and the multiple pathways that our One-Stop Career Centers through direct supports, partnership, and procured services can offer.

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, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS UNDER THE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM ELEMENT. [12]

[12] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

WIOA requires that all Title I-funded Youth programs have the following 14 elements:

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:
 - a. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
 - b. Pre-apprenticeship programs;
 - c. Internships and job shadowing; and
 - d. 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 post-secondary education and training.

New Jersey commits to ensuring the required 14 Youth elements are delivered. However, as 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 workforce boards are responsible for identifying the existing providers of program elements in their area and procuring services as necessary where there are gaps in services.

Further, *20 CFR 681.470* states that non-WIOA funds can be used to provide WIOA youth program elements under certain conditions. Therefore, NJDOL allows local programs to 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 Workforce Development Board must ensure that the program element is closely connected and coordinated with the WIOA youth program.

For example, YouthBuild is a federally funded program that provides work experience through a non-WIOA allocation. A local area could enter into an agreement with a YouthBuild program and refer appropriate WIOA-enrolled youth to YouthBuild for work experience. This policy does not preclude an agency such as YouthBuild 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 SETC and NJDOL provide technical assistance to support local leveraging efforts.

Beyond the requirements outlined in WIOA Title I, New Jersey provides leadership for the state's youth strategy through the SETC's Shared Youth Vision Council. The Shared Youth Vision Council recommends service, policy and program components that serve youth at the local level in the workforce system and recommends or assists in the programs and services that focus on youth workforce policy that best serve the needs of clients. With a focus on ensuring quality services for NJ's youth, we will define success by the creation of a highly skilled, motivated, and conscientious workforce to help strengthen New Jersey's economic future. 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: providing and guiding youth to education, employment, retention of employment, and nationally-recognized credentials.

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 has the option to create and maintain a Youth Standing Committee to lead the development of the local youth workforce investment system.

Regardless of whether such a committee exists, it is the responsibility of local WDBs to:

- Actively engage business, community and educational stakeholders around local needs and priorities for youth services; and
- Provides strategic direction and coordination with other programs and initiatives in their communities to make the best use of limited resources.
- Develop a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated system of youth services that effectively prepares young people for higher education and future employment by implementing the 14 program elements, as highlighted above.

The SETC issues guidelines for the development of local plans, including youth-related requirements. NJDOL provides the monitoring arm of the State to ensure compliance.

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). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

WIOA provides the flexibility and authority to states and local WDBs in expanding the definition of who is eligible for Title I youth services to include additional populations that have been identified as needing additional assistance, as well as allowing for a 5% exemption from low-income requirements. Additional policy with details is forthcoming from NJDOL regarding the opportunities for expanding access and ensuring that young jobseekers in New Jersey have

access to the career and training services that they need. Expanding WIOA youth eligibility allows for an opportunity to address unique community needs for those who have a barrier to completing an education program or to secure and hold employment. Any local area that seeks to expand criteria for eligibility through requires additional assistance must codify these criteria in clear policies that define and offer documentation standards regarding various criteria. These criteria must also align with local plans for in-school and out-of-school youth.

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" (WD-PY19-6.1) issued by NJDOL in June 2015 and revised January 2019, the following is the State's definition of **Requires Additional Assistance**: "An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment."

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. The use of this criterion must be limited.

In the same document, "limitation" is defined: "No more than five percent of the in-school youth served in a local area may be an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. [*WIOA Sec. 129 (a) (3)*]." The WD-PY19-6.1 policy document is provided in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

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 AND PROVIDE THE STATE POLICY FOR DETERMINING WHETHER A YOUTH IS ATTENDING OR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL.

"Attending school" and "not attending school" are not defined in New Jersey state law. State policy WD-PY19-6.1 issued by NJDOL (provided in Appendix 3 of this Plan) includes the following definitions:

Attending School – Youth are considered to be "attending school" if they receive services from any one of the public or non-public institutions listed in the table below. Those being home-schooled or privately tutored would be considered attending school for the purpose of WIOA Title I-B youth eligibility determination. A youth enrolled at a post-secondary institution would also be considered attending school.

Enrolled in School – A student on the attendance rolls whether or not the student is physically present on any given day.

Not Attending School – For the purpose of WIOA Title I-B, a youth is determined to not be attending school if the youth is not receiving services from any one of the public or non-public institutions listed in [below]. Individuals who are enrolled in adult basic education/GED preparation under Title II of WIOA, skills training, or other remedial education programs. Including those offered through publicly and privately funded adult basic education programs, YouthBuild or Job Corps program or drop-out re-engagement programs are categorized as not attending school. Eligibility for these services is to be based on the educational status of a

youth, not on the location or funding source of the entity providing the service(s). Therefore, such youth must be categorized as OSY for the purposes of registration in New Jersey's system of record, America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS). Youth attending high school equivalency programs funded by the public K-12 school system who are classified by the school system as still enrolled in school are an exception, they are considered in-school youth.

List of Public and Non-Public Institutions

Public Schools:

- School Districts
- Charter Schools (including Cyber Charters)
- Area Vocational Technical Schools

Non-Public Schools:

- Sectarian Schools
- Private Schools

6. IF USING THE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION WHICH MUST FURTHER DEFINE HOW TO DETERMINE IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS UNABLE TO COMPUTE OR SOLVE PROBLEMS, OR READ, WRITE, OR SPEAK ENGLISH, AT A LEVEL NECESSARY TO FUNCTION ON THE JOB, IN THE INDIVIDUAL'S FAMILY, OR IN SOCIETY. IF NOT USING THE PORTION OF THE DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE.

Not applicable, as New Jersey is using the definition under WIOA Section 3(5)(A) which defines Basic Skills Deficient as a youth who has "English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test."

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 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. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)

This section is not applicable to New Jersey. New Jersey is not a single-area state.

4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.

This section is not applicable to New Jersey. New Jersey is not a single-area state.

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

This section is not applicable to New Jersey. New Jersey is not a single-area state.

6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.

This section is not applicable to New Jersey. New Jersey is not a single-area state.

7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL CARRY OUT THE REVIEW OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED UNDER TITLE II CONSISTENT WITH WIOA SECS. 107(D)(11)(A) AND (B)(I) AND WIOA SEC. 232.

This section is not applicable to New Jersey. New Jersey is not a single-area state.

8. COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

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 waivers at this time, but reserves the right to do so should rules allow and situation(s) require such.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
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 and basic skills deficient;	Yes
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;	Yes
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;	Yes
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);	Yes
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;	Yes
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;	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
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);	Yes
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;	Yes
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;	Yes
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.	Yes
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);	Yes

ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);

- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each

of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	61.0		62.0	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	60.8		61.8	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	5046.0		5146.0	
Credential Attainment Rate	60.3		61.3	
Measurable Skill Gains	51.3		52.3	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);

- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the

core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	61.4		62.4	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	61.2		62.2	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	7192.0		7292.0	
Credential Attainment Rate	64.1		65.1	
Measurable Skill Gains	53.1		54.1	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers

indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	61.4		62.4	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	58.2		59.2	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	1824.0		1924.0	
Credential Attainment Rate	52.7		53.7	
Measurable Skill Gains	60.9		61.9	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM (EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

All Program-Specific Requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

On January 6, 2020, USDOL released the *Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Flexibility* rule, which gave States additional flexibility with regard to the administration of the programs funded with

Wagner-Peyser funds. At this time, New Jersey intends to continue to use its state merit staff employees to deliver Wagner-Peyser services.

2. 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 through NJDOL teams, or coordinated through a new training partnership being created between NJDOL and GSETA (Garden State employment and Training Association). 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 <https://nj.gov/labor/wioa/>. NJDOL also will incorporate training opportunities for One-Stop staff relating the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, in coordination with DVRS and CBVI. NJDOL is also developing a new Learning Management System that will provide access to training and technical resources, as well as a statewide training calendar to ensure coordination of training across units.

3. DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES AND REFERRAL TO UI STAFF FOR ADJUDICATION

The incredible number of Unemployment Insurance recipients over the last two years, both strained and brought to light needed changes across our system. Questions about Unemployment Insurance were met in every corner of our system. The need for continued integration and connection of One Stop partners emerged as a critical need. However, we also recognize that integration and connection will no longer always require co-location. Over the last couple years, NJDOL has continued pursued strategies that develop cross-training opportunities and systems that work across One Stop partners – this includes efforts to modernize our data systems, the development of a Single Sign-On, and investments in universal platforms such as SkillUp New Jersey that can offer training opportunities across programs.

In addition, over the last four years, NJDOL has sought to build out specific centers of technical assistance within our core programs – Title I, II, III, and IV programs, as well as Work First New Jersey (WFNJ). A key goal moving forward is to support connection and cross-training through the development of our new Learning Management System (LMS), as well as through NJDOL's training partnership with GSETA, drawing on the internal expertise of our teams, our local areas, and outside partners.

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 30 One-Stop Career Centers. Prior to Covid-19, UI staff was 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. As part of this transition, UI increased its capacity to serve customers in One-Stop Centers through a system of courtesy telephones and online resources at the majority of One-Stops. Wagner-Peyser staff were 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. When Covid-19 began, this shift to remote systems accelerated and evolved to try to meet the incredible influx of UI customers that resulted from the pandemic. As UI rolls have declined, NJDOL's leadership with the Governor's office is seeking to develop strategies for strengthening our UI services statewide, drawing on the lessons learned from the pandemic to balance in-person services and leverage technology and the opportunities for remote support within our One-Stop Career Center network.

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. Claimants receiving a profiling score are entered into the RESEA (*Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment*) selection pool for mandatory One-Stop services. RESEA participants are mailed an invitation during the second week of their and report generally five to six weeks into their claim. NJDOL is currently exploring options that would speed up notification, and service commencement, for UI claimants, including using email and other alerts.

The RESEA 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.

During Covid-19, the need for RESEA supports dramatically increased, and NJDOL sought to maintain the same quality and sequence of service through virtual supports. As we move forward, we seek to continue to develop RESEA programs as a bridge from UI to more individual career services and training support.

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;

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). 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.
- 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, Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA), must participate in reemployment services as a condition of continued UI benefit eligibility. 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. While there is no minimum number of employer contacts required of UI claimants to maintain eligibility, One-Stop staff evaluate claimants work search history as part of the UI eligibility determination portion of the RESEA. Telephone, in-person contacts, and applying for job openings or sending résumés electronically using the state’s online labor exchange system or directly at employer websites, are all acceptable work search methods.
- UI claimants calling NJDOL 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 the department’s website.

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 online re-employment orientation video — http://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/plan/start/reemployment_orientation.shtml — after completing their application for unemployment benefits. This orientation provides 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 the One-Stop Career Centers. Upon filing, claimant information automatically populates the One-Stop case management system to facilitate service delivery and minimize duplicate data entry. Claimants required to attend mandatory workshops 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 state’s job board. In order to provide more proactive services to UI claimants, the balance of UI claimants not selected for RESEA will be invited to attend a re-employment orientation. 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 staff to resource room PCs and provided technical assistance on filing or directed to the UI phone bank 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 include the launch of a single sign-on application for UI claimants that will provide them 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 occur more frequently.

2. REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE’S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW;

See above response in d. 1.

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

See above response in d. 1.

4. PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

See above response in d. 1.

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 AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES 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.

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.

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 percent 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 percent 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 Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) outreach program and H-2A activities of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development are limited to a sampling of the roughly 1,300 farms that use Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers.

Typical characteristics of MSFWs in NJ include predominantly Spanish, Haitian Creole, or Korean speaking, from countries of origin that include Mexico, Guatemala, Jamaica, Haiti, Korea, and U.S. born workers from Puerto Rico. Farmworkers tend to have low levels of literacy, with minimal access to resources and supportive services. Due to lack of transportation, many rely on friends/family, crew leader shuttles, or public transportation options. Also, lack of healthcare access tends to increase risk of undiagnosed and unreported/underreported health conditions. Given the housing options associated with migratory and temporary based employment such as those associated with the farming industry, MSFWs are overrepresented in housing areas that tend to have overcrowding, forcing many to share kitchen and bathroom areas. Regarding access to employment and training programs, MSFWs may benefit from ES services, including partnerships with MSFW serving organizations, but due to long work hour schedules, remote area location associated with farms, and mistrust in government agencies given the issues associated with immigrant communities, MSFWs tend to not participate with ES employment and training programs/services. Based on past and projected agricultural and farmworker activity in NJ, farmworkers, including MSFWs, needs include:

- Flexible hours for accessible services as agricultural work hours do not always coincide with typical business hours
- Assistance with language barriers, including English language classes
- ES services offered in culturally and linguistically appropriate manner, including bilingual one-stop staff, translated list of services and programs, referrals to appropriate supportive services resources
- Increased collaboration with MSFW serving organizations, including PathStone, to build a sense of trust within farmworker communities while increasing program service capacity
- Increased co-enrollment with WIOA core programs, including Title 1 and II for training options.
- Streamlined ES service delivery to ensure all MSFW are provided ES services and protections in an equitable manner, on a statewide basis
- Increased WDB involvement and activity, as it relates to creating policies and programs tailored to serve MSFW communities, particularly in local areas with ETA designated Significant Offices
- Referral systems to pandemic related programs and services, including COVID-19 vaccination, testing, and symptoms management.
- Increased awareness regarding CDC and NJ DOH COVID-19 related guidance and safety recommendations, using culturally and linguistically appropriate tools.

Addressing unmet employment and training needs by offering and incentivizing training and employment programs, including work experience components, On the Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker training, as well as partnering with community businesses to create employment and training opportunities tailored to meet unique needs of MSFWs. The four designated MSFW Significant offices will participate in all upcoming work-based learning training sessions offered by the Office of Career Services.

2. 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

New Jersey's **top-selling agricultural commodities** include greenhouse/nursery products, blueberries, tomatoes, and peaches. New Jersey ranked 40th overall among the states in agricultural production in 2010, the last year state-level data comparisons are available, 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 percent and 5 percent respectively from 2009-2010, but prices were up 4 percent.

New Jersey's top five **most labor-intensive** agricultural commodities, listed below with their peak months, are:

1. Blueberries, July
2. Cranberries, October
3. Orchards: Peaches, August; Apples, September
4. Vegetables: Asparagus, May; Tomatoes, July; Mixed Vegetables, August; Sweet Potatoes, October
5. Nurseries, 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 the **COVID 19 pandemic**, price hikes in fuel and chemicals and by worker competition from other sectors.

New Jersey farmers hire both foreign and local workers to fill labor demands during agricultural peak season. **H-2A job orders have remained consistent, despite pandemic related labor shortages.** A planned Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) marketing strategy will address workforce development issues facing NJ farmers. NJ farmers will continue to work with outreach workers and one stop center staff for their staffing needs.

3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (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 shows 12,000 – 14,000 workers during New Jersey's 2019 growing season, up from the statewide estimate of 700-1,000 workers during low

season. Numbers are based on past estimates, wage and crop surveys and input from partners such as WIOA 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* – individuals who are employed, or were employed in the past 12 months, in farm work of a seasonal or other temporary nature and are not required to be absent overnight from his/her permanent place of residence. Non-migrant individuals who are full-time students are excluded. Labor is performed on a seasonal basis where, ordinarily, the employment pertains to or is of the kind exclusively performed at certain seasons or periods of the year and which, from its nature, may not be continuous or carried on throughout the year.
- *Migrant farmworkers* – individuals 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 New Jersey 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 New Jersey migrate through Georgia, Maine, Michigan, 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 Creole/French are the most 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 assistance with unemployment insurance claims.

Farmworkers are especially likely to be disadvantaged in terms of access to information about new or changing labor market conditions and 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 commonly 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.

Farmworkers are still in need of COVID related services, including vaccination and testing resources. NJDOL will continue to collaborate with its sister agencies and community partners to ensure MSFWs are made aware of available resources, including appropriate referral methods.

Past and Projected Agricultural and Farmworker Activity

Three new outreach workers were hired at the beginning of the 2019 growing season. This helped to increase the number of MSFWs contacted where they work, live, and congregate. The new outreach employees had a comprehensive orientation, including several weeks working within a One-Stop Career Center to familiarize themselves with the full range of career and training services available to MSFWs. During this period, they also received training from the experienced outreach worker, met key partners including wage and hour staff, received training from the NFJP (PathStone) grantee, accompanied the experienced outreach staff on farm visits, were introduced to the apparent violation and complaint system, and were familiarized with recording customer information and activities in the AOSOS case management system.

As seen in the chart below, 5,430 MSFWs were contacted during PY 2018. Outreach ranged from a low of one contact during the month of January to 2,150 MSFWs contacted during June 2019. Outreach during the period resulted in the receipt of three complaints which were investigated and resolved to the satisfaction of the affected workers by the department’s Wage and Hour Division staff.

NJDOL expects the number of MSFWs contacted in PY 2019 and succeeding years will surpass the PY 2018 totals as the full impact of the new outreach hires is reflected in a full year of data.

PY	Best Estimate: MSFWs in Area	# of MSFWs Personally Contacted	Approx. Staff Days Performing Outreach	# of Applications for Jobs Taken	# of AJC-Related Complaints Received from MSFWs	# of Apparent Violations Referred to Enforcement Agencies
2018						
Jul	7,700	1,472	12		2	2
Aug	4,250	853	10		1	1
Sep	2,800	144	8	3		
Oct	2,000	88	10			
Nov	200	17	4			
Dec	200	18	4			
Jan	200	1	1			
Feb	400	168	7			
Mar	400	87	3			
Apr	400	167	7			

PY	Best Estimate: MSFWs in Area	# of MSFWs Personally Contacted	Approx. Staff Days Performing Outreach	# of Applications for Jobs Taken	# of AJC-Related Complaints Received from MSFWs	# of Apparent Violations Referred to Enforcement Agencies
2018						
May	525	265	4	1		
Jun	2,650	2,150	33	3		
Total		5,430			3	3

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 are 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).

Outreach staff are funded with Wagner-Peyser “10 percent” funds. Based upon NJDOL’s analysis of resources available to support outreach and an assessment, there is an adequate and sufficient amount of resources available.

4. 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:

New Jersey has designated four locations as Significant and Bilingual Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) offices:

- Atlantic County One-Stop Career Center, 2 South Main Street, Pleasantville, New Jersey 08232
- Cumberland County One-Stop Career Center, 3322 College Drive, PO Box 1500, Vineland, NJ 08362
- Gloucester County One-Stop Career Center, 1480 Tanyard Road, Suite A, Sewell, NJ 08080 and 215 Crown Point Road, Thorofare, NJ 08086
- Somerset County One-Stop Career Center, 75 Veterans Memorial Drive East, Somerville, NJ 08876

Pleasantville covers over 130 farm employers 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.

Vineland covers over 300 farm employers and processes 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.

Outreach

Outreach staff will contact 40 MSFWs per day on average with a goal of reaching a total of 3,600 through the four local offices during the growing season. The update to this number reflects NJDOL's reduction in outreach staff, implementation of COVID safety precautions for the return of in-person outreach (lesser farms visited), and the alignment of the definition of outreach with USDOL regulations.

Local Office	# of MSFWs to be Contacted during PY 19	Staff Days Conducting Outreach	# of Days per Week	# of Farms, Campsites or Gathering Places per Day	# of MSFW Contact per Day
Atlantic	900	90	4	2	10
Cumberland	900	90	4	2	10
Gloucester	900	90	4	2	10
Somerset	900	90	4	2	10

Significant MSFW office staff and management, outreach workers and other appropriate personnel are provided with the computer-based training on services to farmworkers and farm employers.

NJDOL has assigned the necessary personnel to provide effective outreach services to MSFWs. Although each significant office had a dedicated staff person conducting outreach during the growing season, the promotion of Cumberland County One Stop Career Center's outreach worker has now left MSFW outreach personnel with one vacancy going into the MSFW 2022 Outreach season. NJDOL is actively recruiting the appropriate staff person to ensure the provision of accurate coverage for Cumberland County's farms. In the meantime, the Gloucester County One Stop Career Center outreach worker will plan and appropriately manage her outreach efforts to cover both Gloucester and Cumberland areas. ES Managers will continue to ensure that outreach services are made available to MSFWs in the four designated MSFW Significant offices.

Self-assessments of One-Stop Career Centers 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) include information compiled through internal and external customer contacts, customer satisfaction surveys, system-generated reports, and input provided by stakeholders.

Outreach visits are made to the agricultural community from April to November with the vast majority of the visits between May 15 and October 1 to locate and contact MSFWs at their working, living and/or gathering areas to inform them of current One-Stop Career Center), PathStone Inc., and other community-based organization services which may be of interest. Outreach activities are consistent with 20 CFR Part 653.107 and serve to implement strategies aimed to identify, document and track MSFWs as they access basic and individualized career services and training services offered through the state's One-Stop Career Centers.

Outreach Strategies

Since Program Year 2011, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has worked to recruit an MSFW Outreach team that includes permanent, year-round, bi-lingual staff. It has also sought to develop a broader MSFW outreach effort in which outreach workers, local office management, and partners from community-based MSFW service organizations

have 1) ongoing communication with one another and 2) a better understanding of their respective roles in ensuring MSFWs the same quality services as non-MSFW customers.

In recent years, the focus of outreach worker training has been on making the staff subject matter experts in MSFW procedures and regulations, such as the:

- Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA)
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- OSHA/ETA/State Housing Standards and Field Sanitation rules
- Federal/State Farm Labor Contractor Registration rules and Child Labor laws
- and others

The State Monitor Advocate emphasizes the importance of providing employment service and benefit information in Spanish, Haitian Creole, and other languages commonly spoken by MSFWs; Limited English Proficiency resources; and a unified complaint system.

Consistent with DOLETA strategies for enhancing opportunities for agricultural employers, limited-English proficient individuals, and farmworker adults and youth, New Jersey's outreach priorities have included:

- 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 training for all parties will place more emphasis on these MSFW strategies.

A. CONTACTING FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY THE NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES

The New Jersey outreach program will focus on locating and contacting farmworkers not reached through normal intake activities conducted by One-Stop Career Centers. NJDOL will explore and implement processes intended to meet and exceed DOLETA compliance requirements in providing qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate service delivery to MSFWs.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program (MSFW) outreach training and information will be extended to all of the state's One-Stop Career Centers, not just to staff at the Significant MSFW offices. The new State Monitor Advocate (SMA) started in December 2019. The focus continues to be on providing unified understanding of the MSFW program to all One-Stop Career Centers in New Jersey. Visits will help the SMA identify the specific information and training materials

needed by each office, especially those where MSFW service requests and job orders have been less frequent. All local offices could help more MSFWs if internal procedures, such as handling complaints, were more consistent and informal.

Networking with community-based organizations will be more frequent and pursued in regions of the state that have not had as much MSFW staff attention in the past as the major agricultural areas of South Jersey. The traditional approach of boosting MSFW awareness of local services through outreach worker field visits needs to be balanced by alerting more local community colleges, churches, legal services, health clinics, agricultural extension services, farmers' markets, events and festivals to the importance of them actively directing more of the MSFWs they encounter to the One-Stop Career Centers.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development is also looking for ways that the outreach team and community-based organizations can work together to collect and analyze more data on who the MSFW population encompasses, where they are concentrated statewide, and what their specific service needs. Understanding why some MSFWs have failed to connect to support services may require new approaches to traditional survey techniques as well. Training outreach workers how to take advantage of the state's AOSOS customer case management system will remain a high priority.

B. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUTREACH STAFF. 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 AND EMPLOYMENT-RELATED LAW COMPLAINT SYSTEM ("COMPLAINT SYSTEM" DESCRIBED AT 20 CFR 658 SUBPART E), 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.

More training events for outreach workers, local office staff and community organizations is an important vehicle for getting the word out on new MSFW concerns, such as harassment on the job, career service resources, and native language materials summarizing farmworker rights under state and Federal law.

Adding MSFW questions to local office monitoring interviews is an area where technical guidance could help do more to bring MSFW services closer to the levels offered to non-MSFW clients. New Jersey is also looking at ways to take greater advantage of direct technical assistance through its Regional Monitor Advocate and the National Monitor Advocate office.

Technical assistance provided to outreach staff will consist of the following:

- Training that includes in-person and computer-based training on services to farmworkers and farm employers, Agricultural Recruitment System (Intrastate and Interstate Clearance). Review of MSFW data entry and tracking into NJ's case management system, America One Stop Operating System (AOSOS)
- Targeted training by NJ Labor Market Analysts to address local area labor demand needs, including partnership strategies with local area Business Resource Centers
- Ongoing cross-training with WIOA Partners, including Titles I and II, to increase co-enrollment into funded employment and training programs

- Provide State-issued vehicles, laptops, and cell phones
- Enhancing collaboration with MSFWs' service provider organizations in order to assist with outreach efforts, including sharing resources and collaborative training efforts to address service delivery, referrals, rights and protections, and career and employment opportunities
- Ongoing reviews of MSFW daily outreach logs and plans, complaint system logs, MSFW program performance, compliance reports customer, satisfaction surveys, and input provided by stakeholders, in order to identify best practices, areas of needed improvement, training needs, and policy area needs
- SMA will continue to support the network of service delivery by providing technical support and training and will be available, in an advisory capacity, to NJDOL in order to maintain program integrity and compliance with federal program mandates.
- Staff will be required to attend meetings, training conferences, and program-related events in agricultural areas throughout the state, including partner and non-partner MSFW serving agencies, and USDOL. Ongoing review of MSFW rights, including overview of both ES regulations and ES laws and NJ's Unified Complaint System.
- Ongoing training via resources provided by ETA's Workforce GPS.

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

Training opportunities for outreach workers are being expanded beyond traditional MSFW laws on the Federal level, such as the Fair Labor Standards Act and Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, to give the staff a deeper understanding of updated Department of Labor and Workforce Development programs involving eligibility for state Unemployment Insurance assistance, Wage & Hour guidelines, and state standards for safety and housing. Online surveys and webinars can also educate professional staff on topics such as how to determine if a worker has enough days worked and enough farm work income to qualify as an authentic "Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker."

The NJDOL Division of Career Services (DCS) conducts annual WIOA Core Partner Cross-training, where lead trainers present on program eligibility, services, and service delivery collaborations. Programs that attend include, but are not limited to:

- Title I Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth
- Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy
- Title II Employment Services, including MSFW and RESEA Programs
- Title IV DVR

DCS will expand the training to also include Unemployment Insurance (UI), PathStone (NFJP grantee), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Senior Community Service Employment, TANF, and Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG). All One-Stop staff, including outreach workers, must attend Core Partner training. NJDOL DCS field staff also hold ongoing planning meetings in their assigned local areas to discuss changes, challenges, and training/technical assistance requests, as part of an ongoing partner service delivery improvement conversation.

NJDOL monitoring efforts are designed to oversee that required partners provide access to its programs or activities through the one-stop delivery system, participate in the operations of the one-stop system, and provide representation on local WDBs. NJDOL also conducts quarterly Central Office Partners Meetings, where each partner updates the one-stop delivery system regarding program eligibility changes, programs and services, and collaboration opportunities.

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

NJDOL is working on further developing its internal protocols and providing technical training as needed. Professional development activities and training are provided through conference calls, training webinars, video conferencing and train the trainer workshops. Upcoming professional development for one stop center staff and partner programs include:

- Effective outreach strategies for serving farmworkers
- Strategies for serving farmworkers in ES, including English Language Learners (ELL) and low digital literacy farmworkers: Intake, assessment, case management, referrals, and reporting/tracking.
- Employment Service (ES)/Employment-Related Law Unified Complaint System: Identifying, addressing and resolving complaints and apparent violations. Farmworker Rights.
- Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS): Process, Outreach, and Marketing
- Protecting farmworkers from sexual harassment and human trafficking
- Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA)
- Child Labor Laws: Protecting children in the fields
- America One Stop Operating System (AOSOS) Review: Documenting MSFW services and activities
- Division of Wage and Hour Regulations and Process related to MSFW System
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standards and Protocols
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

E. COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH NFJP GRANTEE AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS

In February 2019, an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was executed between NJDOL and NJFP grantee, PathStone, to memorialize roles and responsibilities and facilitate the exchange of data pertaining to services provided to MSFWs. The strategy mandates NJDOL and PathStone joint outreach processes, including providing required information on partner programs, and/or services, reporting activities, and conducting need gap analyses where outreach or service delivery is inadequate. Required shared information includes, but is not limited to, number of outreach contacts made, number of participants enrolled, number of referrals made, services provided, performance indicators, labor market and wage information, supportive services available, and participants receiving reemployment assistance benefits. PathStone will continue to report apparent violations and referral of complaints to local one-stop center managers and/or MSFW outreach staff or SMA. Strategies, outlined in forthcoming

NJDOL policy, will be developed to ensure service delivery collaboration exists for Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) where no MSFW outreach staff are present. This may include the use of technology and other innovative outreach protocols, as well as collaborative partnerships with other state, regional, or local social service agencies. Further collaborative efforts include working on special projects and cross training, such as the Annual MSFW training, hosted by NJDOL. PathStone and NJDOL will continue to coordinate emergency assistance needs for MSFWs.

Regarding improving partnerships, PathStone and NJDOL continue to host regular meetings with a wide range of local, regional and state organizations engaged in MSFW support services, known as the Helping Hands Coalition. WDBs in Significant Offices areas are also expected to invite PathStone to serve on their WIOA Youth sub-committees to ensure that policies are created reflecting strategies that serve the needs of MSFW youth, including co-enrollment into the WIOA Title I Youth Program. SMA will also assist PathStone in initiating discussions between local providers and WDBs to ensure MSFWs are effectively served.

New Jersey's outreach workers and One-Stop Career Centers, in collaboration with strategic partners and affiliated sites, will continue to 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 One-Stop Career Center or community-based partner offices;
- Assisting in posting résumés online and conducting on-line job searches through the NJDOL labor exchange website; and
- Assisting in communicating between limited English proficient individuals referred to jobs and employers.

5. 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

Career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the One-Stop Career Centers. NJ ensures that all Workforce Boards and One-Stop Career Centers serve all applicants, including MSFWs. Bilingual staff are available at all significant centers as well as many other centers across the state. As part of the registration process, customers will be identified as MSFWs at the initial point of contact/intake and provided with a verbal and written explanation of services available in English, Spanish or Creole. A MSFW desk aide is available to all staff to assist in identifying MSFWs. Services including basic, individualized (training) and follow-up, will be provided as necessary. Individualized and training services, including co-enrollment options, will be provided through referrals to on-site partner programs. The NJ labor exchange system, Job Source, allows for self-services at any location, without the need of visiting a One-Stop Career Center. Customers utilizing self-services at the One-Stop Career Center, however, will have access to staff assistance. The MSFWs' knowledge, skills and abilities will be assessed to determine appropriate jobs to which they may be referred. Job referrals will be provided through mass recruitments, Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS), H-2A job referrals, and job developments. Effort will be made to refer MSFW jobseekers to H-2A job orders whenever possible. For H-2A job orders, staff will ensure terms and conditions of employment are discussed prior to referral and that the jobseeker is aware of the assurances afforded. H-2A job orders are suppressed in the management information system for the purpose of ensuring maximum protections to the applicant. Staff are encouraged to follow up on all referrals made to H-2A job orders. Referrals will be made to English as a Second Language classes to reduce language barriers and resume and interviewing skills workshops to enable MSFWs to become more competitive in the workforce. Staff will also provide career guidance and suggest training programs that would best serve the needs of those who are not job ready or those who are ready for a change in occupation. Other programs MSFWs may be referred to include Vocational Rehabilitation (for disabled MSFWs), older workers' programs and housing assistance agencies. Staff will also be familiar with and refer MSFWs appropriately to other community supportive services. The State Monitor Advocate will conduct quality assurance visits to all significant offices on an annual basis to ensure that MSFWs have equal access to employment opportunities through NJ's one-stop center delivery system.

NJ ensures that all One-Stop Career Centers assist all employers, including agricultural employers, in filling job openings. To increase employer participation, links will be established with employers, employer councils, and other employer groups to identify potential employers to establish a pool by which to refer MSFWs. One-Stop Career Center staff in significant MSFW centers will perform marketing outreach to growers, harvesters and processors. The Business Service Representatives (BSR) at the Business Resource Centers will develop new employer contacts, maintain existing contacts and encourage job order creation through the local career centers. BSRs also inform agricultural employers on how to register and use the NJDOL labor exchange system for talent needs, provide current information on applicant availability and labor market information, assist with conducting job searches online using the state's job board, and provide assistance with information on employment and training programs, tax incentives, subsidized employment, and Work Opportunity Tax Credits.

MSFW Outreach workers will also promote labor exchange services to agricultural employers through participation at employer conferences or meetings. Identifying the needs of agricultural

employers will continue to be a high priority. Strategies that will be used to promote labor exchange services to agricultural employers include recruiting agreements, job fairs and new business relationships. Some of these efforts include advising worker advocates and groups through notifications of job orders in both English and Spanish; and providing notification to employers and advocates of any changes to foreign labor program requirements that affect workers. Mass recruitment agreements will be offered to agricultural employers at the beginning of a season or when large pools of labor are needed. These agreements can include services such as marketing, prescreening, referral, and completion of applications and I-9 documents. The Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) is an alternative to the H-2A program that will be offered to employers who have temporary agricultural or food processing jobs and are in need of workers. State and local staff participate in recruitment efforts with NJ employers and farmworker organizations to recruit domestic workers. Coordinating activities with farmworker groups will maintain dialogue on job and worker availability to help increase U.S. worker participation. One-Stop Career Centers in significant agricultural areas will be provided copies of approved clearance orders that will provide all staff, including outreach workers, with current information on job availability to assist in these efforts. 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 will also be available.

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 and 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 or whenever there is an apparent violation affecting the health and safety of farmworkers. To ensure that the information pertaining to the use of the employment service complaint system is publicized, the ETA approved employment complaint poster is prominently displayed in each local One Stop, NFJP grantee local offices, and farmworker advocacy groups locations. As part of the State's Learning Management Training System, all ES staff will be trained on the employment service complaint system, including how to provide complaint system related information to farmworkers and farmworker advocacy groups. The State's Annual MSFW Training, for both OS staff and farmworker- serving organizations, will cover the employment service complaint system process. Outreach workers will be fully trained in all aspects of employment-related services to MSFWs, including taking complaints while in the field. Further, staff who observe, have reason to believe or are in receipt of information pertaining to an apparent violation of employment-related laws are required to document and refer the suspected violation to the career center manager, who is required to follow established procedures in resolving such allegations. Outreach workers are encouraged to make routine visits to worksites to observe whether field sanitation and pesticide regulations are being followed by employers. They are also trained to ask questions of the farmworkers they come into contact with to determine if violations have taken place. These systems are closely monitored by the Monitor Advocate during annual on-site quality assurance visits and quarterly desk reviews.

C. MARKETING THE AGRICULTURAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEM FOR U.S. WORKERS (ARS) TO AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH PUBLICITY.

H-2A agricultural survey staff members and outreach workers disseminate on-site information on the ARS to agricultural employers as part of field visits. Offering more information online and

expanding farm employer partnerships are being explored as a way to reach additional employers.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (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. The SWA will ensure that local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) partner with PathStone Inc., the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee, in the four offices designated as Significant Offices in NJ. In February 2019, an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was executed between NJDOL and Path stone to memorialize roles and responsibilities and facilitate the exchange of data pertaining to services provided to MSFWs. The agreement builds upon the establish partnership by outlining the joint outreach processes, including providing required information on partner programs, and/or services, reporting activities, and conducting need gap analyses where outreach or service delivery is inadequate. Strategies will be developed to ensure service delivery collaboration exists for local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) where no MSFW outreach staff are present. This may include the use of technology and other innovative outreach protocols, as well as collaborative partnerships with other state, regional, or local social service agencies. Further collaborative efforts include working on special projects and cross training, such as the Annual MSFW training, hosted by NJDOL. PathStone and NJDOL continue to host regular meetings with a wide range of local, regional and state organizations engaged in MSFW support services, known as the Helping Hands Coalition. Local WDBs in Significant Offices areas are also expected to invite PathStone to serve on their WIOA Youth sub-committees to ensure that policies are created reflecting strategies to serve the needs of MSFW youth, including co-enrollment into the WIOA Title I Youth Program.

In addition to continued participation in the USDOL Region I annual Pre-Harvest conference and other Post-Harvest meetings, 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 NJDOL services.

NJDOL recognizes the need to collaborate with other MSFW organizations in order to expand capacity and leverage existing resources. NJDOL will establish informal agreements with MSFW serving organizations whom are already working in partnership with NJ, including:

- CATA - The Farmworkers' Support Committee, whose mission is to educate workers about their rights and support them as they develop and exercise leadership skills in order to create a better life for themselves and their communities.
- The New Jersey Migrant Education Program (NJ MEP) is a federally funded program that supplements educational and support services for migratory children.

- Migrant Worker Outreach Organization, whose mission is to provide educational, social and recreational activities, and to offer material assistance to migrant farm workers and their families

South Jersey Legal Services, Inc. (SJLS), a non-profit organization created to provide legal representation and advocacy to low-income individuals in Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Monmouth, Ocean and Salem Counties.

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.

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 NJDOL has routinely shared draft Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker policies and procedures via e-mail 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 30 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. These on-site reviews and presentations, which began in January 2018, will continue to address past problems identified by New Jersey through an assessment of Equity Ratio Indicators.

New Jersey's Labor Exchange Agricultural Reporting System (LEARS) reports reflect efforts to get both the local office Employment Service staff members and the Outreach workers to increase the number of job and career guidance referrals made for the state's MSFW population. NJDOL is looking at ways to better ensure that MSFWs registered in the One-Stop case management system are receiving career and training services and that those services are recorded properly. This effort will result in improved equity indicator comparisons between MSFWs and non-MSFWs as service delivery and administrative issues are addressed such as:

- Training the outreach workers to enter all delivered services into the NJDOL AOSOS case management system;
- Encouraging outreach workers, local office staff and managers to make use of the National Monitor Advocate's easily accessible computer-based training modules;
- Offering ongoing technical assistance to managers and staff at Significant MSFW local offices; and
- Ensuring follow up with PathStone for co-enrolled MSFWs so that all career and training services delivered via PathStone are recorded in the One-Stop case management system.

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.

A review of New Jersey's Labor Exchange Agricultural Reporting System (LEARS) reports for recent program years shows significant progress in contacting an increasing percentage of Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers as part of the state's MSFW outreach efforts.

With four staff dedicated to MSFW outreach during the growing season, NJDOL is planning to reach every MSFW working in New Jersey in PY 2019 and moving forward. Key elements of the expanded MSFW outreach plan are:

- Greater use of computer-based training modules for MSFW staff for Agricultural Outreach Workers, State Monitor Advocates, and business-service units (for farm employer services);
- Greater understanding of the New Jersey's Employment Service staff's Customer Complaint Procedures, including longer time periods for non-discrimination appeals resulting from implementation of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act;
- Increased local office engagement in job referral and career guidance for the MSFW population;
- Permanent year-round job placement for MSFW outreach workers instead of the previous practice of hiring temporary staff on a seasonal basis; and
- Higher annual goals for the number of both agricultural and non-agricultural job placements.

Ongoing efforts to increase the number of MSFW contacts and narrow service quality between MSFW and non-MSFW customers include:

- Increased staffing levels;

- Higher daily outreach goals;
- Expanded National Monitor Advocate computer-based MSFW training for local staff and Outreach workers;
- Continued case management system (AOSOS) training for Outreach workers to improve data quality on MSFW services;
- Adequate supplies of Outreach worker brochures/literature translated into Spanish and Haitian Creole (or language readily understood by the worker);
- Regular SMA participation in Monitor Advocate National Training sessions to ensure that New Jersey Outreach workers, local office staff and state WIOA partners engaged in MSFW community services are kept update on new WIOA regulations impacting MSFW services and complaints; and
- Timely training of outreach workers on key issues such as MSFW sexual harassment, complaint procedures and English language assistance.

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 reviewed and approved this AOP, as part of New Jersey's Combined State Plan Modification for WIOA, 2022.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act 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));	Yes
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
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 Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for 	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.	

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	47.9		48.9	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	47.4		48.4	

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	5501.0		5601.0	
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

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“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to adult education and literacy programs and activities under title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

Describe how the eligible agency has aligned 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 College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for adult literacy are required to be adapted and utilized within curriculum and instruction for all NJ Title II providers. These standards are aligned with the State’s K-12 content standards and serve as a foundation for instruction in all Title II programs, including English Language Acquisition (ELA) programs. All Title II programs are annually monitored in the areas of instruction and curriculum development by NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy (OAL) Area Coordinators who have K-12 and/or adult education instruction backgrounds and training to ensure ongoing consistency and full adoption of the CCRS statewide. Any new Title II providers will be provided with support and training for full adoption of the CCRS. NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy staff is committed to continually researching the best practices of CCRS and providing professional development to Title II providers through training, curriculum review, and professional learning communities of practice.

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 any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these 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.

Special Rule. Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

In New Jersey, the Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) process will ensure equal access to all eligible providers for the local activities described below.

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 Adult Basic Education 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 face-to-face classes, small group or 1 to 1 instruction, distance learning, hybrid instruction, and tutoring. In general:

- Instruction is delivered by eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness at community colleges, K-12 school systems, community-based organizations, businesses, community buildings, prisons and jails, faith-based organizations, or anywhere students can be accommodated.
- Instruction is year-round, from July 1 through June 30 (state 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) - now referred to as ELA (English Language Acquisition):** 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.
- **Adult Secondary Education (ASE):** Adult secondary subjects consist of courses in mathematics, reading, history, science, government, language arts, and other courses leading to a high school diploma. The NJ Department of Education (NJDOE) has approved two high school equivalency exams; the HiSET developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS), and the GED developed by Pearson Vue. These tests are offered in an online format; a paper-based test may be provided for those with a qualifying disability.
- **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) increasing parental involvement in children's education, including helping more frequently with school activities, increasing contact with children's teachers, and being more involved in children's school activities; and (2) increasing parental involvement in children's literacy activities, including reading to children, visiting libraries and purchasing books or magazines.
- **EL Civics - Citizenship Preparation Education and Civic Participation:** This program's focus is on literacy skills and uses ESL (now ELA) methodologies and citizenship preparation material in a contextualized manner 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.
- **Integrated Education and Training: An Integrated Education and Training (IET)** program must meet the definition and requirements set forth in WIOA and the final regulations as established by the United States Department of Education on August 19, 2016 in the Federal Register. IET Programs utilize a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement (§463.35). An IET program must include the following three components: adult education and literacy activities; workforce preparation activities; and workforce training (§463.36). In addition, as part of a career pathway (§463.37), the intention of an IET program should support the state workforce development plan and local Workforce Development Board plans under WIOA; the programs must align services with state and local workforce needs. Each Title II provider in New Jersey maintains a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with their local Workforce Development Board (WDB) to support alignment and coordination. All Title II providers who apply for and receive Section 243 funding for IET

programs must have two DOL OAL approved IET courses which draw on regional job sector gaps and employment demands.

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).

In Fiscal Year 2021, the total amount of federal funds available for the AEFLA grant program were \$17,325,495 and New Jersey awarded grants to eligible applicants ranging from \$2,080,566 to \$355,394. In accordance with the federal requirements of WIOA, Title II (Sec. 203, (5) (A)-(J)) eligible providers include:

Eligible applicants (i.e., eligible providers) are organizations that can prove evidence of demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities; eligible applicants may include —

1. a local educational agency (LEA, i.e., school district);
2. a community-based organization or faith-based organization;
3. a volunteer literacy organization;
4. an institution of higher education;
5. a public or private nonprofit agency;
6. a library;
7. a public housing authority;
8. a nonprofit institution that is not described in any of items 1. through 7. and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals;
9. a consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in any of items 1. through 8.; and
10. a partnership between an employer and an entity described in any of items 1. through 9;
11. other applicants of demonstrated effectiveness.

Additionally, the applicant must demonstrate:

- 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 coordinated 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 childcare, 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 were required to consult with their 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. The past effectiveness of an eligible applicant in improving the literacy skills of adults is a strong factor in the delivery of adult education instruction and supportive services. In addition, the alignment of local adult education activities with the local area plans and services, as well as, local regional workforce plans are essential to complete program balance.

NJDOL OAL conducted an open competition in March 2021 for new AEFLA grants to be awarded July 1, 2021. The NGO addressed the required thirteen considerations and seven additional requirements established in WIOA Title II. The competition was open to all eligible providers. All eligible providers were required to submit evidence of demonstrated effectiveness. To demonstrate effectiveness, applicants that have received Title II AEFLA funds in the program years immediately preceding the competition were evaluated based on their performance against the state's negotiated targets during those years. Applicants that did not receive funds through NJDOL under AEFLA past activities were required to provide data that showed their past ability to achieve success in comparable measures. The threshold for demonstrating effectiveness was the same for all applicants regardless of past funding. For both groups, these measures included effectiveness in helping students develop their academic skills, achieve high school equivalency, and transition into employment and/or postsecondary education/training. The competition was conducted through use of the System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE).

As part of the application review process, NJ Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) reviewed applications for alignment with the local plans. Eligible providers submitted applications to NJDOL OAL staff through SAGE. OAL staff held online training in Spring 2021 for WDB directors on completing an evaluation and applications were electronically disseminated to WDBs for review. NJ WDBs were given the opportunity to provide recommendations to improve alignment of proposed Title II services with the Local Plans. NJDOL OAL shared WDB reviews with all panel review members. Any eligible application that did not receive WDB feedback were not penalized and were also reviewed by the panel for funding consideration.

The Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) for AEFLA services in New Jersey is a 4-year award which began July 1, 2021; hence, all subrecipients who are awarded for every year of the grant are subject to annual risk assessments and are required to meet all requirements of the AEFLA award, including performance targets. Failure to meet any or all of the aforementioned AEFLA requirements will trigger audit findings and corrective action. Continuation year funding in subsequent years is based on each provider's ability to work towards remediation, overall responsiveness, performance, and meeting any required corrective action.

Additionally, each year's continuation and grant amounts will be based on the following criteria: federal and state funding allocations, contract compliance, success in meeting contracted enrollment and providing contracted services, evidence of sufficient progress in meeting the state-imposed targets for the agency performance outcomes, evidence of continuous program improvement, compliance with USED and the State's fiscal and programmatic policies and guidelines.

NJDOL OAL staff work to ensure all adult education programs funded under Section 231 offer full-service adult education programs. NJ Title II providers must deliver instruction at all six Adult Basic Education (ABE) and adult secondary education (ASE) educational functioning levels (EFLs), plus English language acquisition (ELA) activities and integrated English literacy and civics education where there is a need. Programs providing ELA and/or English literacy and Civics education must support transition of those students to ABE/ASE instruction. All programs must also prepare students for and support them in achieving successful transition to postsecondary education/training or employment.

Programs are required to have an intake and orientation process which helps students and staff determine an individual's readiness for participation in the Title II program and an exit review. Programs must have attendance and other policies that are consistently enforced to help students remain successful within the Title II program and beyond. All NJ Title II providers are

required to utilize the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Reading and Math GOALS series for determining Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs) for ABE students; ELA students may be tested with CASAS, Best Plus 2.0 or TABE CLAS-E. All New Jersey approved assessments are listed and detailed annually in the published NJ Title II Assessment Policy accessible on the NJDOL website. All NJDOL Title II students must be pre-tested and post-tested as per test publisher guidelines which are further discussed at length in the annually published NJ Title II Assessment Policy.

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 for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

In New Jersey, section funding 225 is competitively procured through the NJDOL Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) process. As part of the competitive NGO process, the State issues the application guidelines, receives all proposals for services, reviews proposals and makes all determinations of funding. In addition, NJDOL manages the contract, makes all service provider payments, and reviews performance, in accordance with Title II requirements.

NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy Services utilizes 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, and as such, the FY 22 NGO addressed Section 225 funding. Providers receiving funds to provide programs and services to correctional facilities and other institutions are 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 and NJ Title II providers work to establish

referrals with local One Stop Career Centers (OSCCs) and library systems for services. Wagner-Peyser funds provide 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 WIOA. 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.

NJDOL recognizes that those who were formally incarcerated may face additional barriers. NJDOL is committed to providing professional development to staff who are involved in the justice-served programs. In this regard, to help special populations with significant barriers to employment, New Jersey has created targeted programs and dedicated staff to help ensure positive outcomes. The objective 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.

REENTRY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

Currently, there are about 215,000 justice-involved individuals statewide, including approximately 20,000 inmates in prison, 15,000 inmates in jail, 15,000 paroles, 15,000 in Drug Court, and 150,000 on probation. This number does not reflect the number of job seekers who are no longer justice-involved but do have a conviction that would preclude them from certain jobs.

Pre-Release Services

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 state correctional system so that work readiness services can be implemented prior to release. This approach supports a seamless transition to community-based One-Stop Career Center services and then into employment.

The 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; and
- Life skills and employability skill development to prepare students to gain employment.

DOL, through its Reentry Specialists, works with the Department of Corrections and their newly created Providing Access to Community Employment (PACE) program to facilitate transition of incarcerated individuals into society and employment.

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. The newly created NJDOL Division of Career Services seeks to better align youth, those involved with corrections, as well as all other vulnerable populations established under WIOA.

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, including how 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.

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.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to 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.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

NJDOL's NGO process for Adult Basic Skills and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Grant Programs will continue to ensure that all eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness have the ability to apply for funding. The FY 2022 NGO for 243 funds was a separate competition from Section 231 funds, and was open to all eligible providers. NJDOL established a four-year grant period for section 243 funding with yearly continuation contracts. Renewal of subsequent years of the grant are based on the following criteria: contract compliance, including success in meeting contracted enrollment and providing the contracted services; evidence of sufficient progress in helping students improve English language skills; evidence of continuous program improvement; compliance with fiscal and programmatic policies and guidelines; and the availability of funds determined by the amount of the federal award.

Funds awarded under WIOA Section 243 will be used, at a minimum, to support Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programming, including instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation; adult literacy and education activities; and workplace preparation activities of the programs. Grantees who receive Section 243 funding will be encouraged to identify alternative funding opportunities to cover the cost of the

occupational training portion of the integrated education and training program; however, use the Section 243 funds for such training is allowable. Applicants who are successfully awarded complete required forms and checklists which includes WDB consultation in developing IET programs. Subsequently, NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy (OAL) staff will annually monitor IET programs for performance, instruction, and to ensure the IET model in use has all required components in compliance with WIOA Title II regulations.

The content of the application for Section 243 funds addresses the seven requirements and 13 considerations identified in the Act. All programs funded under WIOA Title II are tracked monthly for performance outcomes and as such, all provider applicants are required to submit evidence of demonstrated effectiveness. To fulfill the demonstrated effectiveness requirement, provider applicants must submit data which is indicative of performance and participant outcomes. NJDOL requires provider applicants submit a minimum of three consecutive years of performance data and/participant outcomes. In the case of a consortia model, all partner agencies submitted a complete performance data table as part of the application. A provider applicant who was unable to provide evidence of their demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities was not considered for funding, and their application was not reviewed.

Each NJ Workforce Board Director was invited to virtual training and asked to review and comment on any Section 243/IELCE applications for alignment with the Local Plan. Eligible providers submitted complete applications for Section 243 funding through the SAGE system. NJDOL OAL staff reviewed each application for eligibility and completeness. NJDOL OAL staff distributed the applications to the appropriate NJ WDB for review and comment. The State Director provided technical assistance via a webinar and documents with instructions and timeline to local WDBs prior to the review period commencing. In turn, local WDBs had the opportunity to provide recommendations to improve alignment of proposed Title II services with the Local Plans. NJDOL OAL staff reviewed the recommendations and results of the review were provided to the internal panel review team. Applicants were required to demonstrate knowledge of and strong and/or growing partnerships with their local workforce partners to provide work readiness services including, but not limited to, job search assistance career pathways. Applications which did not receive WDB comments were not penalized and were moved forward to panel review.

All NJDOL panel review teams were provided with all necessary documentation and training, including a review of scoring procedures/rationale, NGO, confidentiality and ethics forms prior to the panel review.

In addition, NJDOL OAL staff reviews each IET program carefully using prescribed guidelines and required forms to ensure curriculum, planning and budget/spending reflect all necessary components of the IET, follow AEFLA regulations, and work in harmony to prepare participants to meet all required education and training in order to gain employment at the conclusion of the education and training. Applicant program applications are assessed on the specific industry training included as well as the approach towards the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in conjunction with contextualized and specific occupational training. Additionally, all IET programs are monitored and assessed for quality and performance on annual basis. Title II IET providers are encouraged to create meaningful pathways to employment with the local OSCC counselors, industry leaders, and WDBs.

The NJDOL Office of Research Information (ORI) had provided valuable and up-to-date data to Title II providers in the creation of IET programs which align with local area needs. Communication regarding enrollment and completion via literacy committee meetings is one

suggested course of action DOL OAL staff monitors to ensure there's a full integration with the workforce system.

E. STATE LEADERSHIP

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA

NJDOL will fund several activities that, together, comprise a high-quality professional development system that identifies and provides training in the following: development of lesson plans and curricula that align with CCRS, digital literacy and online instruction, mental health resources, retention strategies, IET development, use of data for program monitoring, and strategies for success and opportunity aimed at ELA students who hold a degree and/or postsecondary training from another country.

The State Director continues to work to better align Title II with WIOA core partners and OSCCs through training and support services to staff. The State Director will work with Title II providers and OAL staff to provide technical assistance to OSCC staff to help facilitate client referrals to and from Title II providers. The State Director is a lead project manager in a research study to ultimately modernize the intake system at all OSCCs in New Jersey; hence, the work devoted involves extensive research of what other states are utilizing for intake and tracking, and a determination of how to streamline data collection and entry with regards to all core partners within a common system. This work/research will continue through 2022-2023.

Title II providers in NJ are working towards increasing system capacity through a more robust use of digital literacy, including access and online teaching and learning with the Aztec software system and Burlington English software, both paid for with Title II federal leaderships funds. The Aztec software aligns to the CCRS, TABE/CASAS, and allows for instruction at all Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs) including HSE preparation. Aztec Software's Continuum of Learning can be implemented as a complete distance learning solution with minimal instructional supervision, as a blended learning model, or as a supplement to direct, face-to-face instruction. All staff receive annual high-quality professional development on Aztec software via in-person and virtual meetings. Aztec usage reports help OAL staff understand area needs and further required professional development.

With the rise of remote learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic and a State Director goal for a more inclusive digital learning focus, client access, and professional development for online instruction, NJ DOL will utilize Leadership funds to purchase Burlington English (BE) software for state fiscal years 22/23 for all NJ Title II providers serving ELA clients with a goal of a March 2022 adoption of BE. Burlington English has been identified and requested by many current Title II providers through a needs assessment survey and discussion. BE software allows more students to enroll as it is cell phone/tablet friendly, allows for growth of soft skills and has embedded models for development of career pathways. Burlington English is uniquely geared toward English Language Acquisition (while Aztec software is focused on native English speakers) so this software would fill a needed gap of service delivery and reach a wide audience. Since BE is a cloud-based software service, current providers will gain access through licenses purchased through DOL. OAL staff and Title II providers will be fully trained in March 2022 and therefore annually on administering the BE courses, interpreting the reporting information, and preparing any follow-up professional development and/or course instruction aligned with the BE system. Access to multiple forms of technology and understanding ways to help Title II clients rise above the digital divide are other areas of focus for the NJ OAL. The State Director

will also research and work with agencies such as the FCC on innovative ways to provide funding for internet connection/software and more access to technology.

Leadership funds are currently utilized to fully support the NJDOL Title II management information system, in order to be in compliance with the National Reporting System (NRS). This includes ongoing, intensive technical support for all providers in an effort to ensure data integrity and improve data quality to result in improved performance outcomes and identification of any areas of weakness. Program quality is assessed through specialized reports generated through LACES specifically for NJDOL adult literacy staff to make data-driven decisions on training, best practices, and program refinement.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

NJDOL intends to fund several activities that, together, comprise a high-quality professional development system that identifies and provides training in the following: development of lesson plans and curricula that align with CCRS, digital literacy and online instruction, mental health resources, retention strategies, use of data for program monitoring, and strategies for success and opportunity aimed at ELA students who hold a degree and/or postsecondary training from another country.

All Title II providers in NJ are expected to continue to utilize forms of digital literacy and online teaching and learning. NJDOL will work to procure training on various platforms and incur best practices for OAL staff and Title II providers. This high-quality professional development will ensure technology will be used to help enhance the local provider roles in continued content standard alignment.

The infusion of leadership dollars for the development of resource centers and a forum for best practices led by OAL staff, and the development of mental health first aid training will also take priority during state fiscal years 22 and 23.

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.

NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy provides ongoing technical assistance to all program providers in a myriad of ways. Each state fiscal year, the NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy (OAL) utilizes an in-house risk assessment tool to determine levels of required annual monitoring for each Title II agency. The risk assessment tool informs performance, fiscal management, and other program related responsibilities. As such, providers who are new, or are found to be in high or moderate scores on the risk assessment tool will be selected for on-site monitoring and virtual visits conducted by NJDOL adult literacy area coordinators and program staff. The monitoring tool is shared in advance of the monitoring visit and all visits will include a review of data, discussions with key staff, and review of selected files. The conclusion of the monitoring visit will result in a monitoring report/letter with any corrective action(s) and required timeline for completion to comply under the terms of the federal grant award. Any Title II providers deemed moderate or low risk will also be monitored at the conclusion of the high-risk reviews in the same manner previously stated.

On a monthly basis, OAL program staff reviews grantee performance through targeted reviews within the LACES database and will conduct reconciliations with budget & accounting through the SAGE system to ensure spending is reasonable/allowable and documented according to the terms of the grant award. OAL staff will conduct extensive budget reviews the months of July and August each state fiscal year in accordance with AEFLA regulations and statutes. Professional development and program-specific technical assistance is provided to all grantees regardless of risk assessment results.

OAL staff works in tandem with LiteracyPro on targeted LACES software training each spring which provides ample opportunity for review of data. This deep-dive of data allows for OAL staff to better develop monitoring and technical assistance for each provider. The LACES data system allows for collection of very specific program information. These reports include:

- Student Error reports that indicate errors on a student record and where to locate/correct the specific error(s);
- Enrollment Reports that provide information about the number of students served and units generated in each instructional category by a specific funding source;
- A breakdown of the enrollment hours generated by students in the specific funding source by instructional category;
- Agency specific report cards which speak to program performance including ability to meet or exceed federally negotiated state targets;
- Data matching with other NJ workforce systems, including AOSOS and NJEEDS.

The NJDOL OAL staff will continue to provide technical assistance specific to system alignment, role of eligible providers, and dissemination of instructional practice. The State Director for Adult Education holds a key role in a number of internal and external workgroups/committees aimed at addressing adult literacy barriers and works closely with partners at the NJ Department of Education and local WDBs to engage the State's other education and training providers. The continued growth of a public-facing State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) dashboard details NJ Title II performance, populations served, and barriers facing clients will work to help showcase areas in which NJ excels, and to discern areas in which more technical assistance, funding, or other leveraging across titles is needed. The State Director will be an appointed member of the SETC in 2022 and will work to ensure adult literacy has a voice in the development of policy and procedure.

The NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy will continue to provide support and training for required data validation with all Title II providers. This requires ongoing training and internal collaboration with NJDOL Office of Research and Information (ORI) staff. The results of annual Data Validation help inform and ultimately provide more guidance to the NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy staff for any perceived areas of weakness and will help to determine areas of focus for upcoming professional development.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
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;	Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
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 the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
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;	Yes
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;	Yes
4. 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.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Please download and sign the forms below. Please scan and return the forms to wioa@ed.gov at the same time you submit your State Plan via the portal.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
2. Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
3. SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (required, only if applicable)
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)

APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	Enter information in this column
Applicant's Organization	NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	Enter information in this column
First Name	Robert
Last Name	Asaro-Angelo
Title	Commissioner
Email	Robert.Asaro-Angelo@dol.nj.gov

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the following instructions posted at <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.doc>.

The NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy (OAL) oversees the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) services in New Jersey, which are delivered through "Programs of Instruction" that receive AEFLA funds via a competitive grant process. All applicants for new awards must include information in their applications to address this provision in order to receive funding. To ensure equitable access to these programs, in accordance with Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), the Notices of Grant Opportunity are issued with the following language:

Methods to Overcome Barriers to Equitable Participation and Ensure Equitable Access to, and participation in this grant program by all eligible participants, teachers, and program beneficiaries with special needs in compliance with the requirements of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427 must be described. The agency must address and describe steps it will take to overcome barriers to equitable participation so as to allow potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the program and to achieve high standards. Section 427 of GEPA highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access of participation that may be addressed: gender, race, color, national origin, disability and age. Based on local circumstances, the agency can determine whether these or other barriers may prevent students, teachers and other beneficiaries from equitable access or participation.

These steps must include an agency's process in assisting participants to obtain supportive services in overcoming barriers to participation in the program. This should include contacting any referral agencies prior to the participant's visit. The goal of contacting the referral agency prior to the visit is to ensure a proper referral is being made for the needs of the participant.

In addition, NJDOL has developed an attestation form for future use by applicant agencies when submitting grant applications. This form asks the applicant to identify the specific steps the agency will take to ensure equitable access to and equitable participation in the program or activity to be conducted with federal adult education assistance by addressing the access needs of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries in order to overcome barriers to equitable participation, including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability and age. The form also indicates that the GEPA highlights six types of barriers that can

impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age, and asked the applicant agency to determine, based on local circumstances, whether these or other barriers may prevent students, teachers, etc., from such access or participation in the federally-funded program or activity, and to attest to the steps to be taken to comply with the GEPA requirements.

The NJDOL will ensure equal access to Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds at the state and local level, as required under Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). All contracts and grants for professional development and state leadership activities will follow state and federal procurement rules and procedures. Professional development and state leadership activities will be available and accessible to all local program directors, teachers, and staff. NJDOL will include in its application process a required narrative for grant applications for AEFLA instructional funds to ensure local providers are meeting the requirements set forth under Section 427 of the GEPA, and to determine how the grantee is ensuring equal access to and participation in adult education activities. These narratives are reviewed by OAL staff annually to ensure there is equitable access provided by each applicant agency.

The State Director for Adult Education will continue to encourage strong partnerships with DVRS through staff training and access to Title II resources for understanding. Additionally, OAL will work to ensure use Title II providers have access to resources for adaptive equipment, American Sign Language interpreters and individuals working as certified as NJ Teacher of the Handicapped and certified Teacher of the Deaf. Title II providers will continue to provide bi-lingual staff and on-site support services for community and family counseling, among other activities. NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy will continue to highlight best practices for promoting inclusion in local programs and to break down any barriers which remain.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation

process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	44.0%		46.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	43.0%		45.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$4800		\$4900	
Credential Attainment Rate	36.0%		37.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	50.1%		51.5%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan [13] must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA:

[13] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA

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 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.

In 2021, DVRS was moved out of the Office of Workforce Development and is now part of a new Office within the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development. This is the Office of Employment Accessibility Services and includes DVRS as well as the Division of Disability Determination Services and the Division of Temporary Disability Insurance and Family Leave Insurance.

DVRS continues to be committed to working with the Office of Workforce Development and all WIOA partners. Currently all but one of the 18 Vocational Rehabilitation offices throughout the State of New Jersey are co-located at One-Stop Career Centers.

DVRS subscribes to Employment First principles and believes these principles should be accomplished in the context of long-term career pathway development.

The impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic over the last two years led to a downturn in the number of referrals to DVRS as well as service providers. During this time, DVRS worked in a hybrid model working part of the work week remotely and the remainder of the week in their offices. Staff became increasingly acclimated to the use of virtual platforms for appointments, meetings, and trainings. During the pandemic, DVRS has strived to identify methods to increase referrals and reassess the employment needs of DVRS consumers through Informed Choice as it relates to labor market demands within the context of a career pathway model.

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 (NJDOL). NJDOL 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.

Annually, DVRS and its SRC jointly develop, agree to, and review State goals and priorities. DVRS regularly consults with its SRC in the development, implementation, and revision of policies and procedures pertaining to the provision of VR services. In the past year, the primary focus was on review and recommendations of Case Service Policy Manual and the Consumer Handbook. DVRS provides its SRC with all plans, reports, and other information required to be submitted to RSA; policies and procedures

used by agency personnel in the provision of VR services; information relating to the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction data; and copies of any due process hearing decisions. The SRC regularly reviews and makes recommendations related to the comprehensive system of personnel development. The DVRS Director and staff provide regular reports to the SRC on the status and projections of the CSPD. The SRC advocates and supports agency efforts in their recruitment, preparation, and retention of optimal levels of qualified personnel needed for maximal service provision.

The SRC is actively involved in the development and implementation of the agency's 3-year comprehensive statewide needs assessment and indicated follow-up that drives the State Plan goals and strategies.

DVRS has received input from the SRC regarding DVRS's decision as of FY 2022 to no longer be in an Order of Selection. DVRS has assured the SRC that DVRS will be able to serve all eligible individuals and will advise the SRC if the Order of Selection needs to be re-instated in the future.

SRC Recommendations for DVRS

Recommendation:

- 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.

Agency Response:

- 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 intends to continue to partner with Rutgers University's Master's program in Rehabilitation Counseling by providing internships in our local DVRS offices and recruiting candidates from this program. This recruitment will be expanded to other Master's programs as well.

Recommendation:

- The SRC recommends that the DVRS program 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.

Agency Response:

- 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.

Recommendation:

- The SRC recognizes that the DVRS program can be affected by state funding cuts. The SRC recommends that the DVRS continues to identify and advocate for strategies to ensure that state matching funds will be consistently available for future fiscal years and that there is funding for maintenance of effort.

Agency Response:

- DVRS accepts this recommendation. DVRS will work closely with the DOL fiscal staff and other key partners to develop key strategies and monitor this effort.

Recommendation:

- 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 increasing the use of paid internships and on-the-job training (OJT) opportunities for qualified DVRS jobseekers as appropriate.

Agency Response:

- DVRS accepts the recommendation to develop processes that will encourage the increased use of paid internships and on-the-job training opportunities for qualified DVRS jobseekers. DVRS will explore trainings for DVRS counselors for OJT, as it recognizes this as an underutilized service. DVRS can also utilize assistance from the BOT to reach out to employers to obtain additional OJT, as well as internship experiences for DVRS consumers.

Recommendation:

- The SRC 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 competitive-integrated employment.

Agency Response:

- 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. The DVRS CRP unit will work with the extended employment (EE) programs and local DVRS offices to identify potential DVRS consumers for the EE Hybrid program. Both the CRP Unit and local DVRS offices through the required counseling under Section 511 of WIOA. will identify and encourage increased referrals of EE consumers to the local DVRS offices.

Recommendation:

- The SRC recognizes that public satisfaction for DVRS services is critical and recommends that DVRS continue to hold yearly public forums throughout the state that will focus on specific topics based on the goals established by the comprehensive statewide needs assessment. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Public Forums were held via Virtual Platforms. Because of the increased participation, the SRC recommends that at least one Public Forum is held virtually on an annual basis.

Agency Response:

- DVRS accepts the recommendation to continue yearly in person and virtual 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 will review the

current customer satisfaction surveys and obtain input from the SRC as to how these surveys may be improved and utilized to inform continuous quality improvement. DVRS will also explore the use of surveys for employers and service providers.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

- 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 continue to identify 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 increased use of paid internships and 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.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

Not applicable: DVRS approves of all the recommendations from 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;

DVRS is not requesting a waiver of statewideness.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

See response in b.1. Requirements of the VR services portion of the Combined State Plan will apply to any services approved under any waiver that may be requested and approved in the future.

3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

See response in b.1. Requirements of the VR services portion of the Combined State Plan will apply to any services approved under any waiver that may be requested and approved in the future.

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;

The New Jersey Department of Labor and the 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 the Workforce Development Division within NJDOL and is a strong partner with the One-Stop Career Center System throughout the state. The agency also enjoys a cooperative relationship with state and community-based agencies to collaborate on programs that 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.

Memoranda of Understanding and Collaboration with State Partners

Over the course of this plan, DVRS intends to explore updating or creating the following MOUs:

- The New Jersey Department of Education (DOE), DVRS and the New Jersey Commission for the Blind (CBVI) entered into an updated formal interagency agreement in 2019. WIOA requires the state VR agencies and the state education agency (NJDOE) to enter into a formal agreement to facilitate and coordinate services needed by students with disabilities to successfully transition to employment.

The purpose of the interagency agreement is to facilitate and coordinate **services** needed by students with disabilities to successfully transition from school to employment or other post-secondary activities leading to employment.

These services include:

- Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services
- VR Transition Services
- The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) – DVRS and the Commission for the Blind (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. DVRS met with DDD and CBVI throughout 2021 and is the process of finalizing an updated MOU.

- Department of Children and Families (DCF) – DVRS continue to explore a collaboration with DCF as it relates 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.
- Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) – DVRS had a MOU with DMHAS that ended in 2014. DVRS will reach out to DMHAS to explore opportunities to collaborate in areas such as cross training of staff and referrals of mutual consumers.

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.

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.

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 experiences may take place without violating employment law.

Coordination with Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and Centers for Independent Living (CIL)

In New Jersey, 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 Administration for Community Living (ACL) Section 704 Report.

The state currently has eight federally funded centers for independent living (CILs). The DVRS expanded the network through the ACL 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 (with the CILs) who provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities and Prevocational services to youth and adults.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

DVRS works in collaboration with Disability Rights New Jersey (DRNJ) as the grantee that coordinates programs under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. DVRS is a member of DRNJ's Assistive Technology Council to ensure that appropriate assistive technology assessments, equipment, and support are done in a timely manner for DVRS consumers. DVRS also contracts with three Deaf centers at three sites, that have established equipment libraries to show assistive technology to individuals who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Late Deafened adults, and individuals with cochlear implants.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

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.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

DVRS has fee-for-service vendors to provide Out-of-School Youth Employment Services (OSYES). These services are provided to eligible youth with disabilities between the ages of 16 to 24. The services include Job Exploration Counseling, Counseling on Enrollment Opportunities in Post-Secondary Education Programs, Workplace Readiness Training, Work Based Learning Experiences, and Instruction on Self-Advocacy.

DVRS collaborates with the Centers for Independent Living throughout the state. Many IL centers contract with their local workforce areas and provide services to out-of-school youth. DVRS also works in partnership with the court system, in particular with efforts to help youth with substance abuse histories to obtain employment. Counselors in the local offices also participate in faith-based efforts to reach out-of-school youth to provide services to youth with disabilities.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

The DVRS state director is a voting member on the Commodities and Exchange Commission; this is the entity that directs the state's set-aside program for state use contracts. State use employment is not considered to be competitive-integrated employment as currently defined by WIOA. DVRS cannot open a case for individuals working at one of these programs, unless the individual wants to move into competitive-integrated employment. DVRS counselors are aware of state use contracted work and may provide individuals with information about such programs when an individual has expressed an interest in this type of work.

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

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 DVRS.

Each local DVRS office has Lead Transition Counselors (LTC) to work with school districts within the county. The LTC provides consultation and technical assistance and assists with the referral of students for services while in school and after exiting high school. In addition, there is a DVRS Counselor assigned to every public high school throughout the state.

The DVRS statewide coordinator for Pre-ETs and Transition services meets regularly with the counterpart for this position in the Office of Special Education Programs and CBVI. They provide cross trainings and technical consultation on the MOU (Interagency Agreement) between DVRS, DOE and CBVI.

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. 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.

Some school districts rely on the DVRS counselors to provide consultation and/or Pre-ETS services for students as early as age 14, others ensure that students are connected with 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.

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;

The Division had a long-standing formal interagency agreement for transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities. This agreement among DVRS, the Office of Special Education (NJOSE) in the New Jersey Department of Education, and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) in the New Jersey Department of Human Services, was updated September 27, 2019.

The interagency agreement is to facilitate and coordinate services needed by students with disabilities to successfully transition from school to employment or other post-secondary activities leading to employment.

The requirements of Section 511 of Rehabilitation Act as they pertain to students and youth are outlined in the interagency agreement. 14(c) businesses referred to as "employers" are prohibited from employing any individual with disabilities who is 24 years of age or younger at subminimum wage, unless the individual has received documentation from DVRS or CBVI and has completed the required activities per CFR 397.20, and as outlined in the interagency agreement. This includes:

- Pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) that are available to the individual under section 113, or transition services under the IDEA, Application for VR services with the result that the individual was determined- Ineligible for VR services, or Eligible for VR services, had an approved IPE that included a specific employment goal consistent with competitive integrated employment, and the individual was unable to achieve an employment outcome in competitive integrated employment despite working toward the employment outcome with reasonable accommodations and appropriate supports and services, including supported employment services and customized employment services, for a reasonable period of time, and his/her case was closed; and
- DVRS or CBVI provided career counseling and information and referral services to federal and state programs and other resources that offer employment-related services and supports designed to enable the individual to explore, discover, experience and attain competitive integrated employment, and the counseling and information and referrals were not for employment at subminimum wage.

The DVRS VR counselor at the local DVRS office where this process occurs, or CBVI VR counselor at the regional service center, will maintain the documentation of the above required activities and provide a copy to the individual pursuing employment compensated at a subminimum wage during the timelines identified and specified under 34 CFR 397.

The New Jersey Office of Special Education (NJOSE) will share the information and requirements of the interagency agreement information with all New Jersey Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and will ask them to share this information and requirements with all participants during Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings that include transition planning and where students with disabilities may choose to seek employment compensated at a subminimum wage. LEAs will provide DVRS or CBVI with documentation that the student has received transition services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20U.S.C. 1400et seq.), such as transition services available to the individual under section 614(d) of that Act (20 U.S.C. 1414(c)).

In accordance with 34 CFR 397.31, NJOSE will neither enter into a contract nor any other arrangement with an entity holding a special wage certificate under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act for the purpose of operating a program under which a youth with a disability is paid a subminimum wage, including nonpaid work. NJOSE will advise LEAs to contract with, or refer students to, only those services and programs that pay the greater of the

prevailing minimum wage or the state/federal minimum wage. DVRS and CBVI will obtain from all community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) that are approved to provide extended employment (sheltered workshops), statements of assurances, to be renewed every three years, that state that the CRPs are in full compliance with section 511 of Rehabilitation Act, and that they do not have any contracts or other arrangements with LEAs or the NJOSE for the purpose of operating a program for an individual who is age 24 or younger under which work is compensated at a subminimum wage, including nonpaid work.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

WIOA requires that Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) 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 an identified program development specialist (PPDS) who is the statewide transition coordinator and lead for Pre-ETS planning. Goals have been developed to ensure appropriate services are offered. In order to meet the WIOA requirement DVRS established an identified Pre-ETS (Lead Transition) VR Counselor in each local field office. The PPDS meets with all of the Pre-ETS counselors on a quarterly basis to provide updated information, discuss programmatic issues, and to address any pertinent areas of concern. The Pre-ETS counselors coordinate required activities to ensure consistent delivery of Pre-ETS services throughout the state. Pre-ETS counselors contact all LEAs to coordinate the following:

- Identification of all students with disabilities;
- Timely submission of relevant documents to the local office that will establish eligibility for students, through informed choice, when they turn 14;
- Parental agreement for the student to receive Pre-ETS services; and
- Development of appropriate Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

The Pre-ETS 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 have been developed to make sure there is a coordinated strategy with defined roles and responsibilities between LEAs and DVRS.

There are over 75,000 students with disabilities ages 14 – 21 in New Jersey’s public schools. Currently a counselor is assigned to each public high school throughout the state. DVRS continues to plan to increase the number of counselors in counties where there are high numbers of students with disabilities, in particular Bergen, Essex, Monmouth, Middlesex, Camden and Passaic counties.

DVRS provides consultation and TA that assists LEAs to plan for the transition of students with disabilities. Counselors provide information about VR services in a variety of ways, including distribution of brochures about VR services, classroom visits to discuss services, and evening sessions with families. Additionally, each local Workforce Development Board has a disability subcommittee that includes the DVRS manager and the county superintendent. County-wide transition fairs are common throughout the state and counselors participate in them.

A DVRS counselor is assigned to every public high school in New Jersey. Counselors provide technical assistance to Child Study Teams (CST) that help in the development and implementation of IEPs. While many high schools take advantage of the counselor's expertise in vocational rehabilitation, others prefer not to include DVRS on a regular basis. Counselors provide information to families in a variety of ways, including presentations at conferences sponsored by New Jersey's Parent Training and Information Center, and other disability-specific organizations such as Autism New Jersey.

DVRS participates in annual student conferences sponsored by the Offices of Special Education Programs. The DVRS transition coordinator (PPDS) 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.

The LEA Child Study Team (CST) case manager takes the lead in transition planning in New Jersey. DVRS counselors provide consultation and technical assistance and referrals for DVRS funded Pre-ETS services, but do not fund any of the entitlement services provided under IDEA.

DVRS helps to identify approved vendors for Pre-ETS services and job coaching in circumstances requiring that service; This ensures effective service delivery of Pre-ETS services during high school as well as a smooth transition of services upon graduation. The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) may include funding for services, such as paid internships, that are not entitled services under IDEA.

There are currently thirty-seven approved Fee-For-Service Pre-ETS providers and an additional fourteen contracted providers. DVRS also awarded a contract for a Summer Internship Program for transition students for FY 2020 and FY 2021. During FY 2021 this program served 276 students. The Program Unit in Central Office provides training and consultation for all providers as well as providing consultation to the DVRS Field staff.

There is a DVRS counselor assigned to every public high school in New Jersey. Counselors reach out to their assigned schools to establish communication and relationships with CST members responsible for transition in the student's IEP. Counselors are responsible for developing these relationships in order to ensure that students with disabilities who need transition services are given the opportunity to learn about DVRS services. Each local office tracks the number of transition meetings and consultations provided by the counselor; the PPDS keeps record for the state.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

The Division had a long-standing formal interagency agreement for transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities. This agreement among DVRS, the Office of Special Education (NJOSSE) and the Office of Career Readiness in the New Jersey Department of Education, and the CBVI in the New Jersey Department of Human Services, was updated September 27, 2019.

The services described in the interagency agreement include Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students aged 14-21 in a secondary education program, home schooled or in an alternative secondary school or juvenile justice program. Pre-Employment Transition Services do not require an application to the VR program but students have to be "known" to VR. The DVRS local office must receive a Confidential Student Referral Form found on the

department's website at www.nj.gov/labor/career-services/special-services/individuals-with-disabilities.

Students receiving Pre-ETS services do not require Eligibility or an Individual Plan for Employment as these services are introductory employment services to prepare students for competitive, integrated employment. In the continuum of Pre-ETS services, DVRS also provides transition services and vocational rehabilitation services.

These three types of services: Pre-Employment Transition Services, Transition Services and Vocational Rehabilitation Services are to be provided to students who demonstrate a need for services and are eligible for special education and related services under the IDEA, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, students with a 504 plan and other students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services.

All three agencies are responsible for providing Pre-ETS Services to students.

New Jersey Office of Special Education provides the general supervision, administration, funding and professional development for staff in special education programs and services provided by LEA's for children with disabilities from ages 3-21. A free appropriate public education (FAPE) is provided by LEA's to eligible children according to federal statute and regulations, state statute, administrative rules and departmental procedures.

DVRS partners with contracted vendors through contracts and fee for service arrangements to provide Pre-ETS to those students in need of such services, as well as other VR services, including transition services. The purpose of VR services is to prepare eligible students with disabilities for competitive, integrated employment outcomes and independence where there has not been any demonstrated provision of these services previously.

CBVI has dedicated VR Counselors to work with students with visual impairments, currently enrolled in a secondary education program, including those who are home-schooled. These VR Counselors, called Transition Counselors, are the primary workers responsible for providing and coordinating Pre-ETS to potentially eligible consumers. In addition to serving those who are potentially eligible for Pre-ETS, they are also responsible for providing VR services and Pre-ETS services to high school students with disabilities who choose to apply for VR services. Determining eligibility, assessing consumer needs and evaluating and making referrals to appropriate CBVI and contracted services and programs. Transition Counselors work closely with the student, parents, school personnel, CBVI Teachers of the Visually Handicapped, community rehabilitation providers and other relevant entities to provide consultation, information, coordination and services to enable a student's successful transition from school to post-school activities.

DVRS is responsible to providing Pre-ETS services to students who have not received these services through their local education agencies.

DVRS employs Master's level counseling staff in each DVRS office. There is a DVRS counselor assigned to each school district and a Lead Transition Counselor (LTC) in each DVRS office. The LTC's attend quarterly networking meetings with the Program Planning & Development Specialist who manages the DVRS Transition Program. The LTC's are responsible for providing technical assistance to other counselors as well as schools, local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), One Stop personnel, community partners and other stakeholders within the county.

The Lead Transition Counselor also collects and disseminates program specific statistical data to the Program Planning & Development Specialist (PPDS) to aid in statewide data collection on a monthly and yearly basis on service delivery.

Responsibilities of the DVRS Lead Transition Counselor are:

1. Maintain a caseload of Most Significantly Disabled transition students of between 50 – 100 cases. Manager/supervisor will determine procedures to determine if additional cases should be assigned to Pre-ETS counselors. The VRC will report to the unit supervisor but needs to have a direct link with office manager to review transition activities of Pre-ETS counselor.
2. Conducts regular meetings with the VR counselors to scan the environment of the area served to determine the office's history of connections with the local school districts.
3. Evaluates the effectiveness of school districts with DVRS by assessing the number of referrals/technical consultations/invitations to IEP meetings.
4. Establishes a relationship with each designated Transition Coordinator in the county by: Compiling a list of the Coordinators and CST Directors, distributes a letter co-signed by the local office Manager outlining Pre-ETS DVRS services, meets with transition coordinators and directors to offer training and technical assistance of Pre-ETS services identified in the letter.
5. Participates in Quarterly meetings led by the central office PPDS to: share progress, create best practices, develop a Pre-ETS service delivery system, track statistics
6. Is the office point of contact for school districts, child study teams etc. who are requesting information about Pre-ETS services.
7. Develop and facilitate an annual conference/information session to discuss transition initiatives and provide information to stakeholders in each county. Pre-ETS Counselor will coordinate conference to facilitate the collaboration with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in the county. County stakeholders should be invited to provide resource material to attendees.
8. Initiate and maintain relationships with local Employment Service office personnel that coordinate youth programming in the county.
9. Develop 2 youth recruitment events each year to promote pre-employment transition services and competitive employment opportunities.
10. Participate in Employment Service initiatives such as, Youth in transition & Disability Sub-committees.
11. Act as a consultant to the Project Search initiative attached to the local offices.
12. Acts as liaison to One Stop partners and stakeholders on transition matters.
13. In conjunction with the DVRS Business Unit, facilitates county business partnerships in order to establish, increase and maintain a Pre-ETS relationship which will aide in providing job sampling, internship, externship and paid employment opportunities, etc. for students.
14. Identify and connect students to Deaf Language Specialists (DLS) and Spanish counselors as appropriate for Pre-employment transition services.

15. At manager discretion, Pre-ETS Counselor's will make school presentations as required.
16. Provides monthly reports to the manager/supervisor tracking all contacts and citing important issues that can be shared with the PPDS. These reports will be included in the managers' report to the field chief.
17. Collects, reviews, interprets and compiles a variety of administrative and/or technical Pre-ETS & WIOA data for reports.

Local Education Agencies working collaboratively with DVRS and CBVI will be encouraged to use a specific criteria when determining responsibility, both financially and programmatically, when providing Pre-Employment Transition Services. This criteria continues to be monitored in the NJDOE, CBVI and DVRS workgroup.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

As discussed above, DVRS employs Master's level counseling staff in each DVRS office. There is a DVRS counselor assigned to each school district and a Lead Transition Counselor (LTC) in each DVRS office. The LTCs attend quarterly networking meetings with the Program Planning & Development Specialist who manages the DVRS Transition Program. The LTCs are responsible for providing technical assistance to other counselors as well as schools, local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), One-Stop Career Center personnel, community partners and other stakeholders within the county.

In addition, there is a DVRS counselor assigned to every public high school in New Jersey. Counselors reach out to their assigned schools to establish communication and relationships with CST members responsible for transition in the student's IEP. Counselors are responsible for developing these relationships in order to ensure that students with disabilities who need transition services are given the opportunity to learn about DVRS services. Each local office tracks the number of transition meetings and consultations provided by the counselor; the PPDS keeps record for the state.

DVRS also participates in annual student conferences sponsored by the Offices of Special Education Programs. The DVRS transition coordinator (PPDS) 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.

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 with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers are established and maintained in a variety of ways including issuing contracts, program approvals, MOUs, technical assistance workshops and ongoing monitoring.

When funding becomes available for new vocational rehabilitation projects and services, the availability of those funds is posted as a Notice of Opportunity to apply for a contract (NCO) on the Department website and also communicated to providers statewide. The NCO 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 NCO. Applications are then reviewed for adherence to the NCO 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 NCO 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" although still applicable in some areas is in need of updates to reflect updated requirements of WIOA.

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, such as delineates the referral process and memorialize 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.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Describe the designated State agency's efforts 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 73 individual supported employment service providers. These providers are entirely community-based or associated with community rehabilitation facilities such as center-based 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.

New Jersey is an Employment First State, and particular attention is given to youth with the most significant disabilities who, through informed choice, wish to pursue competitive integrated employment. DVRS has approved supported employment vendors who also vendor with DDD. The DDD system provides support coordinators to their participants who identify the individualized services needed and help arrange for those supports. DVRS counselors meet with DDD support coordinators and identify supported employment vendors common to both agencies in order to ensure a smooth transition of funding.

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 \$6,650,000 million went out FY 2021, and 65 supported employment programs were given contracts to provide extended services.

Since individual LTFA program budgets are limited, a "re-stabilization 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 re-stabilization 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 Rutgers University for supported employment training for staff that work with people diagnosed with psychiatric disabilities.

The DVRS Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) Unit also coordinates and conducts training sessions specific to SE programs, Specialized Services and related topics on a regular basis. Training sessions are offered in various locations throughout the state to ensure that

providers and DVRS local office staff have access to participate. During the last two years as a result of the pandemic, trainings have been conducted using virtual platforms. The training sessions provide a forum to learn about and reinforce any program changes, policy and procedure, discuss experiences in providing services, ask specific questions and collaborate with those involved at every level of service delivery.

In DVRS's effort towards ongoing quality improvement, monitoring of the SE Providers is coordinated and conducted by assigned PPDS(s) in the CRP Unit PPDS on a biennial basis, or more frequently if necessary. During this process, PPDS(s) engage in an in-depth review of the vendors' SE and Specialized Service programming and service delivery as it pertains to their conformance with the N.J.A.C. 12:51 and DVRS Supported Employment and Specialized Services Manual (revised November 2020).

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 through DDD 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

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 continues to operate a Business Outreach Team (BOT). The BOT has three program development specialists who are assigned regionally.

Since such time that the BOT was conceived, the Chief assigned to lead this team and three of the BOT PPDSs left the employment of DVRS. Due to this change in staffing, the functions and reporting structure needed review. The BOT currently has three program planning development specialists (PPDS) who are assigned regionally. The PPDSs each report directly to a Field Chief. The BOT are now also working more directly with the Workforce Business Development team. They will be receiving additional training in the program, Salesforce, in order to allow them to develop and ensure accurate data collection.

The major responsibilities and activities of the BOT include:

- 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
- Coordinate efforts with the National Employment Network (NET) through CSAVR to identify and work with national employer with a presence in New Jersey. Efforts have been made to work with several banks and a national retail pharmacy chain. The BOT will work with DVRS management to explore the feasibility and value of having formalized agreements with several national employers.
- 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 and maintain relationships with New Jersey Industry Partners;
- Utilize labor market information to increase DVRS counselors' knowledge of local business needs; and coordinate activities with business services representatives in the One-Stops.
- Participate in local Workforce Development Boards disability/special population committees.

These BOT staff work with employers and the local DVRS offices to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities that will facilitate the provision of VR service.

Highlights from FFY 2021 that demonstrate the engagement of the BOT include:

- Presented at statewide webinars targeting employers, sponsored by the New Jersey Business Action Center, the New Jersey Business & Industry Association and the New Jersey Casino Control Commission
- Partnership development with CVS, Amazon, Takeda Pharmaceuticals, Target Distribution, South Jersey Bakery, Liscio's Bakery, Sodexo, Aramark, Royal Farms and others.
- Advised and supported Project Search Business Advisory Councils for TD Bank and Jefferson Hospital locations
- Recruited employers for the Gloucester County 2021 Disability Job Fair
- Coordinated a virtual Resource Fair for Mercer County
- Assisted with employer outreach for the 2021 Bridges to Employment Summit, a nationwide virtual event
- Developed partnerships with mayors of West Deptford, Woodbury and Clayton for the hiring of people with disabilities in various roles across their office. This is a follow up to training conducted by a member of the BOT for positions throughout Gloucester County government.

- Created a partnership between the New Jersey Business Action Center and NJDVRs BOT. As a result, training was held in October 2021 for businesses across the State regarding inclusive hiring practices and supports. This was a joint partnership between NJDVRs, NJBAC and Easter Seals.
- Presented to talent acquisition partners at a Job Fair hosted by the New Jersey Casino Control Commission about the importance of hiring people with disabilities and support services for inclusive hiring. All casinos in Atlantic City were present as well as other local employers. Information shared with local offices.

In addition, DVRs intends to support additional Project SEARCH sites which will provide opportunities for the BOT to work with more potential host businesses. This past year, the BOT have assisted in coordinating several reverse hiring events for Project Search participants.

The BOT also coordinates with schools in conjunction with local workforce development boards to educate students and parents about in demand occupations and general career information.

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 provision under WIOA and must be made available to all students with disabilities regardless of VR status. The DVRs has established a Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) unit comprised of a PPDS who acts as the Coordinator and assigned Pre-ETS counselors in each local field office, to ensure that services are made available to students with disabilities in New Jersey. Additionally, New Jersey is actively engaged in increasing the number of Project SEARCH sites. Project Search is now in thirteen sites throughout the state. The BOT will be working in these counties with the businesses to establish opportunities for career exploration for students participating in Project SEARCH. DVRs intends to support additional Project SEARCH sites in every county.

Pre-Employment Transition Services are delivered to students in a variety of ways:

- Collaboration with employers to provide opportunities for career exploration;
- Partnerships with community providers to provide Pre-ETS;
- Career guidance from DVRs personnel;
- Partnerships with CILs to teach students self-advocacy; and
- Opportunities to provide information about career pathways using information from the NJDOL Division of Workforce Development and NJDOL Office of Research and Information (ORI), combined with business intelligence gained from the NJ Industry Partnerships.

Students with disabilities will have opportunities to learn about the industries in their regions that provide the most private sector employment opportunities.

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;

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 to 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. This MOU was updated at the end of 2021 and it is anticipated to be finalized by April of 2022.

During the course of 2021, DVRS Director has met with the leadership of DDD to discuss the development of a Career Pathway Navigation Model. This model would allow for greater access for DDD consumers to be referred to DVRS and be supported in their chosen career pathway. DVRS and DDD staff will be jointly participating in trainings offered through the Institute for Community Inclusion and will use this training as a based to form a statewide collaborative with agency staff and providers.

Areas of collaboration need to be explored for the programming and funding of services that support entry into competitive-integrated employment as well as its sustainability. This may include prevocational services, internships such as Project SEARCH and Customized Employment.

There has been no interagency agreement or collaboration established with the state office of Medicaid. DVRS continues to explore if such an MOU is needed.

There is currently no MOU in effect with the Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS), though there has been one in the past. DVRS intends to reach out to DMHAS to re-establish a relationship and explore how both agencies can effectively work together to serve individuals with significant mental illness and substance use disorders.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

See above response in section h.1.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

See above response in section h.1.

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. 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;

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; related Final WIOA regulations released in July 2016, and the New Jersey Civil Service Commission (CSC) hiring policies and terms of employment.

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 Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credit approval for all of the training programs created and/or sponsored by the agency.

NJDOL 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 DVRS human resources needs and available budget has revealed that it can function with a total of 329 staff members which will ensure that there are 150 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 150. 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 16 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 150 counselor positions would result in reduced caseload size.

Each DVRS counselor is evaluated annually and the achievement of the graduate credential is monitored. 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. The agency has been experiencing a decrease 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: 50 percent over 55 years of age
- Management/Supervision: 30 percent over 55 years of age
- Counseling Staff: 30 percent over 55 years of age

Job Title	Total Positions	Current Vacancies	Projected Vacancies over the next 5 years
Director	1	0	1
Assistant Director	2	0	2
Chief	6	1	1
Manager	14	2	5
Program Planning & Development Specialist	17	0	5
Supervising Rehabilitation Counselor	21	3	8
Administrative Analyst 4	1	0	0
Administrative Analyst 3	1	1	0
Administrative Analyst 2	1	0	0
Administrative Analyst 1	1	1	0
Counselors	119	38	40
Administrative (Clerical)	48	22	24

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.

II. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

See above response in section i. 1. A. i.

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.

See above response in section i. 1. A. i.

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;

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). Since 2013, this program has been delivered by Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and is available in both North and South New Jersey, as well as on-line. This is the sole graduate program in New Jersey devoted to training rehabilitation counselors, and is CACREP accredited. All of the Rutgers graduates are eligible for national certification for the CRC credential as well as for the National Counselor Examination (NCE), required for state licensure, 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.

Staff members 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 and to provide information to both students and university staff about practicum and internship placements as well as careers with state VR agencies. That staff person also monitors staff professional development in conjunction with the agency’s training unit.

Program	Students Enrolled	Employees Sponsored by Agency and/or RSA	Graduates Sponsored by Agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the Previous Year
Masters of Rehab Counseling	120	1	22	31
Undergraduate degrees (Includes associate and bachelor’s programs)	52	0	0	33
Post-Masters Cert - Rehab Counseling	5	0	0	0

II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

See above response in section i. 1. B. i.

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.

See above response in section i. 1. B. i.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, 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. The Division is currently faced with an increased need to recruit qualified staff due to staff attrition, retirements and a long-term hiring freeze. All options to meet the personnel needs of the agency are being explored. 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.

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) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE 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. Due to the need to replace a high level of management, supervisory, and VR counselor positions over the next 5 years, the agency may need to increase the pool of applicants, as permitted by the WIOA amendments to Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, to meet the demand for agency personnel. In order to meet the needs of the agency; DVRS has incorporated into the original Civil Service requirements. A substitution clause to allow for a bachelor's degree with the requisite experience. Of course, the agency prefers hiring master's degree candidates and will continue to do so. The addition of a substitution clause would increase hiring flexibility if the agency could not find enough candidates in a geographic location.

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; as noted above, this program is now delivered through Rutgers University. 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 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). 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.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

NJDOL offers tuition reimbursement for employees who wish to obtain an advanced degree. DVRS would monitor the educational progress of each employee and require the completion of the master's degree before being eligible for promotion.

To ensure future VR staff meet the needs of an evolving labor force, trainings are sponsored through the DVRS Community Rehabilitation Unit, Human Resource Development Institute, Program unit, and external vendors. VR staff routinely participate in the trainings and are awarded Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credits when available.

In addition, DVRS has been working to implement a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor reimbursement program for interested DVRS staff, allowing staff to be reimbursed for courses taken to prepare for CRC exams, exam fees and courses needed to maintain continuing education credits.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(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, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

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 NJDOL 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

To support this objective, DVRS will:

- 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 the DVRS' involvement with a distance learning programs with schools throughout the country.
- Encourage involvement with Thomas Edison College under the NJDOL tuition refund program; and
- Maintain training offerings that grant continuing education units (CEUs).

DVRS has upgraded the skills and education of the majority of the counseling staff. Of the current 119 positions that are filled, 90 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 NJDOL tuition refund program. 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.

Enable the DVRS counselors to obtain and maintain the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) and/or the New Jersey License for Rehabilitation Counselor (LRC)

To support this objective, DVRS will:

- 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.
- 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 NJDOL 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/Latinx 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. The new DVRS director, who started at the end of October 2019, will be developing a plan to address projected vacancies.

Prepare staff to assume new roles as a part of the succession plan

To support this objective, DVRS will:

- 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 NJDOL continues to develop staff to expand their knowledge base to assume increased responsibility on the job. DVRS continues to work with Rutgers University to further promote succession planning initiatives and partnerships.

Evaluate the progress of these training efforts to ensure improved services to individuals with disabilities

To support this objective, DVRS will:

- Ensure staff continue to meet established standards for qualified vocational rehabilitation personnel;
- Set goals around improved SRC consumer satisfaction, measured through surveys;
- Leverage internal DVRS practices, such as the performance assessment review (PAR), to address educational achievement in the developmental plans; and
- Continue the recognition program 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 US Department of Education (USED) 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.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

See above response in section i.4.A.

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.

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 Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI). 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 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.

DVRS typically draws the bi-lingual counselor from a pool of individuals of Latinx heritage who also possess the necessary credentials in addition to speaking fluent Spanish. DVRS also

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.

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.

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 Offices 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 independent living mission along with the SILC to promote independent living as a part of the transition process.

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;

In FFY 2019, the DVRS embarked on a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) in partnership with the SRC. The Assessment was completed in January 2020, the development of

a comprehensive action plan coming out of the assessment has continued to be developed. Below is information pertaining to the CSNA as well as findings.

Data was collected from the following:

- DOL 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 Agency wide survey 2019
 - Employer Survey 2019
 - DVRS consumer satisfaction surveys sent
 - NJ DOE Offices of Special Education Programs graduation data;
 - Public forums held April 17, April 24, and May 29th, 2019.
- Consumer Focus Group Stakeholder Meetings:
 - NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities, People First, NJ 9/5/19
 - JVS Job Club-East Orange 9/17/19
 - JVS Job Club, Somerville 9/24/19
 - NJ Statewide Consumer Advocacy Council, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services 11/14/19
- Key Informant Stakeholder Interviews:
 - Workforce Development Board Directors 6/27/19
 - Workforce Development Board Directors of Bergen, Morris/Sussex/Warren, Somerset/Hunterdon, Middlesex, Camden (Abilities Committee), Gloucester 4-9/2019
 - NJ State Independent Living Council 8/1/19
 - NJ Center for Independent Living Directors 8/22/19
 - NJ Department of Special Education, Office of Special Services 9/10/19

- NJ Association for People for Employment First (APSE) Board 9/23
- NJ Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) 9/25/19
- Division of Deaf and Hard of Hearing 10/7/19
- Disability Rights NJ 10/8/19
- Rutgers Center for Adults with Autism 10/16/19
- Mental Health and Addiction Services 10/23/19
- NJ Autism Center for Excellence (NJ ACE) 10/30/19
- NJ Employment Work Group of Developmental Disabilities Advocacy Network (DDAN) 11/18/19
- NJ Council of Developmental Disabilities 11/21/19
- NJ Transportation Independence Program 12/19/19

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 extended employment programs (sheltered workshops) who, through informed choice, would like to access competitive integrated employment.

Based on the CSNA, DVRS identified the following framework for continuous improvement: 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.

Employment First

DVRS identified exploration 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?
- How might data collection/tracking be simplified?
- Might a Stakeholder analysis to identify and utilize internal and external partners be useful?
- How might customer-centered design be incorporated into program improvement.
- 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 number of individuals with DD, including individuals with ASD.

Services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Likewise, the DVRS identified exploration issues pertaining to improving services to individuals who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing:

- How should DD/HH (Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing), Interpreter programs at Community Colleges be involved in strategic planning?
- What is the role of DVRS in assisting Deaf consumers with advanced degrees?
- How might DVRS counselors become more knowledgeable on the needs and culture of these populations?
- Deaf consumers with limited English skills, and those from other countries, require additional assistance so they can obtain employment or advance in employment; how might those needs be best met?
- How might customer-centered design be incorporated into program improvement?
- How might DVRS better communicate its process to Deaf consumers?
- How might DVRS identify students who are Deaf and hard of hearing in mainstream settings so they can benefit from Pre-Employment Transition (Pre-ETS) services?
- What role might DVRS play in helping them better understand both the needs and assets of Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals?

Strategic objectives to improve DVRS access to consumers who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing include the following:

- Collaboration with Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH), Interpreter programs at Community Colleges and freelance consultants in increase knowledge and skills of Counselors.
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing referrals will be distributed to appropriate counselors in the offices who are knowledgeable of Deaf and HH culture, issues and needs.
- DVRS staff will have the training in Deaf Culture, needs of HH, and cochlear implants and be able to appropriately provide services.

- D/HH students will have increased opportunities to obtain pre-employment transition services through DVRS and the efforts of the Regional Career Centers for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- DVRS will produce a video explaining the DVRS process and role of the counselor in ASL
- Increased DVRS collaboration with other State agencies such as Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH), Department of Education (DOE) to serve those in the community better.
- BOT and PPDS (Statewide Deaf and Hard of Hearing Coordinator) work collaboratively to educate employers on hiring Deaf/HH employees.

Community Rehabilitation Programs

DVRS identified opportunities to enhance the quality of community rehabilitation programs within New Jersey:

- Ensure that DVRS consumers in supported employment have access to qualified employment specialists.
- Transform the current system of sheltered programs to a system that supports movement into competitive employment for individuals with DD/ASD.
- Address family member concerns about competitive employment for their loved ones who have DD/ASD.
- Connect families with 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 *“(l) State Goals and Priorities”* below.

Youth

DVRS is required to provide pre-employment transition services to all students with disabilities who will benefit from such services. To this end, DVRS will continue to host public forums yearly, 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.

Benefits Counseling

In 2021 DVRS implemented a Benefits Counseling Program to encourage individuals who are on Social Security Benefits to explore employment. DVRS currently has a state-wide benefits counseling program. Services are currently provided by eight DVRS vendors whose staff have been deemed as certified benefits counselors. This service is provided in a range of service delivery that included basic benefits counseling and more comprehensive services that can be delivered over a period of time throughout the consumer's case with DVRS. Services are available for youth receiving Pre-ETS services as well as for consumers receiving vocational rehabilitation services through DVRS. This program was developed to alleviate the fears that can be associated with the loss of health benefits when obtaining employment.

In 2019, New Jersey's total population of Individuals with Disabilities living in the Community was 906,929. Of this number 483,974 are Individuals with an Ambulatory Disability of this number 326,918 are Individuals with a cognitive disability, or 36.0 percent of the total number of Individuals with Disabilities living in the community in New Jersey. (2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates).

In 2019, New Jersey's employment gap for Individuals with Disabilities ages 18 to 64 was 36.7 percent, whereas Individuals without Disabilities were employed at 77.7 percent; a 41 percent employment gap. (US Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data)

Of the 5,445,837 individuals between the ages of 18-64 in New Jersey, 416,343 reported having a disability according the American Community Survey in 2019. (2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates).

Commitment to Working with Minority Groups

DVRS counselors are fluent in 28 languages throughout the state, including Chinese, Hindu, Creole, Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, Spanish, Portuguese, and American Sign Language (ASL). There are counselors fluent in Spanish that serve every local office. DVRS has seen an increase of individuals who are minorities in part due to the ability of counselors to communicate in an individual preferred language. DVRS subscribes to a language line in order to effectively communicate with consumers who speak languages not fluent by counselors in a local office.

Collaboration with the One-Stop Career Centers

All but one of the 18 Vocational Rehabilitation offices are co-located at One-Stop Career Centers throughout the State of New Jersey. Counselors are aware of the services provided through other components of the statewide workforce development system. An integrated resource team approach has been utilized when staff from the general system need the expertise of a vocational rehabilitation counselor to determine if any individuals would benefit from the specialized employment services offered through the public VR program. DVRS will develop more information geared toward individuals whose disabilities are not apparent, such as learning disabilities, in an attempt to reduce the stigma that is sometimes associated with disclosure.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

See above response in section j.1.A.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

See above response in section j.1.A.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

See above response in section j.1.A.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

See above response in section j.1.A.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

Community rehabilitation programs are established within the state by following the guidelines set forth in the New Jersey Administrative Code 12:51; DVRS provides the oversight and technical assistance to vendors to make sure all requirements are met before approval, including assessment of the need for the region to be served. DVRS will be assessing the quality of services currently provided to determine whether increased requirements, including nationally-recognized credentials for supported employment specialists, is warranted in order to increase satisfaction from 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

WIOA requires DVRS to provide pre-employment transition services to all students with disabilities who will benefit from such services.

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 continues to recruit and train providers of Pre-ETS services recently posted a notice of funding opportunity to provide Pre-ETS in the state and will continually outreach to LEAs and local businesses to partner with DVRS for the delivery of these services.

New Jersey DVRS has a significant presence in most of the high schools across the state assessing and counseling, attending IEP meetings and working with the schools and other community partners. This provides a foundation for developing and offering a wide range of pre-employment transition services, including developing IPEs for students with disabilities, coordinating and developing internships and other summer or afterschool employment.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

The number of total cases for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) was 10,512 in FFY 2020 and 10,194 in FFY 2021.

The number of new cases opened in FFY FFY 2020 was 5,603 and 5,471 in FFY 2021.

The number of individuals who were made eligible in FFY 2020 was 4,983 and 4,556 in FFY 2021. Using the most recent available data, including the data referenced above, DVRS estimates a total of 5,467 will be eligible for services in FFY 2022 and 6,013 in FFY 2023.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

The number of individuals who were determined eligible in FFY 2021 and who received services under an Individualized Plan for Employment was 1,708. It is estimated that 2,049 will receive services in planned status in FFY 2022 and 2,254 in FFY 2023.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

The number of individuals who received supported employment services (intensive job coaching) in FFY 2021 was 1,069. It is estimated that the number of individuals who receive supported employment services in FFY 2022 will be 1,282 and in FFY 2023, 1,411.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

NJDVRS is not currently in 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

As of FY 2022, DVRS is no longer under an Order of Selection. The DVRS is currently able to serve all individuals eligible to receive services. DVRS does not expect to close any of its priority categories for FFY 2022.

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.

	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to be Served in FFY 2023	Average Cost of Services

	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to be Served in FFY 2023	Average Cost of Services
Totals	\$14,300,000	6,013	\$2,212.55

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

DVRS Goals and Priorities

The 2020 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 2016-2019 comprehensive statewide needs assessment, completed January 2020;
- The public forums held in April and May 2019
- The performance of New Jersey DVRS standards and indicators; and
- Recommendations from the FY 2018 monitoring report on the vocational rehabilitation program in the state of New Jersey.

DVRS is currently working on goals developed from its 2016-2019 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), described below.

Increase employment opportunities and career pathways for individuals with disabilities

- Coordinate employer outreach activities done by the Business Outreach Team (BOT) with the DVRS field offices, through use of standardized approaches and protocols and enhanced communication as well as coordination with DOL/Workforce business team.
- Develop data base for employers who employ DVRS consumers and offer work-based experiences.
- Increase the number of providers who offer internships and work-based experiences.
- Increase the number of On the Job Training (OJT) for DVRS consumers.
- Develop apprenticeship opportunities for consumers by partnering with the USDOL, NJDOL and county coordinator offices of apprenticeships.
- Encourage and support co-enrollment of DVRS consumers with the One-Stop centers.
- Increase number of trainings to employers on disability sensitivity, accommodations, and compliance with the ADA and other pertinent disability related laws.
- Ensure that supported employment providers are trained on job development and employer engagement.

- Collaborate with NJDOL workforce partners to explore employment opportunities as well as customized training and NJDOL OJT opportunities.
- Increase number of providers who offer customized employment to individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- Train DVRS counselors on measurable skills gains and credential attainment and use as benchmarks in their performance evaluations.
- Develop best practices, and standardized protocol for 511 counseling.
- Prioritize referrals made to the extended employment hybrid program.

Enhance service delivery for students and youth with disabilities in transition, ages 14-21

- Increase the number of providers who can offer Pre-ETS services either through fee-for-service or contracts.
- Continue to support and develop Summer Internship program for youth.
- Increase the number of Project Search sites.
- PPDSs will provide on-going training and consultation to Pre-ETS providers and develop a standardized method of monitoring the providers.
- Explore the development of interagency agreements with systems of care for children and youth including but not limited to NJ Division of Family Services (DCF), NJ Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) and NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities.
- Develop an implementation strategy for the SEA with NJDVRS, NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) and the NJ Office of Special Education Programs.

Expand outreach efforts to current and potential customers

- DVRS will provide training to One-Stop partners in on disability related topics and the DVRS referral process.
- Develop strategies to target unserved and underserved youth populations to include minority students, students who are home-schooled, student with 504 plans, and youth with disabilities in foster care and in justice system.
- Utilize the NJDOL website to post DVRS success stories, and information about Project SEARCH and DVRS initiatives.
- Develop updated marketing materials to showcase all aspects of DVRS and its services, to include targeted marketing with DVRS partners and stakeholders.

Continue to support and enhance its quality assurance (QA) processes

- DVRS has a Quality Assurance Manager who has assisted in DVRS in establishing processes and procedures for QA. DVRS plans to continue to identify additional key program staff to work on QA (this includes the establishment of a new unit to focus on QA and monitoring) .and collaborate with field management;
- Leverage data reports to assist assigned QA program staff;

- Training on existing and revised policies and procedures for all staff involved in the QA implementation;
- Review of case service records of DVRS counselors;
- Review and refine instrumentation for conducting service record reviews; 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.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

See above response in section l.1.

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;

See above response in section l.1.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

See above response in section l.1.

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.

See above response in section l.1.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES

The DVRS has not implemented an order of selection for FY 2022. DVRS met with the NJ State Rehabilitation Council to discuss DVRS's decision to no longer be in an order of selection. DVRS has identified that it is able to 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.

Description of Priority Categories if under an Order of Selection

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.

Priorities under Order of Selection

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.

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.

Priority 3: All other eligible individuals, who do not meet the criteria for Priority Category 1 or Priority Category 2, but.

- Have a physical or mental impairment which limits employment in a functional capacity area; and,
- Are not expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

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.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

DVRS is not currently under an order of selection.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

N/A- DVRS is not currently in an order of selection.

D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

N/A- DVRS is not currently under an order of selection.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

DVRS is not currently under an order of selection.

If DVRS would be in an order of selection in the future, The DVRS would first serve in the order of selection Priority 1 followed by Priority 2 then Priority 3. DVRS consumers in Priority 1 would be selected as a priority in receiving services before those in categories 2 and 3.

If a priority category is closed, individuals placed on a waitlist would be served in the order of the highest priority, with individuals with the most significant disabilities served first, and using the order of the date of the earliest application within each priority category.

2. 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

DVRS uses its authority under WIOA to serve eligible individuals, regardless of an OOS, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

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 supported employment services, including extended employment services for youth, for individuals with the most significant disabilities after an individual has been placed in employment. Services provided prior to placement must be expended with VR funds under Title I. The goal of the DVRS is to create an effective, coordinated system of SE work opportunities throughout New Jersey to meet the needs of individuals with significant disabilities. SE funds are tracked separately to ensure reporting for individuals with the most significant disabilities that are served under the SE program. Every person, including persons with the most significant disabilities have the right, through informed choice, to have equal access to employment services.

Of individuals with a SE outcome, the DVRS will increase the number of outcomes each year. The agency utilizes supported employment funds through a fee schedule based authorization process. That fee schedule ensures that the DVRS funds are spent on specific designated services.

Targeted disability groups include the following:

- Individuals with significant intellectual disabilities;
- Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD); and
- Individuals with serious psychiatric illness.

Individuals receiving supported employment services in these targeted groups must be individuals with the most significant disabilities. Individuals with a significant disability, regardless of being in these targeted groups, may be provided supported employment services if they are seeking a supported employment outcome.

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

WIOA requires that 50 percent of the supported employment (SE) allotment be set aside for youth with the most significant disabilities. These funds have been identified and are being tracked. Training will continue to 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 until the youth reaches age 25. It is critical that this training identifies the non-delegable nature of this new provision in WIOA. DVRS has developed policy that identifies this provision in WIOA and tracks youth who require extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years. Factors that initially impeded progress in achieving the percentage of funds spent for youth was due to inaccurate coding and reporting in the AWARE case management system. This matter has since been resolved through enhanced communication and training provided to DVRS staff.

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.

DVRS and CBVI have an 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.

DVRS has also secured state funds to provide extended supports for long-term follow-along (LTFA) to ensure job retention during any changes related to disability or environment. The DVRS has a MOU with DDD to reflect DDD's commitment to provide the LTFA once a consumer has been rehabilitated through the DVRS.

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

- Maintain 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 NJDOL's emerging Industry Partnerships;
- Ensure that all counselors have the opportunity for continuing education as appropriate;
- Send information about the DVRS services to the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network to be included in all transition workshops throughout New Jersey;
- Partner with other state agencies (i.e. the DDD, the CBVI) to ensure the DVRS services information is thoroughly distributed;

- 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 unserved and underserved DVRS consumers – including, but not limited to: at risk youth, minorities, disability groups to include, Autism, deaf and hard of hearing, significant mental illness – DVRS will look to continue and expand its work in the following areas:

- Exploring best practices for connecting to hard-to-reach populations;
- Work to collect validated statistics of how many individuals in unserved and underserved categories are served by DVRS, and assessing specific strategies for addressing gaps that are identified;
- Collaborate with partners to increase the number of transition students to have open cases two years prior to exiting school;
- Seek out and collaborate with community programs that serve identified underserved populations; and
- Provide training to increase cultural competency for DVRS staff and providers where needed.

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

DVRS is the lead agency for the State Grant for Assistive Technology program in the state of NJ. In order to improve the provision of assistive technology statewide, DVRS has awarded the Richard West Assistive Technology Advocacy Center of Disability Rights New Jersey a contract to implement the program. Its purpose is to assist individuals in overcoming barriers in the system and making assistive technology more accessible to individuals with disabilities throughout the state. 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 Disability Rights NJ using the following methods:

- Allowing the DVRS clients to try out equipment before purchase to determine best match for their specific needs;
- 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.

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;
- 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.

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 has assigned a Pre-ETS (Employment Transition Services) counselor to each office. Responsibilities include:

- Coordinating all the Pre-ETS and transition activities throughout the catchment area;
- Supporting transition fairs; and
- Providing 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 technical assistance to the schools as warranted;
- Confer with parents; and
- Make referrals to benefits counseling when appropriate

DVRS also supports the Independent Living centers to provide transition services to students on a fee-for-service basis throughout the state.

DVRS has identified several best practice strategies that are used in the delivery of pre-employment transition services:

- Program planning and development specialist coordinates pre-employment transition strategies statewide;
- All counselors provide pre-employment transition services in the local offices;
- Data from the NJ Office of Special Education is used to determine the number of counselors needed in each office;
- Funding opportunities with community partners for the provision of pre-employment transition services;
- Business unit outreach to help establish work-based learning opportunities for students with disabilities;
- Partnership with NJ employer outreach and sector partnership efforts to provide real time labor market intelligence that helps counselors provide effective employment coaching for students with disabilities; and
- Working in partnership with local areas to identify career pathway opportunities for students with disabilities.

On a state level, DVRS 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 IDEA 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 is currently engaged in the following efforts to support the effectiveness and proliferation of community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) in New Jersey:

- Collaborates with sheltered workshops to assist individuals to obtain competitive employment;
- Nurtures 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
- Provides technical assistance to CRPs that wish to become an employment network.

DVRS is currently assessing the community rehabilitation programs within the state to determine strategies that will result in the following outcomes:

- Nationally-recognized credentials for supported employment specialists;
- Ability of CRPs to deliver customized employment strategies;
- Ability of CRPs to provide community-based appropriate assessments to individuals with disabilities; and
- Capacity of CRPs to use a discovery process for individuals with the most significant disabilities when appropriate.

New Jersey currently supports center-based segregated programs using non-federal dollars; DVRS is actively involved with these programs to provide technical assistance to vendors who are engaged in business transformation for their program.

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 continues to be involved in workgroups at NJDOL 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 requirements.

Additionally, DVRS has established goals for improvement based on the 2017 RSA monitoring visit. These include the following:

- Development and Implementation of statewide counselor trainings;
- Making updates to the Supportive Employment Services Manual and policies for the appropriate use of SE funding; and
- Developing internal controls for contract management, fiscal oversight, and other pertinent areas related to funding and service provision.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The DVRS is a core participant in the American Job Center/One-Stop Career Center system and maintains an active presence on the eighteen local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) as well as the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC). The SETC has established relationships with both DVRS and CBVI State Rehabilitation Councils, as described in prior sections. Local WDBs sponsor disability issues committees and the DVRS local managers have a designated seat on these groups. The local DVRS offices are co-located with the One-Stop Career Centers in all but one location.

Additional strategies include the participation in all NJDOL efforts to coordinate services to all customers, including employers that can be informed of the wide range of services available to assist them in hiring individuals with disabilities. In fact, the DVRS, as a key partner in Workforce Development with the New Jersey American Job Centers is well-positioned to ensure that all components of the statewide system is appropriately equipped to assist individuals with disabilities who access general services. The DVRS Director has been nominated for the state workforce development board (SETC) and awaits formal appointment and Senate confirmation.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE
COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

DVRS is committed to continually enhancing the quality, scope, and scale of the services to help New Jerseyans with disabilities achieve their career aspirations. The following are selected high-impact strategies to support this commitment.

Employment First Initiatives

DVRS is committed to establishing more Employment First initiatives throughout the state. As of FY 2022, additional Project SEARCH sites have been initiated and targeted hiring events for qualified candidates with disabilities have been designed and implemented. The business outreach unit will continue to assist with these efforts.

Services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

DVRS identified opportunities to improve both the reach to and services to Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing consumers. Strategies include the continuation of regional Deaf language specialist positions throughout the state, improving the direct access for Deaf consumers via video phones in the offices, and working with the Deaf centers to increase outreach to this population.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

Innovation and Expansion Activities

Innovation and expansion (I&E) activities are developed to promote model demonstrations and best practices for the VR program.

DVRS currently has a state-wide benefits counseling program. Through a collaborative effort with the Social Security Administration, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Maximus, DVRS implemented a fee for service model to address consumer needs in New Jersey.

Services are currently provided by eight DVRS vendors whose staff have been deemed as certified benefits counselors. This service is provided in a range of service delivery that included basic benefits counseling and more comprehensive services that can be delivered over a period of time throughout the consumer's case with DVRS. Services are available for youth receiving Pre-ETS services as well as for consumers receiving vocational rehabilitation services through DVRS. This program was developed to alleviate the fears that can be associated with the loss of health benefits when obtaining employment.

JEVS-HireAbility provides employment services to DVRS consumers with the most significant disabilities to include DVRS consumers on the Autism Spectrum. I&E funds have also been used to provide services in three regional Deaf centers. In addition I &E funding continues to be provided to the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).

Other programs include the Pre-Employment contracts for summer internships. Some factors that had impeded further innovation and expansion activities included the lack of sufficient collaboration with schools but it is hoped that this will be improved with the continued implementation of the updated MOU and joint trainings that have been conducted with CBVI and the Office of Special Education programs. Another factor had been the need for some of the vendors providing services under the Pre-ETS grants to gain experience and training in providing services, this has become less of an issue over the last two years. In addition, the number of Pre-ETS providers interested in providing internships has continued to grow.

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.

Equitable Access

DVRS continues to invest in the expansion of 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. Selected efforts in this regard include the following:

- Encouraging increased participation in the hybrid program;
- Updating vendor reporting forms as needed;
- Monitoring required vendor accreditation and staff development;
- Consistent monitoring of both the SE providers and extended employment (sheltered workshop) programs;
- Enhancing training provided to DVRS staff and everyone within the statewide delivery network;
- Collaborating, through regular meetings and communication, with the New Jersey chapter of the Association of People Supporting Employment (APSE); and
- Continuing collaboration with ACCSES NJ, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing leadership and support to members who advocate for and serve persons with disabilities through community-based programs.

DVRS plans to continue its 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.

DVRS developed a hybrid program for extended employment providers. This program allows extended employees to transition into community-integrated employment while maintaining their status as an extended employee. Participants work part of the week in extended employment and part of the week in community-integrated employment.

DVRS Counselors continue to provide access for extended employees to apply to DVRS through the provision of information and counseling as prescribed by Section 511 of WIOA. All activities are documented and tracked by DVRS central office.

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

Goal 1: Accuracy of Data – DVRS has been able to effectively use its AWARE data case management system to accurately report data, with minimal or no errors, due to continual AWARE system upgrades and monitoring by DVRS staff to ensure compliance with WIOA requirements.

The AWARE Best Practices team comprised of Central Office and field staff, meets regularly to review changes and updates.

DVRS staff continue to be trained by Central Office on all updates made to the AWARE system and receive continued technical assistance.

Designated DVRS staff will continue to participate in national trainings and meetings on the AWARE system.

Goal 2: WIOA Performance Indicators – DVRS will continue to work with DVRS staff to ensure compliance with all performance indicators through training and consultation.

DVRS was able to input data into the AWARE system to report the number of consumers who achieved a measurable skills gain (MSG). This data was successfully report to RSA. The WIOA PY 2020 Annual report included data for MSG, Credential Attainment, Median Earnings 2nd quarter after exit, and Employment rate 2nd and 4th quarter after exit.

DVRS developed counselor trainings that began in December 2019 with an emphasis on meeting all required measures and indicators. This training included an emphasis on measurable skill gains in addition to standard case management process and procedures. DVRS in the latter part of 2021 and continuing into 2022 conducted re-orientation training for field staff on MSG activity and how to properly record this activity in the AWARE case management system.

DVRS will continue to work on increasing the employment outcomes for individuals who have exited the DVRS program with an emphasis on offering DVRS consumers a career pathway as a means to increase median earnings.

DVRS also continues to recognize the need to expand programs and increase services that will prepare youth for the world of work.

DVRS also recognizes the need to develop programs and increase services that will prepare youth for the world of work.

Goal 3 – Resolution of Compliance Findings and Corrective Actions – It is anticipated that by July 31, 2022, DVRS will have resolved all the compliance findings and corrective actions stemming from the Fiscal Year 2017 monitoring report conducted by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, RSA.

DVRS will continue to implement strategies to meet the corrective actions. Areas of concentration include but are not limited to: updated policies and procedures; counselor trainings; adherence to federal regulations for timely case management processes.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

See above response in section p.1.A.

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

DVRS has increased training opportunities for SE Providers and DVRS staff. This was accomplished by the CRP Unit offering quarterly trainings on the following:

- Overview of the DVRS SE Manual
- Trial Work Experience (TWE)
- Community Based Work Evaluations (CBWE)
- Internship Development & Supports
- Customized Employment Training

DVRS increased the number of SE vendors who offer TWE and CBWE by the CRP Unit conducting outreach efforts to existing SE vendors.

The CRP Unit developed a formal SE Monitoring process. The goal was met of providing formal monitoring to all SE Providers.

The CRP Unit has developed updated policies and procedures for Supported Employment in order to comply with WIOA requirements.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

DVRS has achieved and is successful in keeping the goals and priorities set forth in the Supported Employment (SE) program with tracking, monitoring and continual funding of our contracts to provide extended services to DVRS consumers including youth.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

Pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA, NJDVRS has been in a baseline period required to establish levels of performance for the following indicators:

• Employment Rate in the 2nd Quarter after Exit
• Median Earnings in the 2 nd Quarter after Exit
• Employment Rate in the 4 th Quarter after Exit
• Credential Attainment Rate

In PY 2020, NJDVRS achieved the following levels of performance:

Measurable Skill Gains (MSG): Negotiated Level of Performance: 32%

- NJDVR Actual Level of Performance: 23.6%
 - Denominator: 2,058
 - Numerator: 485

Expected level of performance will be submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration for all performance indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023. NJDVRS is making efforts to improve data validity and is providing training for staff regarding data submission into the Aware Case-Management system.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

I&E funds were used for a state-wide benefits counseling program. Through a collaborative effort with the Social Security Administration, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Maximus, DVRS implemented a fee for service model to address consumer needs in New Jersey.

I&E funds were provided via a contract to JEVS HireAbility for 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.

I&E funds have been used for Pre-Employment Contracts for Summer Internships.

I&E funding continues to be used to support the State Rehabilitation Council and Statewide Independent Living Council activities.

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

Supported employment (SE) is “competitive-integrated employment, including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which individuals are working on a short-term basis toward competitive employment, that is individualized and customized consistent with the strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individuals involved, for individuals with the most significant disabilities.” (Amendments to Title IV, Sec. 401. Definitions, Rehabilitation Act, 1973).

Services provided by supported employment vendors are VR services funded with Title I funds that support the goal of supported employment on the consumer’s Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). These services as funded by Title I include job placement. Once job placement occurs, supported employment services are provided using Title I or Title VI funds

for up to 24 months, or longer, if needed prior to the transition to extended services (Long-Term Follow-Along).

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 and extended services (Long-Term Follow-Along) in order to perform such work.

Employment First 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.

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
- Long-Term Follow-Along (LTFA)

Extended Services (LTFA) for students and youth: Supported employment services must be provided for the necessary time period needed following job placement. The movement from pre-employment transition services to extended services only occurs once the student or youth has become employed in supported employment and is ready to transition into extended services.

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 Community Rehabilitation (CRP) Unit continues to enhance the SE vendor approval process to ensure that the appropriate standards are met in the vetting process.

In DVRS's effort towards ongoing quality improvement, monitoring of the SE Providers is coordinated and conducted by an assigned Program Planning and Development Specialist (PPDS) in the CRP Unit on a biennial basis, or more frequently if necessary. During this process,

PPDS(s) engage in an in-depth review of the vendors' SE and Specialized Service programming and service delivery as it pertains to their conformance with the N.J.A.C. 12:51 and SE Manual. This in-depth review includes dialogue with the providers administrative and SE direct service staff, feedback from DVRS field office staff, review of case files and documentation pertaining to the programs' operations. Documentation includes most recent CARF accreditation report, organizational chart, staff resumes, and related trainings attended, satisfaction surveys from stakeholders, and any additional requested reporting that impacts service provision. Formal reports summarizing findings, including recommendations and any required actions are prepared and presented to the providers' and DVRS field office management. This collaborative effort between the CRP Unit, DVRS field office staff and the providers ensures that performance and quality standards are maintained and fosters consistency and continuity in the services being provided. In an effort to broaden the scope of services that could be offered by supported employment providers, DVRS introduced several specialized services in 2017. These included Community-Based Work Evaluations, Customized Employment, and Internship Development and Supports. DVRS continues to encourage providers to apply to vend these services. The CRP Unit is considering the use of "Discovery" – a component of Customized Employment – as a separate and distinct service and may explore how Work-Adjustment Training may be used in competitive-integrated work settings. The CRP Unit continues to provide training to providers and DVRS field staff on all specialized services currently offered by SE providers, including Trial Work Experience. For transition students with disabilities, in particular students with the most significant disabilities, counselors will coordinate the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in order to ensure that students can move from Pre-ETS services to extended services when appropriate. Care will be taken to make sure students do not lose funding upon the end of IDEA entitlement.

Long-Term Follow Along (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 2,500 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 24 months but evaluates each case and the person's need on an individual basis. In the pre-IPE (Individualized Plan for Employment) 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.

The DVRS CRP Unit continues monitoring efforts of the Long-Term Follow-Along (LTFA) program to include:

- Identifying Department of Developmental Disabilities consumers and DVRS consumers 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
- Examining cases that may have evolved toward independence and are no longer in need of the service.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

See above response in section q.1.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS 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[14], AND ITS SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT[15];

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOLE) - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)

2. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY)[16] AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[17], THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[18], 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;

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOLE) - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AGREES 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[19], THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[20], 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 AGENCY AND/OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS 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 (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS 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;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Karen Carroll, State Director of NJDOL Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Karen Carroll, State Director of NJDOL Division of Vocational Rehabilitation 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.

FOOTNOTES

[14] Public Law 113-128.

[15] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

[16] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[17] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[18] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations.

[19] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[20] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 6.

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Karen Carroll
Title of Signatory	State Director of NJDOL Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Date Signed	3/15/2022

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in

sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances: **The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

The State Plan must include	Include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures 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 unit assures 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. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to: Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:	
3.a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.b. The establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (A or B must be selected):	
3.b.(A) "is an independent State commission" (Yes/No)	No
3.b.(B) "has established a State Rehabilitation Council" (Yes/No)	Yes
3.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	
3.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)	
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 agency allows for the local administration of VR funds (Yes/No)	No
3.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 agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs (Yes/No)	No
3.g. Statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or	No

The State Plan must include	Include
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	
3.h. The descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.i. All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.j. The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.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	
3.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	
3.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 agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:	
4.a. Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.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	
4.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)	Yes
4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.e. 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	
4.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	

The State Plan must include	Include
4.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	
4.h. Comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, 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 of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.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	
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,	
4.j.i. Has developed and will implement,	
4.j.i.I. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and	
4.j.i.II. 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	
4.j.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:	
5.a. The designated State unit assures 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	
5.b. The designated State agency assures 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	
5.c. The designated state unit 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. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:	
6.a. The designated State agency assures 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	

The State Plan must include	Include
6.b. The designated State agency assures 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. Provision of Supported Employment Services:	Yes
7.a. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b. The designated State agency assures that:	
7.b.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	
7.b.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	

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available

to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	44.0%		46.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	40.0%		43.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,300		\$5,500	
Credential Attainment Rate	30.0%		31.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	35.0%		36.0%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (BLIND)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan [13] must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA:

[13] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA

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;

New Jersey uses an option to deliver Vocational Rehabilitation services through two distinct programs. The majority of services are delivered through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services' 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, visually impaired or deaf-blind. In keeping with USDOL/US Department of Education (USED) requirements for the State Plan, the following section will describe programs offered for blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind people.

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 visually 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 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.
- Increased collaboration and access at the One-Stop Career Centers and other workforce partners, to ensure that all programs, services, and facilities are accessible to individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired, via consultation, guidance, and training. Continue to identify points of alignment through interagency cooperative agreements to define relationships.

- 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 visual impairment. Training must be linked with ongoing coaching.
- 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.
- Implementation of activities under the interagency cooperative agreement between DVRS and Department of Education, to improve cooperation and understanding of CBVI's role in providing transition and pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, ages 14-21.
- Using other successful CBVI programs for older adults and transition-age youth as a model, enhance programs targeted toward the training and adjustment of blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind individuals between the ages of 25 and 54.
- 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 and 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.
- Increase the availability of outcome and satisfaction data through formal reporting requirements for vendors and enhancing internal program evaluation activities, for CBVI consumers to utilize when choosing services and community rehabilitation providers, to enhance informed choice.
- Evaluate and improve community rehabilitation provider services and programs, particularly those providing employment services, such as job development, placement, and supported employment and time-limited job coaching, and including those that serve the deaf-blind community.
- Continued outreach to businesses, through enhanced relationship building across public and private sectors, including workforce partners, private industry partnerships, post-secondary education providers, and industry organizations.
- The SRC would like to emphasize that the Commission is uniquely situated to provide high-quality VR services to blind and visually impaired consumers, and the Commission has data that verifies that VR agencies that focus on blind and visually 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 State Plan Goals and Priorities

- The Administration solicited feedback and recommendations from the SRC through regular Council meetings, as well as stakeholder meetings, to develop goals, priorities, and state strategies for the PY 2022 State Plan Modification.

- Administrative staff presented to the SRC membership the proposed goals and priorities, state strategies for the PY 2022 State Plan Modification 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 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

- 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 utilize the SRC membership to review and provide feedback on improving the cooperative relationships with One-Stop Career Centers and other workforce partners, with a focus on ensuring access for blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired individuals.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will seek to enhance collaboration with the NJ Department of Education, as well as local education entities, through the newly developed 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 continue to provide high-quality VR services to blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind consumers to promote positive employment outcomes for the consumers its serves, including a focus on enhancing group programs and training for individuals ages 25-54.
- 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 work with the SRC membership to develop protocols for evaluating and training CBVI vendors that are in alignment with State Law and the provisions of the Combined State Plan and making this information available to consumers to facilitate informed choice.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation to enhance and expand outreach and partnerships to facilitate engagement with the business community, so as to open doors to competitive, integrated employment, through training, consultation, and other business-focused services.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

Not applicable; CBVI accepts all of the 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;

CBVI is not requesting a waiver of statewideness for services for individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

CBVI is not requesting a waiver of statewideness for services for individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

CBVI is not requesting a waiver of statewideness for services for individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

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;

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, deaf-blind, and visually impaired. Consistent with the requirements of WIOA, CBVI is committed through its array of programming to helping its consumers to secure integrated, competitive employment.

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 visually 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 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: 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. The Commission has also 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, Offices 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, visually impaired, and deaf-blind via the Local Educational Agencies in New Jersey. CBVI provides comprehensive educational services to children that are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired.
- 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.
- Talking Book and Braille Center: Computer/Printer/Closed Circuit Television loaner and distribution program

Additional cooperative agreement:

- The College of New Jersey: The NJ Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program, iCanConnect, which distributes telecommunication and internet access equipment to individuals who are deaf-blind and meet FCC eligibility requirements.

Programs and services administered by CBVI not carrying out services under the Workforce Development System:

- 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. Cooperative partnerships exist with Federal, State, and municipal buildings, as well as private businesses, to bid, establish, and implement the facilities at each of these locations.
- CBVI administers a comprehensive Assistive Technology program to help blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired consumers secure employment and to simply live

independently in a twenty-first century world. These services are provided to consumers of all ages, from children in the primary education system through a program specifically targeting the Older Blind population, defined in Federal law as fifty-five and older.

- CBVI administers an Independent Living and Independent Living—Older Blind program for blind, visually 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. Additional specialized programs include: a week-long Senior Hands-On Retreat Experience (SHORE) is offered twice per year in different areas of the state for adults age 55 and older who are interested in a more intensive instructional program (this program has been temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and will resume once public health concerns allow); lessons in assistive technology are provided both individually and in a classroom environment in cooperation with the New Jersey State Library – Talking Book & Braille Center, called the Library Equal Access Program (LEAP); and a state-wide peer support group network dedicated to assisting this constituency with adjustment to blindness, called the Assistive Support Program for Individual Renewal, and Education (ASPIRE), which currently has 58 active groups in all 21 counties. The ASPIRE program was expanded in 2020 to include additional groups not solely focused on the older blind population - two deaf-blind specific groups, as well as a group targeting individuals who are 24-54 years old.

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. When an individual is in need of employment services to assist him/her in obtaining or maintaining employment, he/she must seek those services through DVRS or CBVI initially. DDD provides other needed services while the eligibility determination is being made with DVRS or CBVI, or in addition to the employment services provided through the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program. Once an eligibility determination is made with DVRS or CBVI, DDD is able to provide employment services not available through VR, as well as the other support services that are available through DDD.

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 CBVI seeks to update these MOUs in the near future.

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.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

CBVI administers a comprehensive Assistive Technology program to help blind, visually-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 also collaborates with staff at the Richard West Assistive Technology Advocacy Center (ATAC) of Disability Rights New Jersey (DRNJ). The ATAC is New Jersey's federally funded assistive technology project. The ATAC assists individuals with disabilities in overcoming barriers in the system and making assistive technology more accessible. The ATAC also maintains a robust advisory council with a broad representation from the disability community and providers of Assistive Technology devices and services. The ATAC Advisory Council provides recommendations and guidance to the ATAC team. Its membership includes state agency officials, representatives from community organizations such as centers for independent living, and advocates with disabilities and family members of people with disabilities. Council members have assisted ATAC in networking, advising on our small grants initiative, and in helping facilitate training and speaking opportunities. A member of the Commission's executive leadership team overseeing Assistive Technology serves as a member of the advisory council.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

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.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

CBVI has a Memorandum of Understanding with DVRS, the general VR agency, and the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), a sister agency within the New Jersey Department of Human Services and an agency that provides a full array of services for youth exiting secondary education including employment supports for individuals with a wide array of developmental disabilities. DDD's service delivery system allows for self-direction in developing community based supports. Individuals with developmental disabilities may apply for an eligibility determination at age 18 and are eligible for services at age 21 when they exit secondary education. CBVI's VR Transition Counselors provide information to families about DDD service while in high school, and VR Counselors working with out-of-school youth communicate with the DDD Support Coordinators to facilitate collaborative services for supports.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

The Commission does not utilize any State Use programs.

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

CBVI, since its inception, has assisted school districts in providing education programs that address the unique needs of children with visual impairments, blindness, and deaf-blindness. In 1993, this partnership was formalized with local school districts through provider service agreements, which 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 nine transition counselors who work in the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit, i.e., six transition counselors assigned to the agency's service centers and three Deaf-Blind Specialists. In addition, Commission staff participate in transition fairs developed by Local Educational Agencies (LEA).

For potentially eligible, and eligible students not receiving services from CBVI's Education Services Unit, school districts are encouraged to reach out and directly facilitate a referral to CBVI for Pre-ETS and Transition Services. CBVI will also be providing additional training and outreach activities to LEAs to increase local school districts' knowledge of CBVI's Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), Transition Services, and VR Services, and facilitate referrals for any students not already identified through CBVI's Education Unit. Resources and informational materials will be provided to LEAs for distribution to appropriate parents and students about referral and services.

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;

Also see above response in section d.1.

Through the memorandum of agreement, signed in 2019 by CBVI, DVRS, and the NJ Department of Education's Office of Special Education (NJOSE), roles and responsibilities were outlined for each agency in the provision of transition services. With the assistance of the NJOSE, CBVI will provide training, outreach, and technical assistance to school districts pertaining to Pre-ETS, Transition, and VR services for students who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired. These services may be provided to school districts in a range of formats, including presentations to LEAs through webinars, phone/video conferencing, and individualized training to LEAs, either in person or remotely. CBVI will also be creating reference and resource documents for LEAs, for distribution to LEA staff and families with potentially eligible students.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND
EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

Also see above response in section d.1, d.2.

For potentially eligible and eligible consumers of CBVI's VR services, and in consultation and coordination with the LEA, student and family, CBVI will provide services that complement and supplement the transition services provided by the school under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or customarily provided to students in the school. CBVI's services will not

serve to replace the obligation of the school districts to provide Transition Services under an IPE, as required by IDEA.

Through a variety of individual and group services and programs, the transition counselors may directly provide or arrange for the provision of the full range of Pre-Employment Transition Services for potentially eligible high school students. Information and referral services are also provided to the students, their parents/guardians, and their school district about relevant agencies and services to assist in the transition process from secondary education to adult outcomes.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

See also responses for sections d.1, d.2 above.

(NOTE: All references to NJDVRs below are for students with disabilities other than visual impairments; otherwise, all coordination and communication for students who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired should go to NJCBVI.)

While CBVI and the NJ Office of Special Education share a common vision and goal to increase the number of transition age students with disabilities to successfully transition from school to competitive integrated employment, the agencies recognize that some individuals with disabilities may choose to seek employment compensated at a subminimum wage.

- LEAs can contract with, or refer students to, only those entities that pay the greater of the prevailing minimum wage of the State/Federal minimum wage as per Section 511 of Rehabilitation Act.
- LEAs may neither enter into a contract nor any other arrangement with an entity holding a special wage certificate under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act for the purpose of operating a program under which a youth with a disability is paid a subminimum wage, including nonpaid work, as per §34 CFR 361.22(b)(6).

Under Section 511 of Rehabilitation Act, 14(c) businesses referred to as “employers” are prohibited from employing any individual with disabilities who is 24 years of age or younger at subminimum wage, unless the individual has received documentation from CBVI upon completion of all of the following activities as per §397.20:

- Pre-ETS that are available to the individual under section 113, or transition services under the IDEA.
- Application for VR services with the result that the individual was determined: a. Ineligible for VR services, or b. Eligible for VR services, had an approved IPE that included a specific employment goal consistent with competitive integrated employment, and the individual was unable to achieve an employment outcome in competitive integrated employment despite working toward the employment outcome with reasonable accommodations and appropriate supports and services, including supported employment services and customized employment services, for a reasonable period of time, and his/her case was closed; and
- CBVI has provided career counseling and information and referral services to federal and state programs and other resources that offer employment-related services and supports designed to enable the individual to explore, discover, experience and attain

competitive integrated employment, and the counseling and information and referrals were not for employment at subminimum wage.

NJ Office of Special Education (NJOSE) will share this information and requirements with all New Jersey LEAs, and will ask them to share this information and requirements with all participants during IEP meetings that include transition planning and where students with disabilities may choose to seek employment compensated at a subminimum wage.

The CBVI VR Transition counselor at the regional service center, will maintain the documentation of the above required activities and provide a copy to the individual pursuing employment compensated at a subminimum wage during the timelines identified and specified under 34 CFR 397. The timeframe for NJCBVI to provide the documentation to the youth, per §397.40 is as soon as possible, but no later than:

- 45 calendar days after completion of the activities required under this section; or
- 90 calendar days, if additional time is necessary due to extenuating circumstances, after the completion of the required actions in this section.

Extenuating circumstances should be interpreted narrowly to include circumstances such as the unexpected lengthy absence of NJDVRs or NJCBVI personnel, due to illness or other family emergency, who is responsible for producing or transmitting the documentation to the individual with a disability, or a natural disaster.

If a youth with a disability or, as applicable, the youth's parent or guardian refuses, through informed choice of employment options to participate in the activities required by section 511 or the implementing regulations in part 397, documentation must at a minimum:

- Contain the information in 397.10(a)(2); and
- Be provided by NJCBVI to the youth within no more than 10 calendar days of the youth's refusal to participate.

Any of the Pre-ETS and transition services that LEAs provide must be documented and provided to NJCBVI as specified under 34 CFR 397.

LEAs are responsible for the following as specified under 34 CFR 397.30 regarding youth with a disability seeking subminimum wage employment:

- LEAs will provide NJDVRs or NJCBVI with documentation that the student has received transition services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400et seq.), such as transition services available to the individual under section 614(d) of that Act (20 U.S.C. 1414(d)).
- The documentation will be provided to the NJDVRs or NJCBVI in a manner that complies with confidentiality requirements of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g(b) and 34 34 CFR 99.30 and 99.31) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1417(c) and 34 34 CFR 300.622).
- This documentation will contain at a minimum (§397.30):
 1. Youth's name;
 2. Description of the service or activity completed;
 3. Name of the provider of the required service or activity;

4. Date required service or activity completed;
 5. Signature of educational personnel documenting completion of the required service or activity;
 6. Date of signature described in paragraph (b)(1)(v) of section 397.30; and
 7. Signature of educational personnel transmitting documentation to NJDVRs or NJCBVI; and h. Date and method (e.g., hand-delivered, faxed, mailed, emailed, etc.) by which document was transmitted to NJCBVI.
- In the event a youth with a disability or, as applicable, the youth's parent or guardian, refuses, through informed choice, to participate in the activities required section 511 or the implementing regulations in part 397, such documentation must, at a minimum, contain the:
 1. Youth's name;
 2. Description of the refusal and the reason for such refusal;
 3. Signature of the youth or, as applicable, the youth's parent or guardian;
 4. Signature of the educational personnel documenting the youth's refusal;
 5. Date of signatures required by paragraphs (b)(2)(iii) and (iv) of this section;
 6. Signature of educational personnel transmitting documentation of the refusal to NJDVRs or NJCBVI; and
 7. Date and method (e.g., hand-delivered, faxed, mailed, emailed, etc.) by which documentation was transmitted to NJCBVI.
 - LEAs must transmit the documentation described above to NJCBVI as soon as possible upon the completion of each of the required actions, but no later than- a. 30 calendar days after the completion of the required activity or service; or b. 60 calendar days, if additional time is necessary due to extenuating circumstances, after the completion of each of the required actions. Extenuating circumstances should be interpreted narrowly to include the unexpected lengthy absence due to illness or family emergency of the educational personnel necessary to produce or transmit the documentation, or a natural disaster.
 - LEAs must provide documentation required when a youth has refused to participate in an action required by section 397.30 to NJDVRs or NJCBVI within 5 calendar days of the youth's refusal to participate.
 - When LEAs transmit the last documentation to NJDVRs or NJCBVI regarding the services provided to youth under section 397.30, the LEAs must provide a cover sheet that itemizes the documentation that has been provided to NJDVRs or NJCBVI regarding the youth.
 - LEAs must retain a copy of all documentation provided to NJDVRs or NJCBVI under section 397.30 in a manner consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.333.

NJCBVI Coordinator of VR and Transition Services, in consultation with NJOSE, must develop or use an existing process to document the completion of this process, as well as the transmittal of documentation from LEAs NJCBVI, consistent with the confidentiality requirements of the

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 USC 11232g(b) and 34 CFR 99.30 and 99.31) and IDEA (20 USC 1417(c) and CFR 300.622) pursuant to (section 511(d) of the Rehabilitation Act and §397.10).

The process may include but need not be limited to: Review and verification of appropriate transition services that were provided and documented by LEAs, review and verification that a discussion of informed choice of employment options occurred between NJCBVI counselor and the youth and/or parent/guardian, review and verification that all documents were signed by youth and/or parent/guardian, NJCBVI local office counselor and local office supervisor attesting that the above process is documented and verified, and only after the completion of all requirements contained in section 397 shall youth who have exited their school system enter into subminimum wage employment.

This Documentation must contain at a minimum (§397.10(a)(1): a. Youth's name; b. Determination made, including a summary of reason for the determination or a description of the activity or service completed; c. Name of individual making the determination or the provider of the service/activity; d. Signature of the NJCBVI personnel transmitting documentation to the youth with a disability; e. Date and method by which the document was transmitted to the youth.

NJCBVI and LEAs must retain copies of the documentation in a manner consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.333.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

See above response in section d.1, d.2

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.

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. 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 works to provide information and referral to eligible consumers for the following organizations which hold contracts with the Social Security Administration to conduct Work Incentives Planning and Assistance projects. Through the WIPA project, these organizations provide free in-depth benefits counseling to eligible individuals receiving Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) based on a disability, to make informed choices about work.

- Goodwill Industries of Greater NY and Northern NJ – Covering Bergen, Essex, Hudson, and Union Counties.
- Family Resource Network – NJ Work Incentives Network Support (NJWINS) – Covering Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Salem, Somerset, and Warren Counties.

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 designated State agency's efforts 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.

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. DDD and CBVI have also provided cross-training on employment-related services to agency staff and support coordinators, to ensure that direct service personnel from each respective agency are aware of the services and most appropriate funding source available to consumers, with the goal of maximizing services and not duplicating efforts of the other agency.

Additionally, under a MOU with The College of New Jersey's Center for Complex and Sensory Disabilities, a pilot program called Youth Employment Solutions (YES) was initiated to facilitate competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with the most significant disabilities who have exited the secondary school system. This program utilizes the Customized Employment model to engage the youth in the Discovery Process, and, in partnership with a supported employment service provider and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, develops a Customized Employment placement. Once an employment placement has been achieved, the identified supported employment service provider takes over with providing on-the-job supports. Over the next three years, CBVI will be looking to replicate this pilot on a larger scale statewide with supported employment agencies with the support of TCNJ's CCSD, as it has demonstrated successful supported employment outcomes at a higher level than typically seen with traditional methods for CBVI consumers with the most significant disabilities. Extended services are available to individuals who have been determined eligible for services by the DDD. CBVI may also make available extended services for up to four years to youth with the most significant disabilities until a youth reaches the age of 25, if a more appropriate funding source is not yet available.

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

CBVI has 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. Services provided by the Business Relations Unit can include, but are not limited to, consultation and evaluation around assistive technology and accessibility issues; disability awareness training; recruitment for internships and employment vacancies; and targeted hiring events. CBVI's Business Relations Unit also seeks opportunities for consumers to engage in career exploration activities with business partners, such as informational interviews, job shadowing, and work experiences.

In 2021, CBVI was also selected by the Institute for Community Inclusion to participate in the Scale Up Progressive Employment Project, funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research. Through this project and the associated learning collaborative, CBVI will create and implement a progressive employment initiative

with the goal of increasing consumer opportunities for learning and employment, and enhancing services offered to CBVI consumers and business partners. This project will be piloted with a focus on the southern region of New Jersey and the work experience program offered through CBVI's training center in New Brunswick, with the goal of statewide implementation following an analysis of the pilot program.

CBVI's Business Relations Unit also seeks to partner with agencies and organizations that support, serve, or represent the business community, including local workforce development boards' disability issues committees, local area One-Stop Career Centers, human resources professional organizations (such as SHRM), and community rehabilitation providers serving dual customers of VR consumers and businesses. The Business Relations Unit regularly attends job fairs and networking events that facilitate business engagement and connections. Additionally, CBVI is also a member of the National Employment Team, a subsidiary of the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, and a national network of business consultants within VR that facilitates a coordinated approach to serving regional and/or national businesses.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

CBVI has dedicated staff to provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, including those enrolled in post-secondary education. CBVI's Business Relations Unit evaluates business partners' interest in participation in career exploration activities, such as informational interviews, job shadowing, work-based learning opportunities, and networking events. The Business Relations Unit Staff work collaboratively with CBVI staff serving youth and students with disabilities, as well as CBVI partner programs for students and youth with disabilities, to identify and develop opportunities for employment engagement, and competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with disabilities following the completion of their educational programs.

CBVI's Pre-ETS programs for students, as well as programs working with youth with disabilities, conduct outreach to businesses and facilitate opportunities for work-based learning experiences, coordinating as necessary with CBVI's BRU to ensure that both the business and student or youth are supported in a dual-customer approach.

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;

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.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

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 MOU will be reviewed and updated for renewal.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

The Commission also plans to create an MOU with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to identify sources of collaboration, including the ability to access long-term follow along services for individuals with serious psychiatric illness to them, and supports for blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired consumers with mental illness. DMHAS is a sister agency to the Commission under the Department of Human Services, and the two agencies currently collaborate to bring cross-training opportunities to each of the divisions' staff.

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. 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;

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 three regions, Northern, Central, and Southern, and maintains three regional offices, which include locations in Newark, Freehold, and Cherry Hill, as well as a satellite office in Atlantic City, 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 statewide Transition and Deaf-Blind Services Unit is overseen by a single supervisor, with specialized VR Counselors located in the three regional offices, to provide services to transition-age students and 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 regional offices and/or the Transition and Deaf-Blind Services unit. The Business Relations Unit (BRU) addresses the need for VR agencies to provide services to businesses as a dual customer. The BRU is made up of two VR Counselors and one supervisor, who provide services statewide. The agency serves

approximately 2,500 consumers seeking employment who are blind, deaf-blind, or visually impaired 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, visually impaired, or deaf-blind on an annual basis across all service units. In addition, the agency provides eye screening services to targeted populations that are traditionally underserved and provides that service to approximately 36,000 New Jerseyans annually.

Administrative Staff (Agency-wide)

Job Title	# Served	# Positions
Assistant Division Director	2,500	1
Supervising Community Program Specialists:		
- Coordinator of Vocational Rehabilitation & Transition Services	2,500	1
- Manager of Joseph Kohn Training Center	100	1
- Manager of Business Enterprises New Jersey	60	1
Assistant Supervisor of Educational Services (JKTC)	100	1
Principle Community Program Specialist (JKTC)	100	1
Principle Community Program Specialist (BRU)	2,500	1
Principle Community Program Specialist (Executive Unit)	2,500	1
Program Specialist (Transition & Deaf-Blind)	900	1
TOTAL:	---	9

Supervising Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors

Location	# Served	# Positions
Northern Regional Office	825	2
Central Regional Office	750	1
Southern Regional Office	525	1
TOTAL:	---	4

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors I & II

Location	# Served	# Positions
Northern Regional Office	825	8
Central Regional Office	750	7
Southern Regional Office	525	7
JKTC	100	1
Transition and Deaf-Blind Services	900	9

Location	# Served	# Positions
Business Relations Unit	2,500	2
TOTAL:	---	34

II. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

NJ-CBVI provides vocational rehabilitation services to approximately 2,500 individuals annually, via four service centers, including the statewide transition and deaf-blind services unit, and the Joseph Kohn Training Center. Approximately 90 percent of the individuals that NJ-CBVI serves are individuals with a significant disability.

NJ-CBVI developed a Business Relations Unit in 2017. 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 (5 yr)
Supervising Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	5	0	2
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	34	3	4

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.

See above responses in sections i.1.A.i. and i.1.A.ii.

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;

DVRS and CBVI negotiated with administrators at the Rutgers University, School of Health Professions (formerly 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 of Health Professions. This is the sole graduate program devoted to training rehabilitation counselors in New Jersey and is CORE and 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

Program	2019-2020 Students Enrolled	2019-2020 Graduates	2020-2021 Students Enrolled	2020-2021 Graduates
Masters Rehabilitation Counseling	90	18	120	31

II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

See above response in section i.1.B.i.

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.

See above response in section i.1.B.i.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, 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.

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 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) 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) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

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 (now known as Rutgers University School of Health 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 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). Rutgers is the only institution of higher learning in the state to offer graduate degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling.

Master's Program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling

Though CBVI is no longer able to directly provide financial support for staff to pursue coursework in the Master's or Post-Master's program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling at Rutgers University, the Department of Human Services' Office of Workforce Development and Training (OWDT) Department of Human Services (DHS) oversees and supervises the administration of the current Tuition Reimbursement Program (TRP), which provides tuition reimbursement for eligible employees of the Department. Through this program, staff who do not currently meet the CSPD may pursue additional coursework to meet the requirements of the CRC.

There are presently thirty-four (34) full time vocational rehabilitation counseling staff members at the agency in traditional VR Counselor roles. Currently, thirty (30) staff members meet the

CSPD Standard, an 88 percent rate of compliance. There are three (3) staff members that do not meet 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 assess 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, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

See above response in section i.3.A.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(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, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

RSA VR Technical Assistance Centers

CBVI has utilized the expertise and resources made available by a number of the Technical Assistance Centers (TAC) sponsored by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), to advance agency knowledge, programs, and performance under WIOA. CBVI received Intensive Technical Assistance to establish their Business Relations Unit with the Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center and increase counselors' knowledge and use of Labor Market Information as a counseling tool with consumers identifying vocational goals and services. A three-day training on Business Engagement was provided to all VR Counselors and Supervisors by the National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision at Mississippi State University. CBVI is also currently participating in an Intensive Technical Assistance project with the Target Communities Technical Assistance Center to enhance service provision and partnerships to better serve consumers from underserved communities and received trainings around issues related to the intersection of poverty, disability, employment and VR services. The administration also regularly distributes additional resources and opportunities for attending webinars and participating in communities of practice implemented by other technical assistance centers, such as the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT), Youth Technical Assistance Center (Y-TAC), and the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC).

Since 2020, CBVI has also made connections with the new TAC grantees, including:

- The Center for Innovative Training in VR (CIT-VR) for intensive TA via VR 101 training, the creation of the agency's internal training modules, and VR Supervisor trainings;
- NTACT-C for targeted technical assistance in enhancing the accessibility of the state's Career and Technical Education programs, and general technical assistance on working

collaboratively with DVRS and NJ Department of Education on executing the Transition Services Memorandum of Understanding.

- General TA from the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM) and the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Employment (VRTAC-QE)

Tuition Reimbursement

The Office of Workforce Development and Training (OWDT) Department of Human Services (DHS) oversees and supervises the administration of the current Tuition Reimbursement Program (TRP). The program will assist employees in broadening their knowledge, skills, and contributions to the Department through continued learning and professional growth. This program reimburses State employees for eligible tuition expenses, up to a maximum of \$2,000 per fiscal year. In order for staff to be considered, they must complete an application which also serves as an agreement to all of the requirements outlined in the Tuition Reimbursement Guidelines. A supervisor's signature is required, and the course must be related to their current/planned job responsibilities.

Civil Service Commission (CSC)

The CSC Center for Learning and Improving Performance (CLIP) is currently responsible for the design, development and delivery of a variety of training programs designed to enhance public employees' performance at any stage in their career in the areas of: computers, government and policy, management and supervision, process and organizational management, and professional development. In addition, each new supervisor completes the CLIP's Supervisor Success Series. This three-day series is designed to help supervisors support employees to meet job performance criteria by assessing employee knowledge, skills, and abilities in relation to the mission and set standards of the organization. The classes in this series are: Critical Conversations, Performance Management and Performance Challenges, and Documentation and Discipline. CSC uses an online system called Learning Management System (LMS) to faster administer State mandated and some elective trainings as an alternative to a classroom setting. Civil Service Commission also offers instructor-led trainings at one of the available county colleges. Employees are encouraged to attend courses pertinent to their job duties and responsibilities.

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.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

See above response in section i.4.A.

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 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 are bilingual, including staff in the Project BEST 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. In 2021, CBVI contracted with a vendor that provides on-demand interpreter services for over 200 languages. The agency also 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/Latinx 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.

The CBVI works collaboratively with the New Jersey Department of Education (NJ DOE) 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 NJ DOE have an ongoing working relationship, as outlined in three Memoranda of Understanding. The first fulfills the requirement under WIOA to implement a cooperative agreement between VR and Education systems around the implementation of transition services to students with disabilities, signed in 2019. The second and third enable school districts to sign service provider agreements with CBVI for the provision of blindness education services to students with visual impairments, and to arrange for professional development for school district personnel (teachers, paraeducators, and administrators). Under both agreements, CBVI will provide professional development and technical assistance to local education agencies to better serve students who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired.

The Commission also 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 established 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 seeks to prepare the next generation of teachers who will have an impact on students who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired.

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;

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) in collaboration with its State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the assistance of the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston, conducted a comprehensive statewide needs assessment to ascertain the rehabilitation needs of individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired, completed in 2021. The intent of the assessment was to obtain information on these needs, services gaps, and agency strengths/areas of improvement. The SRC was actively involved in the process, including the development of assessment methods and served as an active partner in conducting the assessment activities with the agency.

The assessment efforts yielded quantitative and qualitative data on the employment needs of this population from various sources. The information gleaned from these assessment activities was used by the agency to further develop goals, objectives, and strategies that will improve outcomes for those that receive vocational rehabilitation services from the agency and to improve outreach efforts to unserved or underserved populations.

The process that was developed for conducting the needs assessment involved six primary data-gathering approaches:

- Focus groups conducted with consumer and stakeholder groups, including a focus on students and youth, deaf-blind consumers, and general VR consumers to be conducted at a range of locations across the state.
- Electronic surveys conducted with the following stakeholder groups: consumers (including a focus on students and youth, deaf-blind consumers, and individuals with the most significant disabilities); CBVI staff; Community Rehabilitation Providers
- Individual stakeholder interviews conducted with the following groups: Workforce partners, including One-Stops; Businesses
- A Request for Information to solicit feedback from CRPs and Stakeholders on how to restructure and improve the range of employment services provided, including Pre-Placement Activities & Job Development, Time-Limited Job Coaching, Supported Employment Job Coaching, Services to Students and Youth, including Supported Employment.
- Analysis of a variety of existing demographic and case service data relevant to blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired individuals;
- An assessment of the Joseph Kohn Training Center, including a physical assessment of the building for the identification of capital projects, and a strategic plan for programmatic improvement.

In addition to the formal assessment activities for the CSNA, CBVI has engaged consumers, the State Rehabilitation Council, stakeholders, and CRPs throughout this CSNA cycle, which has contributed to the identification of areas that warrant further exploration, improvement, and the development of additional programs and services.

- Through feedback from the SRC and stakeholders, as well as a review of the Youth Employment Solutions pilot (described further in Section (2) below), CBVI has identified that the current Supported Employment (SE) services do not fully meet the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, and do not facilitate successful employment outcomes at a desired rate. In comparing the agency's outcome data with that of the YES program, the YES program demonstrated a higher rate of employment outcomes than seen through traditional SE services. Some characteristics unique to the YES program include more person-centered and customized employment approaches, increased collaboration between a consumer's adult services providers (particularly those that are outside the VR program), activities that maintain consumer engagement, and a payment structure that focuses on outcomes and deliverables. The Request for Information, will be utilized to further obtain information that will guide the development of a new program structure and Request for Proposal to develop a new list of CRPs committed to providing SE services to CBVI consumers.
- Through prior CSNAs, as well as feedback from stakeholders and staff, CBVI has identified that consumers who are minorities, as well as those who are economically disadvantaged, may face additional challenges in accessing services due to language and other non-disability related barriers. The agency has begun taking steps to address these barriers by hiring social workers (including those who are bilingual) to facilitate information and referral to appropriate local community and governmental agencies, and identifying and expanding the agency's list of interpreting vendors.
- Prior CSNAs, as well as SRC, consumer, and stakeholder feedback, have identified two primary groups believed to be underserved by CBVI: Deaf-Blind consumers and consumers with the most significant disabilities who require SE services. 1) To address the needs of Deaf-Blind consumers, CBVI has hired an additional VRC Deaf-Blind Specialist. Additional consumer feedback has highlighted the need to expand the agency's Support Service Providers program, to be more flexible in addressing the support needs of Deaf-Blind consumers. Dedicated focus groups and outreach for feedback to the Deaf-Blind community and stakeholders were conducted to further identify how to better serve this population. 2) To address the needs of consumers with the most significant disabilities.
- SRC, consumer, and stakeholder feedback has previously identified a need to enhance cooperation and collaboration with other workforce partners, as well as access for blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired consumers. CBVI continues to work on this, as required under WIOA, and conducted informational interviews with the Local Workforce Development Boards and One-Stops as part of this CSNA cycle that contributed to CBVI's proposed contributions within the local area MOUs and IFAs.
- CBVI has struggled historically with obtaining feedback from students and their parents on the need to improve, enhance, or create additional Transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services. This challenge was also reflected in CBVI's experience during the CSNA cycle. CBVI staff working with students and youth have identified the need for additional options for students with disabilities that may not be interested in the agency's existing programs, either due to the residential component or time-commitment. CBVI plans on conducting focused outreach to transition-age youth and their families to increase future participation in the survey, as well as focus groups, to identify what areas are identified as a priority to our students and youth with disabilities and their families. The RFI referenced above, will also request feedback from

stakeholders and CRPs on enhancing the provision of work-based learning experiences to students and youth with disabilities. Finally, CBVI will be issuing an RFP to identify additional vendors for the provision of short-term and targeted topic Pre-ETS services, to supplement our more comprehensive summer and year-round Pre-ETS programs.

COVID-19 Response

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted the provision of, and efficacy of, NJCBVI services. The challenge in adjusting to this unprecedented health crisis was grounded both in the nature of converting services to a virtual platform, as well as the time frame required for such a change. As such, the pandemic forced a degree of isolation upon a population already prone to feelings of disconnection. labor market data has not yet been collected.

However, throughout the course of the adjustment, certain advantages were realized that CBVI hopes to continue to utilize as we move forward as an option to enhance access when appropriate. Virtual and remote learning provide for increased flexibility in meeting consumer needs, allowing for more frequent instruction and eliminating the costs of travel associated with in-person contact. Utilizing virtual learning in this way overcame certain previously encountered scheduling related barriers. Remote instruction also allowed for service provision in situations where in-person contact may not have been preferred due to other circumstances such as medical needs not associated with COVID-19, or in situations where an in-person meeting location may not have been convenient.

Though virtual learning was an option for many, there were those who were adversely impacted by this necessary alteration. The Deaf-Blind population were heavily impacted as denial of in-person service meant the elimination of tactile ASL essential for communication. As virtual learning requires a base-line of reliable technology and internet service, consumers from low-income households were more likely to encounter associated challenges with virtual instruction. Additionally, in order for remote learning to be effective, the consumer must possess foundational skills in the use of their technology, a skillset that would not necessarily be present in certain cases such as with newer referrals. Remote learning, by its very nature, tended to increase preexisting feelings of isolation and disconnection.

In order to overcome some of the challenges associated with isolation, communication, and technology, NJCBVI implemented a number of corrective measures. Frequent virtual outreach became a regular component of VR and IL service provision. An increase virtual presence allowed for the dissemination of information and provided additional methods to stay in regular contact with consumers. The agency saw to the provision of iPads to those consumers who would benefit from the technology for access, and the communication potential it represented. Alterations were made in instructional methods allowing for robust virtual curricula on a wide range of subject matter. Finally, as the COVID-19 guidance has evolved and allowed with the appropriate precautions, CBVI resumed in-person services for consumers when appropriate and desired by the consumer, while continuing virtual offerings, to be flexible to the unique needs of the wide range of individuals served.

Data Collection from National Databases

Data sources used for this report include:

- 2017 Disability Status Report for New Jersey from Cornell University's Employment and Disability Institute
- U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey (ACS)

- 2017 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- The American Foundation for the Blind-Prevalence Rates of Visual Loss (January 2017)
- The National Research and Training Center on Blindness & Low Vision at Mississippi State University

All Disabilities

Data Source: 2017 Cornell Disabilities Status Report New Jersey, 2017 Cornell Disabilities Status Report US, and 2018 American Community Survey (ACS).

Nationally, the prevalence rate for all types of disabilities across all age groups was 12.7 percent. In New Jersey, the prevalence rate for all types of disabilities across all age groups was 10.2 percent. Based on the prevalence rates for New Jersey of individuals with a wide range of disabilities, it is estimated that 908,699 New Jersey residents have some level of disability. Of that population aged 18-64, 20.9 percent have income that is at or below the Federal poverty rate. In addition, those individuals aged 21-64 with disabilities that are living in the community are employed at a rate of 37.3 percent nationally, and slightly higher in New Jersey at 39.2 percent.

Data Source: 2017 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System – Disability and Health Data (DHDS) Systems Data, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The prevalence rate for all types of disabilities among adults 18 years of age or older was 25.6 percent nationally, compared to a slightly lower 24.6 percent in New Jersey. The prevalence rate for a visual disability among adults 18 years of age or older was 4.7 percent, both nationally and in New Jersey.

Blindness & Vision Impairment

Data Sources: AFB Prevalence Rates of Visual Loss (1/2017), and 2015 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 2017), and indicates that approximately 161,587 New Jersey residents are blind or visually impaired, a prevalence rate of 1.8 percent of the general population. This prevalence rate is slightly lower than the national rate of 2.3 percent. For ages 21-64, all races and ethnicities, it is estimated that 74,300 New Jersey residents have vision impairments, a prevalence rate of 1.4 percent of the base population in the State. It was also 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 2.5 percent. Individuals who identified their ethnicity as Hispanic, all racial groups, had a prevalence rate of vision impairment at 2 percent of the general population.

Data Source: 2017 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Systems

When defined more broadly to include functional disability, as defined as “blind or serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses” in the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (2017) conducted by the CDC, 4.7 percent of adults of all ages, races and ethnicities reported having a functional visual disability, the same as the national average. When broken down by age, 2.8 percent of individuals 18-44 identify as having a vision disability, and 6.2 percent of individuals age 45-64 identify as having a vision disability. Individuals who identified as Black,

non-Hispanic, (7.4 percent) and Hispanic (8.4 percent) reported having a vision disability at a much higher rate than those who identified as White, non-Hispanic (3.1 percent).

Deaf-Blindness

Data source: Mississippi State University National Research and Training Center on Blindness & Low Vision (NRTC) and U.S. Census Bureau Data

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that 0.77 percent of the U.S. population experiences both vision and hearing loss. The NRTC's review of the data indicates that this population experiences an unemployment rate is more than twice that of the general population, 15.7 percent compared to 7.7 percent.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

See above response in section j.1.A.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

See above response in section j.1.A.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

See above response in section j.1.A.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

See above response in section j.1.A.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

Community Rehabilitation Providers

Participant feedback in the Blindness Learning Community that was implemented in 2017, which provided targeted blindness-specific training with a select group of CRPs was positive and participants indicated it was much needed. However, given the large number of potential CRPs providing this service, as well as the observed turnover in the field resulting in required re-training of staff, CBVI issued a Request for Information from stakeholders and CRPs providing pre-placement activities and job coaching, including supported employment. Specifically, CBVI requested feedback on the challenges faced by CRPs in regard to capacity, staff retention, CBVI role and supports, fee schedules, and facilitating high quality employment outcomes. In a review of the responses, three primary themes came out as needing attention which CBVI agrees with and will focus on moving forward:

1. Fee schedule, payment structure, and billing and payment delays;
2. Enhanced information, communication, and coordination processes with CBVI staff; and
3. A need for CBVI-provided training on serving individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired.

In response to the RFI, CBVI will be developing a Request for Proposal to recruit a smaller number of eligible vendors, to enable consistent referrals, enhance effective communication

strategies, and be able to more regularly provide technical assistance and targeted training on issues unique to blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind individuals. CBVI will also look at revising the current fee schedule, voucher, and payment process, that facilitates CRPs ability to recruit and retain highly skilled staff, as well as encourage high quality deliverables and outcomes.

CBVI is implementing a Request for Information (RFI) from CRPs providing pre-placement activities and job coaching, including supported employment; stakeholders will also be invited to respond. This RFI will constitute a CSNA activity, and the results are also intended to guide the development of a new model of pre-placement, job coaching, and supported employment services better suited to CBVI and its consumers. A Request for Proposal (RFP) will also be developed from the results of this RFI, to solicit CRPs committed to working with CBVI's consumers who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired, including those with the most significant disabilities, and students and youth for Pre-ETS and supported employment services. By focusing on developing the capacity of a smaller group of CRPs to provide this range of services, CBVI intends to create and implement a sustainable system of training and professional development for CRPs serving consumers who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired, including those with the most significant disabilities, to achieve competitive, integrated employment.

In partnership with The College of New Jersey's Center for Complex and Sensory Disabilities, CBVI will also seek to replicate the Youth Employment Solutions (YES) pilot conducted from 2016-present with CRPs across the state, as identified from the RFP noted above. This pilot program utilized a Customized Employment approach to assessing and placing out of school youth with the most significant disabilities in competitive, integrated employment. In partnership with the consumer, their family, their VR counselor, and their DDD Support Coordinator, the YES program successfully helped achieve employment placements for nine out of eighteen youth referred to the program, with two of the youth choosing to pursue higher education in lieu of employment at this time. This represents a 50 percent employment rate, which is a much higher successful outcome than typically seen among CRPs utilizing traditional job development, placement, and supported employment strategies.

State-run Training Center

CBVI owns and operates a residential training center (Joseph Kohn Training Center – JKTC) focused on providing independent living and vocational skills training to VR consumers, to prepare them for successful outcomes in competitive, integrated employment. Through the implementation of an assessment and strategic planning process for the Joseph Kohn Training Center, multiple areas were identified as needing improvement, including programmatic changes, training needs, and capital improvement projects.

To identify the areas for improvement in the JKTC's implementation of its program, a series of focus groups, interviews, observations, and strategic planning sessions were conducted with JKTC consumers, staff, members of the CBVI administration, and VR Counselors. From this process, the agency identified a series of priorities related to increasing internal and external communication and collaboration. These increased collaboration and communication priorities occur across all stakeholders, including consumers, their families, JKTC staff, VR staff in the regional offices, and community stakeholders (such as businesses). Over the next two years, CBVI will create, implement, and evaluate initiatives to address these priorities, and improve services and outcomes of the JKTC.

The Joseph Kohn Training Center opened in 1988 and has aged considerably over the past 32 years. A physical assessment of the building has identified that it will require numerous building upgrades and system replacements in the next five years to deal with normal wear and tear, in addition to meeting current safety and building code requirements. These include:

- Complete Design / Engineering of the Heating & Cooling System which includes:
- New Chiller and Condenser Plant
- New Computerized Automatic Temp and Motor Control System
- Energy management system
- Replacement of room heat /units
- New Lighting and Ceiling including grid supports
- Upgrade / redesign Security Camera's
- Replace vinyl wall covering throughout the building
- Sidewalks – bring them up to city codes
- Weather stripping and re-caulking windows (front of building and cafeteria patio glass wall)
- Patio Awning
- Replace carpeting throughout building
- Water proofing foundation for full building
- Upgrade Generator for full building
- Update elevator computer controls
- New Cafeteria tables and chairs

Deaf-Blind Services

Given the concerns some providers and community partners expressed about services provided to the deaf-blind community, the responses of deaf-blind participants on the consumer survey were examined as compared to respondents who did not check that they were deaf-blind.

A substantial number of deaf-blind consumers reported that the CBVI staff treated them with courtesy and respect and were concerned about their needs. However, deaf-blind consumers generally reported a lower level of satisfaction than consumers who were not deaf-blind. The satisfaction gap was most pronounced in the questions regarding communication. In addition to the feedback received from, and regarding services for our deaf-blind consumers, CBVI has also experienced challenges with consistently identifying vendors to provide ASL interpreting services, and particularly for consumers requiring tactile ASL. CBVI will work to identify additional providers of interpreter services, as well as partner with the community to enhance the skill and knowledge of ASL interpreters, and build capacity in New Jersey to provide interpreter services and work with deaf-blind individuals.

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

As a part of the CSNA activities completed in 2020, NJCBVI distributed surveys to all families of high school students being served by NJCBVI, as well as solicited for involvement in transition-specific focus groups by students and parents. NJCBVI had hoped to use these data sources to do additional analyses of focus group and survey responses to identify needs specific to students and youth with disabilities. Despite outreach efforts, the agency was unable to get sufficient responses from this population to draw any conclusions. CBVI has struggled to engage parents in both opportunities to provide feedback, as well as in sessions geared towards parent education and involvement. Parent engagement continues to be an identified need, and CBVI will continue to conduct assessment activities to reach out to parents and students in order to gather feedback on unmet needs.

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. In 2016, CBVI revised its Blindness Education program delivery to more closely align with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, focusing specifically on more individually tailoring service delivery to students based on their specific needs, and providing service reports to school districts in greater alignment to the requirements under the IEP. Since CBVI serves as the primary provider of blindness education services in the state through its provider service agreements with local school districts, nearly all students identified with visual impairments in New Jersey are known to the Commission. 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 nine transition counselors who work in the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit, i.e., six transition counselors and three Deaf-Blind Specialists.

In 2019, CBVI finalized its Memorandum of Agreement with the NJ Department of Education's Office of Special Education and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services for the implementation of Pre-ETS and Transition Services.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

Annual Estimate of Individuals to be Served and Costs of Services (CBVI)

It is estimated that the State of New Jersey has approximately 79,000 individuals who are of working age (16-64) and have a visual disability (based on 2015 Disability Status Report for New Jersey, published by the Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability at the Cornell University ILR School). Based on the average number of individuals served over the last three program years of WIOA (PYs 18, 19, and 20), it is estimated that approximately 2,500 will be potentially eligible students with disabilities or adults who apply for VR services during FFY 2022. Of these individuals, approximately 2000 will be eligible and receive services from the VR program.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

Of these 2,500 eligible individuals, it is estimated that all will receive services provided under Part B, Title I of the Act. Service costs are estimated to be \$12,450,000.00 exclusive of state match under Title I.

Based on PYs 2018, 2019, and 2020, it is estimated that 1,800 individuals will receive planned VR services provided under Part B, Title I of the Act in FFY 2022.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

It is estimated that 125 individuals will be eligible under Part B, Title VI of the Act, and receive services from CBVI and 40 will obtain employment and receive Supported Employment services in FY 2022.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

CBVI is not implementing 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

CBVI is not implementing an Order of Selection.

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 total amount of estimated funds from Title I is \$12,670,105, serving an estimated total of 2,500 individuals, for an average cost of services at \$5068.

Total service costs are estimated to be \$12,450,000.00, exclusive of amounts for Supported Employment under Title VI and state match under Title I. \$89,310.00 is currently allocated for Title VI, Part B services.

The total amount of estimated funds from both Title I and Title VI is \$12,539,310, serving an estimated total of 1,700 eligible individuals for an average cost of services at \$7,376.06.

CBVI is not implementing an Order of Selection.

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

The following CBVI goals and priorities were developed based on the consultations with the SRC membership and based on data obtained from the 2018 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, as well as the CSNA activities completed in 2020. The goals and priorities below also represent feedback provided by the Rehabilitation Services Administration during the agency's Federal Monitoring in FY 2018.

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 2018, as well as the current needs assessment cycle.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

The following are the strategic initiatives connected with vocational rehabilitation services that will drive agency priorities:

GOAL 1: Service Delivery Program Improvement:

- CBVI will develop and implement new internal controls and procedures, to ensure timely and quality service provision and documentation, in alignment with federal requirements and to facilitate consumer satisfaction.

GOAL 2: Development and Improvement of Quality Career and Employment Programs:

- CBVI will evaluate current services and programs, including those offered by Community Rehabilitation Providers, and enhance and/or develop new programs and services, in response to needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment and connected with meeting performance indicators and 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, across state and local agencies, as well as private sector partnerships.

GOAL 4: Communications, Public Information, and Community Outreach:

- CBVI will continue to enhance external communication strategies and community outreach to increase awareness 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.

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;

All five of the CBVI's overarching goals contribute to ensuring compliance with, and successful achievement of, the reporting of the performance measures under Section 116 of WIOA. In response to an evaluation of data from the agency's federal reports, and regulatory and sub-regularly guidance, the agency has developed, and continues to increase and improve, activities that: increase collaboration with workforce partners, address counselor knowledge, improve data quality, enhance internal controls, and evaluate program outcomes.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

All five of the CBVI's overarching goals contribute to ensuring compliance with, and successful achievement of, the reporting of the performance measures under Section 116 of WIOA. In response to an evaluation of data from the agency's federal reports, and regulatory and sub-regularly guidance, the agency has developed, and continues to increase and improve, activities that: increase collaboration with workforce partners, address counselor knowledge, improve data quality, enhance internal controls, and evaluate program outcomes.

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.

See above response in section I.1. and I.3.B

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES

CBVI is not implementing an Order of Selection.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

CBVI is not implementing an Order of Selection.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

CBVI is not implementing an Order of Selection.

D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

CBVI is not implementing an Order of Selection.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

CBVI is not implementing an Order of Selection.

2. 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

CBVI is not implementing an Order of Selection.

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

CBVI utilizes a wide array of vendors on a fee-for-services basis to provide supported employment services for those individuals with the most significant disabilities. Consumers and/or their representatives are able to select the vendor to provide these services from a list

kept in conjunction with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD).

In addition, the agency has signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the DVRS, the general VR agency, and DDD, a sister agency within the New Jersey Department of Human Services and an agency that provides a full array of employment supports including extended services to individuals with a wide array of developmental disabilities, with the goal of furthering successful outcomes in competitive, integrated employment in the state by increasing access to supports needed to obtain and maintain employment.

CBVI seeks to evaluate and rebuild its model of supported employment services, and to build a network of CRPs that are dedicated to serving consumers who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired, through an outcome-based model and a commitment to the professional development of, and closer collaboration with its partner providers.

CBVI seeks to achieve 5 percent of all successful employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities that require supports on the job, including long-term follow along services.

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

CBVI continues to make available extended services, when needed, for up to 4 years or through age 24. 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, and to maintain that employment.

These services have been identified and are being tracked. Training has been conducted for all counselors that emphasizes that the provision of extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities, under appropriate circumstances, can be provided up to four years. Ongoing training with counselors is provided to ensure accurate use and tracking of supported employment and extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities.

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.

DVRS and CBVI have an active MOU with DDD, which 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.

Additionally, under the MOU with The College of New Jersey's Center for Complex and Sensory Disabilities, a pilot program called Youth Employment Solutions (YES) was initiated to facilitate competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with the most significant disabilities who have exited the secondary school system. This program utilizes the Customized Employment model to engage the youth in the Discovery Process, and, in partnership with a supported employment provider and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, develops a Customized Employment placement. Once an employment placement has been achieved, the identified supported employment service provider takes over with providing on-the-job

supports. This model has demonstrated successful outcomes at a higher rate than typically seen for youth with the most significant disabilities. Under the new MOU being developed for implementation in 2020, CBVI will seek to replicate this model with CRPs across the state who are providing supported employment services.

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

- CBVI will evaluate current processes and procedures required to deliver services, and to streamline the process for direct services staff. The agency will also seek to provide additional supports to counselors and front line supervisors, so that appropriate delegable activities may be conducted by paraprofessionals and support staff, and direct services staff may have greater time to focus on service provision to consumers.
- CBVI will implement a Request for Information (RFI) pertaining to the provision of preplacement activities, job development services, job coaching, and supported employment, including services to students and youth with disabilities. The goal of this RFI is to inform the development of a Request for Proposal for a program that will be outcome-oriented, and to guide the development of a new model of pre-placement, job coaching, and supported employment services better suited to CBVI and its consumers. A Request for Proposal (RFP) will solicit CRPs committed to working with CBVI's consumers who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired, including those with the most significant disabilities, and students and youth for Pre-ETS and supported employment services. By focusing on developing the capacity of a smaller group of CRPs to provide this range of services, CBVI intends to create and implement a sustainable system of training and professional development for CRPs serving consumers who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired, including those with the most significant disabilities, to achieve competitive, integrated employment.
- Based on the feedback provided by the SRC, as well as that provided in ongoing CSNA activities, CBVI will enhance its group programs for VR consumers between the ages of 25 and 54. As the agency has had success developing targeted programs for youth, as well as adults 55 and older through the Independent Living Older Blind program, CBVI seeks to create new programs to support the skills development of younger adults seeking to enter or re-enter the workforce. CBVI will evaluate options for additional customization of training options at the Joseph Kohn Training center, as well as the creation of new programs. This expansion will create groups across the state focused on the peer support and mentoring needs of adults 21-55 years old.
- CBVI will seek out new opportunities for partnerships and collaboration within the workforce development system, in response to SRC and CSNA feedback, as well as resulting from the agency's federal monitoring of FY 2018. Partnerships will be formalized with each of the One-Stop Career Centers, through the signing of Memorandums of Understanding, as well as the Infrastructure Funding Agreements, as required by WIOA. Through these partnerships, the agency hopes to enhance the access

to workforce programs for individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired, as well as strengthen collaborations to better serve the business community.

- CBVI will grow external partnerships with state and local agencies, to identify and collaborate with entities that may support consumers' abilities to achieve competitive, integrated employment, while also increasing awareness of and facilitating referrals for CBVI services to individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired.
- The agency will maintain or expand professional/personnel development to ensure service delivery by qualified personnel. 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. The agency has begun and will continue to implement ongoing training in leadership development, to support the professional development of current supervisors and managers, as well as build capacity for the next generation of leadership in the agency. Customer service training will also be implemented for staff at all levels. Additional VR training will also be implemented to facilitate understanding of VR regulations, and best practices for serving consumers, through internal training as well as training offerings provided by RSA's technical assistance centers and other national experts in the field.
- The agency will continue to maintain and expand its relationship with institutions of higher education which train professionals to enter the blindness field, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility, rehabilitation instruction, and teachers of the visually impaired 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 entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Division of Developmental Disabilities 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. CBVI will review the MOU to identify additional opportunities for collaboration and partnership, and facilitate increased success in competitive, integrated employment in supported employment.

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

CBVI offers New Jersey residents who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired 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) are

responsible for maintaining and staffing six 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. Four of these labs are located in CBVI's Service Centers (Newark, Freehold, Atlantic City and Cherry Hill); the fifth is operated in partnership with the NJ State Library Talking Book and Braille Center and is located in Trenton; the sixth 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. Effective Spring 2020, Assistive Technology training services began being provided in-house by CBVI TSS staff.

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 visually impaired employees, as well as those seeking to reduce barriers for potential future visually impaired employees and customers. 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.

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, for college students taking remedial classes, or during short-term vocational training programs. Equipment available for loan includes desktop PCs, laptops, adaptive software, printers, scanners, and CCTVs. There are also a small number of MacBooks, braille devices and handheld digital magnifiers for loan on a limited basis.

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

CBVI operates 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.

Through the 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, CBVI has increased communication with the Division of Developmental Disabilities. This increased communication has helped to identify additional individuals with the most significant disabilities who may benefit from supported employment services to gain employment in integrated settings.

In 2017, the agency appointed a staff member to have primary responsibility for the implementation of services required under Section 511 regulations related to sub-minimum wage employment for individuals with disabilities. The Extended Employment Specialist is the designated liaison with all facilities throughout the state that provide extended employment in sub-minimum wage settings and is responsible for providing career counseling and information and referral services to identified individuals.

CBVI also regularly engages in outreach activities to the greater community, including community health fairs, job fairs, and transition fairs, to increase awareness of CBVI's services, including vocational rehabilitation services. In 2019, CBVI hired a Community Outreach specialist who has undertaken a number of initiatives to distribute information and materials to a variety of community partners, including doctor's offices, Centers for Independent Living, county departments of aging, and other community health and social service centers. The agency also provides in-service trainings to a variety of entities about CBVI's services, including DDD service providers, educational entities at all levels, businesses, and partner agencies to facilitate awareness and referrals for CBVI services and programs.

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)

CBVI, since its inception, has assisted school districts in providing appropriate education programs that address the unique needs of children who are blind, deaf-blind and visually impaired. 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 nine transition counselors who work in the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit, i.e., nine 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) as an outreach effort to reach families who may be unfamiliar with CBVI services. The Commission maintains, in conjunction with the DVRS and Department of Education's Office of Special Education, a Memorandum of Understanding for the provision of Pre-ETS and Transition services, in compliance with WIOA. Under this agreement,

additional outreach, training, and technical assistance will be provided to Local Education Agencies, to facilitate collaboration and understanding of the Commission's services and programs.

The transition counselors at the agency can directly provide or arrange for the provision of the full range of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for potentially eligible high school students. Information and referral services are provided to the students, their parents/guardians, and their school district 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 for students who choose to apply for VR 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, job seeking activities, etc.

For students not planning to pursue competitive, integrated employment upon graduation, CBVI makes available resources and guidance for these students and their families on how to access the adult services and supports they may require, including through the Division of Developmental Disabilities, Social Security and Medicaid, and legal considerations, such as guardianship. A referral to CBVI's Independent Living Unit can also be made upon graduation for students not pursuing employment, but who wish to receive additional IL services, such as Orientation and Mobility, Eye Health, and other blindness skills instruction.

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 Individualized Education Program (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 may 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. These programs are continuously evaluated for areas of improvement, and to meet the evolving transition needs of students with disabilities. These commission-run programs include:

- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) 1.0, a year-round program targeted to high school-aged blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired consumers that focuses on development of work readiness and blindness-specific skills of independence, mentorship and instruction in self-advocacy from blind and visually impaired role models, and a work-based learning opportunity in an integrated setting;
- Life 101, a two-week summer program for Freshman and Sophomores in high school to focus on acquisition of Pre-Employment Transition Services, including core blindness-specific skills of independence, job exploration counseling, including counseling on post-secondary education opportunities and work readiness training, provided in a residential environment at the Commission's Joseph Kohn Training Center;

- The College Prep Experience Program, dedicated to providing blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired students likely to seek post-secondary education with the necessary skills to succeed in a higher education environment, including post-secondary enrollment counseling, job exploration counseling, self-advocacy skills instruction, and work readiness skills;
- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) 2.0, an extension of EDGE 1.0, that serves to assist undergraduate college students in successfully making the transition from a secondary to post-secondary academic setting, and facilitates the development of work readiness and self-advocacy skills, ongoing post-secondary enrollment counseling, job exploration counseling, and work-based learning through internships and other work experiences;
- Work Skills Prep, a two-week summer program for blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired students, possessing additional complex disabilities, that delivers workplace readiness and self-advocacy skills instruction through hands-on activities and work-based learning opportunities.
- CBVI will be creating a new program, based on the model of Work Skills Prep, to provide a residential summer program for older students with disabilities, focusing on hands-on work-based learning experiences, work readiness skills, job exploration, and self-advocacy. This program seeks to meet the needs of students who are unsure or uninterested in seeking post-secondary education, and intend to pursue competitive, integrated employment after high school, providing an opportunity to explore potential career goals, gain experience and exposure to work, and enhance their independence and self-advocacy skills.

CBVI continues to formally and informally assess the unmet needs and sub-populations of students with disabilities served by the agency. As a result of this assessment, new services and programs are being developed to enhance and complement those already being offered. In addition to enhancing and expanding its existing program offerings, CBVI is also working to create a list of approved Pre-ETS and Transition programs currently being offered outside New Jersey, that may benefit consumers who may have unique needs and supports unmet by the agency's programs and services. A Request for Proposals will also be published in 2020 to identify additional CRPs in New Jersey that are best suited to provide a range of Pre-ETS services, so that the agency may expand its offerings.

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

CBVI plans to issue two Requests for Information and Proposal to identify enhancements and CRP partnerships for the provision of supported employment and related careers services, and for the implementation of Pre-ETS programs and services by CRPs. In identifying a smaller group of CRPs who are committed to serving individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired, CBVI can create a sustainable system of collaboration, communication, and training to its partner CRPs. Once these CRPs are identified, CBVI will partner with the College of New Jersey's Center for Complex and Sensory Disabilities, under the provision of its MOU, to provide

training and technical assistance, focused on blindness-specific issues, as well as the principles of customized employment.

CBVI also plans to address improvements at the Joseph Kohn Training Center in both the areas of programmatic improvement, as well as the physical improvements required to maintain the building's safety and code requirements, based on improvements identified under the comprehensive statewide needs assessment.

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 maintain records and report on the 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. CBVI has, and continues to provide training to counselors, supervisors, and managers on the reporting requirements under WIOA. Internal controls and quality assurance activities continue to be developed and implemented to ensure data integrity in federal reporting.

The agency is also undertaking additional strategic initiatives to improve performance in line with the business engagement measures under section 116 of WIOA.

- Growing the agency's business relations unit designed to meet the needs of the business community in New Jersey.
- Enhancing coordination with the Workforce Development System, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, in New Jersey in developing and participating in Career Fairs and other business engagement activities throughout the state.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

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 visually impaired. The agency is available to provide further assistance in these areas to foster greater access for individuals with vision loss. CBVI will also be reaching out to each local area to formalize partnerships under the Memorandums of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreements, as required by WIOA.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

CBVI will develop and implement new internal controls and procedures, to ensure timely and quality service provision and documentation, in alignment with federal requirements and to facilitate consumer satisfaction.

- CBVI will develop 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 case management system capable of providing data analysis and program evaluation activities, and creation of all other agency-wide systems resulting in a robust and accountable blindness service agency; CBVI executive management team

will work collaboratively to identify, improve, and implement additional internal controls and quality assurance activities, to be overseen by the agency's Quality Assurance Coordinator. CBVI will identify delegable activities and provide additional supports to VR Counselors and Supervisors, to enable increased time for counseling and enhance timeliness of service provision.

CBVI will evaluate current services and programs, including those offered by Community Rehabilitation Providers, and enhance and/or develop new programs and services, in response to needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment and connected with meeting performance indicators and connected with quality employment outcomes.

- CBVI will develop Requests for Information and Proposal to redesign the agency's career and employment services provided by Community Rehabilitation Providers, including Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and transition and career services to youth.
- CBVI will identify barriers to providing quality pre-placement activities, job development, job coaching, and supported employment services to consumers who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired through the implementation of a RFI, as well as ideas to facilitate a model that is outcome oriented and provides data to CBVI and consumers regarding outcomes and satisfaction.
- CBVI will identify and select CRPs that are committed to providing high-quality services to consumers who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired, including those who have and are willing to maintain knowledge and skills specific to serving individuals with vision loss, including those who are deaf and hard of hearing, and those with the most significant disabilities.
- CBVI will identify and select CRPs who are committed to providing high-quality services to students and youth with disabilities, to provide job readiness and work-based learning experiences, as well as job development, placement, and job coaching services, including supported employment for youth with the most significant disabilities. Additional Pre-Employment Transition Services will be developed with partner CRPs, to provide additional Pre-ETS services to meet the unmet needs of students and youth with disabilities as identified in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.
- CBVI will expand the ASPIRE program, a statewide system of peer mentoring groups for individuals who are 55 and older, to include groups dedicated to serving individuals who are 21-54 years old;
- CBVI will expand and improve access to ASL interpreting services, to better meet the needs of our deaf-blind consumers seeking vocational rehabilitation services;

CBVI will focus on growing external partnerships, resources, and alliances to support consumer services and outcomes, across state and local agencies, as well as private sector partnerships.

- CBVI will analyze current Memoranda of Understanding for elements that promote CBVI's mission and expanding and renewing those that benefit CBVI and its consumers in achieving successful outcomes.
- CBVI will target organizations for formal agency agreements, e.g. Workforce development agencies, Independent Living Councils and Independent Living Centers, Social services providers, Housing authorities;

- CBVI will engage 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 grow partnerships with the private sector to enhance outreach and engagement with businesses.

CBVI will continue to improve 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 visually impaired people.

- CBVI will 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.
- CBVI will devote professional attention and resources to creating new agency branding and public image approaches in collaboration with the Department of Human 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's Outreach Initiative has been implemented. Directors of social services, health, senior services, offices of disabilities and libraries for all 21 counties and several municipalities received a letter of introduction and a CBVI information package (88 hard copies and 72 electronic copies). Within 2 weeks, 17 responses were received. Those responses include requests for speakers, additional outreach materials for distribution in the community and requests to schedule eye screenings. CBVI is maintaining a spreadsheet to monitor the impact and effectiveness of this outreach strategy. The next mailing will go out in February to: Managers/Directors of Senior Day Programs and Senior Housing complexes statewide.

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, including leadership and professional development activities, 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;
- Taking steps to fully maximize all staff resources for optimum program benefit.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

See above response in section o.8.A.

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.

See above response in section o.8.A.

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

The CBVI goals and priorities from the approved 2018 State Plan Modification are listed below.

GOAL 1: Service Delivery System Redesign

- Goal: 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.
- Evaluation: Though CBVI intended to move toward a team-oriented approach to service delivery, the largest factors that impeded this goal were connected to the limitations of the agency's case management system, which restricted the agency's ability to fully move into the intended redesign. CBVI has been working toward obtaining a new case management system, and intends to build in greater capacity to facilitate cross-unit collaboration in the future. However, CBVI believes that we have made significant progress toward achieving this goal, as the agency has instituted a number of initiatives to achieve greater collaboration and more cohesive service provision across its service units. The following initiatives were successfully implemented to increase collaboration between service units.

CBVI increased information sharing across disciplines and agency-wide through a monthly newsletter. Cross-disciplinary training was also implemented to facilitate an increased understanding of policy, services, and procedures between units.

Monthly meetings were implemented in each of the offices to bring together cross-disciplinary staff.

A monthly operations meeting was implemented, to include all managers of offices and programmatic units, to share information and address joint concerns.

A leadership development series was started, bringing together all staff at the supervisors and administration, to jointly focus on quality assurance and staff development and supervision.

CBVI hired a Quality Assurance Coordinator to increase internal controls in the service delivery process.

GOAL 2: Development of Quality Career and Employment Programs

- Goal: 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.
- Evaluation: CBVI successfully achieved the goal, and maintained, improved, and expanded on a number of its programs identified in the 2016 State Plan to address the needs identified in the comprehensive assessment. CBVI's Pre-Employment Transition Services programs continued to grow, and the agency continues to work to expand offerings for all potentially eligible students. CBVI's Business Relations Unit (BRU) was most greatly impeded by staff turnover in the unit; however, BRU continues to grow and offer services to businesses and enhance opportunities for CBVI consumers to attain employment. CBVI's staff development initiatives were largely successful, with numerous opportunities and training methodologies being implemented to increase staff knowledge, growth and performance. The greatest impediment to this goal's success has been the numerous responsibilities added to the staff as a result of new WIOA requirements.

CBVI maintained and grew the EDGE 1.0 and 2.0 programs to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to high school and college students who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired (respectively). The EDGE 1.0 program grew from 25 students served in its initial year, to 75 students served in FY 2019. The EDGE 2.0 program was piloted and grew from 15 students in its initial year to 32 students in FY 2019.

CBVI established its Business Relations Unit, which has and continues to successfully implement a range of strategies to engage and serve businesses from a dual customer approach. The Business Relations Unit attends job fairs, participates in Disability Mentoring Days with corporate partners, facilitates consumers' application to and placement in job opportunities, conducts training and technical assistance to businesses on issues of disability and blindness awareness, and conducts outreach and education to public and private entities that work with businesses to increase awareness of CBVI and its services to businesses.

CBVI provided to its VR Counselors and Supervisors a range of trainings dedicated to the development of competencies in using evidence-based practices, including Motivational Interviewing, Labor Market Information, and Customized Employment; additional trainings on federal regulations, policies, compliance, and documentation were also conducted to reinforce the requirements under WIOA.

GOAL 3: External Partnerships, Resources and Alliances

- Goal: 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.
- Evaluation: CBVI successfully implemented strategies to grow partnerships, resources, and alliances to support consumer services and outcomes. Further identification and development of new CRPs was slowed due to other agency priorities and challenges related to procurement; however, the agency's priority for the new plan cycle focuses on building CRP capacity to develop additional programs and services in the coming two years.

CBVI updated and executed two Memoranda of Understanding with the Department of Education to facilitate coordination around transition services to students with disabilities, and for the provision of blindness education services.

CBVI continues to review and evaluate existing MOUs, as well as identify the need for the development of additional MOUs to formalize partnerships between agencies.

CBVI hired Social Workers and Social Work Interns to support consumers and staff in its regional offices in identifying and connecting with local social service entities.

CBVI has worked collaboratively with sister agencies under the Department of Human Services to identify points of collaboration and cross-training.

GOAL 4: Communications, Public Information, and Community Outreach

- Goal: 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 visually impaired people.
- Evaluation: CBVI has successfully increased its internal and external communication strategies to increase its communication with internal and external stakeholders, as well as outreach and awareness efforts to the general public. There were no major impediments to reaching this goal.

CBVI has worked collaboratively with the Department of Human Services to update outreach materials, including brochures, posters, postcards, and introduction letters, to increase awareness of, and collaboration with, other community partners. Included in these outreach materials were a brochure and introduction letter for the Business Relations Unit to increase the unit's reach and connection with businesses and entities working with businesses.

CBVI has hired a community outreach specialist to support the agency's efforts to increase awareness, conduct outreach, and attend events on behalf of the agency.

CBVI implemented a series of stakeholder meetings, to expand outreach to consumer organizations and other entities serving individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired. These outreach efforts will continue and contribute to the agency's ongoing comprehensive needs assessment activities.

GOAL 5: Human Resources Staff Development

- Goal: CBVI will devote resources and energy to various issues related to human resource staff development.
- Evaluation: CBVI has successfully invested significantly in the area of staff development, through training, increased support for staff hiring, recruitment, and leadership development. CBVI continues to work on this goal, as we've experienced turnover in staff during the last state plan period; although this was a slight impediment, CBVI believes that our achievements in staff development are notable, and this is always an area that will continue to be built upon.

CBVI expanded its outreach to institutions of higher education and began the process of increasing partnerships with colleges and universities that prepare professionals in the field of blindness services. Members of the executive management team, along with human resources, met with relevant school and programs to educate them about the agency and our hiring needs, and regularly share open competitive job postings with these preparatory programs.

CBVI implemented a range of trainings dedicated to the development of VR Counseling competencies, as well as leadership development. CBVI also encourages staff to take advantage

of the training resources available through the state Civil Service Commission, and outside webinars, trainings, and conferences to enhance staff professional development.

CBVI has brought on additional Vocational Assistants, who serve as paraprofessionals in the Vocational Rehabilitation unit and support VR Counselors and Supervisors in completing delegable activities to enhance timely service provision. CBVI continues to identify additional strategies to fully maximize and/or add to staff resources for optimum program benefit.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities are described in the Evaluation response under each Goal in above section p.1.A.

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

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.

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.

Evaluation: Since the 2018 State Plan Modification, CBVI has evaluated the impact of the Blindness Learning Community (BLC) Initiative implemented in 2016/2017, and offered continued support for the participating agencies. CBVI has also offered the training to additional Supported Employment providers upon request, and provided additional training to those that participated in the original BLC. Agencies that participated and received increased training and technical assistance by CBVI reported increased awareness and understanding of service our consumers, and a closer working relationship with CBVI. CBVI's intention is to continue this work, by publishing a Request for Information to providers and stakeholders, to rework our SE program based on lessons learned by the BLC. Some factors that impeded our ability are the high rates of staff turnover in SE agencies, as well as the large number of potential providers in the state. As a result, we hope to gain additional information from the RFI in the next cycle, with the goal of creating a program with a smaller number of dedicated providers, and create conditions for increased oversight, support, and success for providers and consumers.

Goal 2 – All graduates of the agency's Work Skills Prep (WSP) 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.

Evaluation: CBVI evaluated the agency's graduates of the WSP program, and implemented outreach to each of those students who were still engaged in the VR process and attempting to attain employment. Through staff training, SE provider training, and assistance from the Youth Employment Solution (YES) pilot, we increased the number of youth involved in job development and supported employment services. The greatest impediment is the continued

lack of capacity and expertise of providers in serving individuals with the most significant disabilities using their current model. Through the YES pilot, we were able to established higher rates of success (approximately 20%) in achieving employment, utilizing Customized Employment methods, as compared to traditional methods of supported employment job development. Through a Request for Information, CBVI intends to make modifications to our SE program, increase provider capacity for serving this segment of consumers we serve.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

See above response in section p.2.A.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

The six primary indicators for performance are:

1. Entered Employment Rate (6 months): percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment, second quarter after exit from the program;
2. Entered Employment Rate (1 year): percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
3. Earnings: Median earnings of participants, who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
4. Credential Attainment Rate: 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. Measurable Skill Gains: 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.

As the VR program was still in baseline for all employment performance indicators through PY 2020, CBVI has provided the following data relative to the employment rate and employment and wage data at closure that is available for PY 2019 and 2020.

	PY 2019	PY 2020
# Closed in competitive, integrated employment	202	148
Employment Rate	35%	28%
Median Hourly Wage	\$14.67	\$15.90
Average Hourly Wage	\$18.28	\$21.23

Based on RSA’s statistical model, as well as historical performance, CBVI and DVRS have proposed the following levels of performance for the following primary indicators, pending negotiation with RSA:

Indicator	PY2022 Expected Level	PY2022 Negotiated Level	PY2023 Expected Level	PY2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	44.0%	44.0%	46.0%	46.1%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	40.0%	40.0%	43.0%	43.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,300	\$5,490	\$5,500	\$5,554
Credential Attainment Rate	30.0%	30.0%	31.0%	31.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	35.0%	47.4%	36.0%	49.4%

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

Innovation and Expansion (I&E) funds were utilized by CBVI in several ways, as described below. CBVI does not use I&E funds to support the State Rehabilitation Council.

In 2017, CBVI issued a Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) and a Request for Letters of Interest (RLI) inviting Supported Employment provider agencies to participate in a Blindness Learning Community (BLC) that focused on building the capacity of staff at these agencies to more effectively serve individuals who are blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind and require supported employment services to obtain and maintain a job. The BLC was established in partnership with The College of New Jersey Center for Sensory and Complex Disabilities and provided targeted training and coaching on evidence-based, non-visual methods of instruction for individuals with low or no vision. Blindness-specific training topics included: dispelling misconceptions about blindness, training in alternative/non-visual techniques, access technology, and travel techniques and strategies. Further topics included Person-Centered Planning/Discovery, Collective Impact Strategies, Customized Employment, and Business Engagement. Additional follow-up support and training was provided to two of the participating organizations, and similar trainings were provided to additional organizations by request in 2018 and 2019.

The agency also developed the Youth Employment Solutions (YES) program in partnership with The College of New Jersey’s Center for Complex and Sensory Disabilities to facilitate competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with the most significant disabilities who have exited the secondary school system, and who will benefit from supported employment services. This pilot program targeted of the agency’s Work Skills Preparation Program (WSP), a summer Pre-Employment Transition Services Program for students who are blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind, who have multiple disabilities, including intellectual and developmental disabilities. This program utilizes the Customized Employment model to engage the youth in the Discovery Process, and, in partnership with a supported employment

services provider and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, develops a Customized Employment placement. Once an employment placement has been achieved, the identified supported employment service provider takes over with providing on-the-job supports. This pilot program will be ending in 2020, and CBVI and TCNJ will seek to replicate this successful partnership with CRPs to build a more sustainable model.

Of the 18 individuals who have worked with the YES program during the three years of the pilot, nine have obtained competitive, integrated employment placements. Given the improved success rate compared to prior employment rates of graduates of the WSP program, CBVI will look to expand and replicate the program in the future.

CBVI also developed the EDGE 2.0 program, which built on the existing Pre-ETS service for high school students and continued the support to students as they made the transition from a secondary to post-secondary education environment. This program piloted a multi-modal model, including one-to-one guidance and support, an online college success curriculum, distance mentoring, and group activities, which provided an additional layer of services to a student as they adjusted to the increased independence and responsibility in a post-secondary setting. As students progress through the system, additional services assist the individual in identifying and obtaining a work-based learning experience, with a focus on paid internships, in order to build employment experience prior to graduation. The program is currently in its fourth year, and CBVI will be evaluating the impact of the program on academic success, including graduation rates, and employment outcomes.

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

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, intensive supported employment services are needed in order to perform such work.

New Jersey became the 14th state to embrace the concept of Employment First (EF) in April 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 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.

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 visually 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. As noted earlier, CBVI plans to evaluate and redesign its supported employment program to develop a smaller group of providers who are committed to providing services to blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired individuals, to be initiated in 2020. 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 four to five percent of all successful rehabilitations into supported employment.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

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.

Except for youth with disabilities for whom extended services from other sources are not available, CBVI may provide extended services for a period of up to four years until the youth reaches age 25. It should be noted that the Commission does not fund Extended Services for individuals other than youth. 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 Individualized Plan for Employment (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 twenty-four (24) 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 (BLIND) CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS 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[14], AND ITS SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT[15];

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) - Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

2. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY)[16] AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[17] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[18] , 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;

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) - Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AGREES 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[19] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[20] , 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 AGENCY AND/OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS 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 (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS 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;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Dr. Bernice M. Davis

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Executive Director, NJ Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired

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.

FOOTNOTES

[14] Public Law 113-128.

[15] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

[16] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[17] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[18] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations.

[19] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[20] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 6.

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Dr. Bernice M. Davis
Title of Signatory	Executive Director, NJ Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired
Date Signed	3/9/2020

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances: **The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

The State Plan must include	Include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures 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 unit assures it will comply with all requirements	

The State Plan must include	Include
<p>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.</p>	
<p>3. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to: Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:</p>	
<p>3.a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act</p>	
<p>3.b. The establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (A or B must be selected):</p>	
<p>3.b.(A) "is an independent State commission" (Yes/No)</p>	No
<p>3.b.(B) "has established a State Rehabilitation Council" (Yes/No)</p>	Yes
<p>3.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</p>	
<p>3.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)</p>	
<p>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 agency allows for the local administration of VR funds (Yes/No)</p>	No
<p>3.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 agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs (Yes/No)</p>	No
<p>3.g. Statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency 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</p>	No
<p>3.h. The descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act</p>	
<p>3.i. All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act</p>	

The State Plan must include	Include
3.j. The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.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	
3.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	
3.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 agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:	
4.a. Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.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	
4.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)	Yes
4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.e. 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	
4.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	
4.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	
4.h. Comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, 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 of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act	

The State Plan must include	Include
4.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	
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,	
4.j.i. Has developed and will implement,	
4.j.i.I. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and	
4.j.i.II. 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	
4.j.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:	
5.a. The designated State unit assures 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	
5.b. The designated State agency assures 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	
5.c. The designated state unit 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. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:	
6.a. The designated State agency assures 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	
6.b. The designated State agency assures 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	

The State Plan must include	Include
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:	Yes
7.a. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b. The designated State agency assures that:	
7.b.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	
7.b.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	

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	44.0%	44.0%	46.0%	46.1%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	40.0%	40.0%	43.0%	43.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,300.00	\$5,490.00	\$5,500.00	\$5,554.00
Credential Attainment Rate	30.0%	30.0%	31.0%	31.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	35.0%	47.4%	36.0%	49.4%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

1

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult program, Dislocated Worker program, Youth program, Wagner-Peyser Act program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation program—and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it elects to include in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. ²⁴ If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the “common planning elements” in Sections II-IV of this document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program.

[24] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA)

There are no program-specific state planning requirements for TAA. If the state includes TAA in a Combined State Plan, the state must incorporate TAA in its responses to the common planning elements in sections II, III, IV, and V of the WIOA State Plan requirements instrument.

Yes

JOBS FOR VETERANS’ STATE GRANTS

(OMB Control Number: 1225-0086)

The Jobs for Veterans' State Grants (JVSG) are mandatory, formula-based staffing grants to States (including DC, PR, VI and Guam). The JVSG is funded annually in accordance with a funding formula defined in the statute (38 U.S.C. 4102A (c) (2) (B) and regulation and operates on a fiscal year (not program year) basis, however, performance metrics are collected and reported quarterly on a Program Year basis (as with the ETA-9002 Series). Currently, VETS JVSG operates on a multi-year grant approval cycle modified and funded annually.

In accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(b)(5) and § 4102A(c), the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (ASVET) makes grant funds available for use in each State to support Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff. As a condition to receive funding, 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c)(2) requires States to submit an application for a grant that contains a State Plan narrative, which includes:

A. HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS UNDER THE JVSG;

Upon intake into the One-Stop Career Center system, jobseekers are given a quick assessment to identify the best career or training services options for that individual. Veteran's status and eligibility for Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) services are also determined during this initial assessment. The criteria used for deciding whether to refer a veteran or other eligible person to JVSG or non-JVSG staff is based on VPL 03-14 with changes 1 & 2, VPL 03-19 and other guidance, which includes in priority order special disabled veterans, other disabled veterans, and other eligible veterans and persons, in accordance with the priorities determined by the Secretary of the US Department of Labor.

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 and other eligible persons are served by the DVOP. All veterans served by the DVOP will be assessed and have an employability plan that directs the delivery of individualized career and training services.

JVSG, non-JVSG, and One-Stop management communicate to Veterans Business Representatives (VBRs) the skills, education, work history, aptitudes, and career aspirations of the veterans they are serving to help direct employer outreach efforts. VBRs, likewise, communicate to One-Stop staff working with jobseekers the needs of employers in the local area to assist with the preparation of veterans for job placement. The role of the Veterans Business Representative is consistent with 38 U.S.C. 4104(b). Since 2014, VBRs have been aligned with NJDOL's existing business services team in order to focus their job duties exclusively on businesses outreach, with the goal of identifying job opportunities for veterans as well as marketing the benefits of hiring veterans to employers. This alignment also ensures efficiencies in sharing effective practices and accessing the latest market intelligence for the benefit of New Jersey's veterans.

NJDOL anticipates employers will continue to 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 percent each year for the next five years resulting in the hiring of an additional 55,000 veterans nationwide.

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 will work with eligible veterans and [SAJV1] and One-Stop Career Center staff will work with all other 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.

NJDOL 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 NJDOL management staff will promote the hiring and retention of military service veterans by direct outreach to employers by Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs), which New Jersey terms Veterans Business Representatives, and other non-JVSG business outreach staff, who will 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 the New Jersey Business & Industry Association and chambers of commerce. Technology, including NJDOL's online labor exchange system and website, automated mass call telephone messaging system, and ability to blast e-mail announcements to targeted veterans will help NJDOL 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. Past efforts included Operation: Hire a Jersey Hero conducted in partnership with major employers like Prudential Insurance Company of America.

Veterans participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Program are deemed high priority customers. In accordance with USDOL-VETS guidance, NJDOL 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. NJDOL'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. NJDOL 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 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 while keeping consistent contact. The goal is to provide the VR&E veterans with the tools to be successful in the job search such as an effective résumé, career guidance, and job search assistance.

JVSG staff is deployed with clearly delineated distinct duties for the DVOP specialist and LVER. Distinct duties include the delivery of individualized career 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 VBR. DVOP specialists and VBRs provide specialized service that complement and add value to One-Stop Career Center's veterans' services. DVOP specialists and VBRs do not duplicate services provided by other labor exchange staff.

In order to maximize the return on investment that the specialized staff contributes, NJDOL will work to quickly fill vacancies.

NJDOL assigns 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 VBRs 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.

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 and a Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) workshop. 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 identified in current guidance. 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 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 the online labor exchange system.

New Jersey implemented Salesforce as a business customer management tool in May 2017. Salesforce helps coordinate services within each region and manage business outreach efforts. All partners have access to the system to help coordinate service and avoid duplicating efforts. 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. Jersey Job Club standardizes service delivery across the One-Stop Career Center system. Jersey Job Club offers three types of service workshops:

- Core workshops – résumé writing, interview skills, social media training;
- Enrichment workshops – networking, industry specific workshops (beneficial for mass hiring efforts); and
- Specific workshops based on population.

**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 and other eligible persons identified as having a significant barrier to employment, as defined in VPL 03-14 with changes 1 & 2, VPL 03-19 and other guidance, are directed to a DVOP specialist. All veterans served by the DVOP will be assessed and have an employability plan that directs the delivery of individualized career services.

LVERs in New Jersey are called Veteran Business Representatives (VBRs) and are aligned with the business services team in order to keep their focus on employer engagement. Jobseeker staff communicate on a regular basis with the VBRs to ensure they are generating job orders consistent with the skills, education and aptitude of the veterans being served.

Based on USDOL-VETS guidance, NJDOL created a desk aid for One-Stop Career Center staff that explained priority of service, definitions for covered and eligible, and definitions for the significant barriers. The desk aid included a checklist for staff use to document the significant barrier and support referral and services by the DVOP.

Once a veteran is referred to a DVOP specialist, staff complete a comprehensive assessment, document barriers, discuss job readiness, offer career advice/planning, and develop with the veteran an employability plan that may include barrier reduction strategies, referral to basic and/or occupational skills training, job search assistance through the Jersey Job Club, and referral to Vocational Rehabilitation or the Veterans Administration. Once a veteran successfully achieves the employment goal, staff are available to provide post-employment coaching as an employment retention strategy. Three elements of case management are followed during this process: comprehensive assessment, documented plan of action, and consistent contact.

VBRs play a critical role in promoting the employment of veterans to the business community. VBRs have been fully integrated into the Business Services team and possess the same toolbox as other Business Representatives, which includes on-the-job training grant funds, navigational assistance for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), knowledge of other state and local programs for defraying the extraordinary costs of hiring and training new workers. VBRs work closely with the One-Stop Managers and DVOPs to target their outreach efforts to employers based on the skills and career aspirations of the veteran looking for employment.

**C. THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE
STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR AMERICAN JOB CENTER;**

JVSG funded staff are fully integrated into New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center system. Veterans entering the system are assigned the level of service that they need to be successful in their employment efforts. On average, 80 percent of veterans registering with the One-Stop can be served through self-service 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 percent 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 One-Stop 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 individualized career services to veterans with significant barriers to employment as defined in USDOL guidance using a case management approach. Subsequent guidance with additional eligibility categories will not substantially impact service delivery. 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 career 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 NJDOL 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, NJDOL has created a custom tab in the AOSOS case management system specifically for the DVOP specialist. Management exception reports have also been developed to identify issues in near real-time. 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. Items on the exception report include whether the customer is an eligible veteran, whether they have received an individualized career service, whether they are in case management, and whether they have a significant barrier. Future enhancements may include whether there is a completed employment plan, and whether Federal Bonding program eligibility letter was generated for the customer.

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 Industry Partnerships. These Industry Partnerships are being created for each of New Jersey's key industries and are designed to develop strategies to meet the skill needs of business and facilitate the development of career pathways with varying access points. Industry Partnerships gather industry intelligence directly from businesses to better inform workforce and education investments. This intelligence informs and assists New Jersey's K-12 and higher education systems, and training providers, with the development of programs that meet the skills and credentials demands of employers. New Jersey Industry Partnerships will continue to be important partners in helping Veteran Business Representatives (VBRs – New Jersey's name for LVERs) better understand employer requirements and help LVERs more effectively connect to employers for promoting veterans for employment.

NJDOL 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, WIOA, Senior Community Service Employment Program (55+), state Workforce Development Partnership programs including Workforce Learning Link and WIOA Title II for low literate veterans, Opportunity Partnership industry supported training, NJ BUILD 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.

NJDOL works closely with other agencies such as the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to ensure that all staff serving veterans are 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 One-Stop partners to promote linkages at the local level.

More and more employers are requesting VBR assistance to conduct veteran recruitments. 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 military service veterans and has hired close to 200 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 staff to see if they meet the minimum requirements demanded by the employer, One-Stop 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.

NJDOL 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. NJDOL'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. NJDOL 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 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 while maintaining consistent contact.

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. VBRs 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 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.

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 USDOL-VETS guidance. In order to maximize services to those veterans, NJDOL actively works with the following types of organizations and services:

- **Veteran Service Organizations:** An organization whose charter and purpose are 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:** 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:** One-Stop partner agency providing work-directed assistance to veterans with disabilities.
- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I:** One-Stop 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 individualized career services is often managed by the DVOP using a case management approach where the delivery of those 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, résumé 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, WIOA Dislocated Worker (25 percent funds), TANF/GA/FS, and smaller miscellaneous funds.

JVSG staff is deployed with clearly delineated distinct duties for the DVOP specialist and VBR. These clearly distinct duties include the delivery of individualized career 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 VBR. DVOP specialists and VBRs provide specialized service that complement and add value to One-Stop's veterans' services. DVOP specialists and VBRs do not duplicate services provided by other One-Stop labor exchange staff.

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 system. One-Stops 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 are 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 One-Stop Workforce manager.

VBRs are assigned duties that promote to employers, employer associations, and business groups the advantages of hiring veterans. VBRs will do this in conjunction and as active members of the business services team. VBRs advocate for all veterans served by the One-Stop 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; and
- Coordinating and participating with other business outreach efforts.

VBRs are also responsible for facilitating employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans in New Jersey under the One-Stop service delivery systems. USDOL-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 job-seeking veterans. VBRs will play an important role in assisting with the development of the service delivery strategies for veterans in their assigned One-Stop, as well as educating all One-Stop partner staff with current employment initiatives and programs for veterans.

NJDOL concentrates VBR staff efforts on targeted job development services for veterans, particularly veterans determined to be job ready after receipt of individualized career services from a DVOP specialist. These measures will assist NJDOL in enhancing existing processes and oversight to ensure DVOP specialists provide individualized career services for veterans with employment barriers, including homeless veterans, veterans with disabilities, and the other service categories listed in more recent guidance.

NJDOL concentrates VBR staff efforts on targeted job development services for veterans, particularly veterans determined to be job ready after receipt of individualized career services from a DVOP specialist. These measures will assist NJDOL in enhancing existing processes and oversight to ensure DVOP specialists provide individualized career services for veterans with employment barriers, including homeless veterans, veterans with disabilities, and the other service categories listed in more recent guidance.

D. THE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED USING THE 1% GRANT ALLOCATION SET ASIDE FOR THIS PURPOSE, AS APPLICABLE;

- [SAJV1] [SV2] [SV3] [SV4] is working with the NJ Civil Service Commission and our Executive Management team to develop a performance incentive program consistent with the requirements outlined in Veteran Program Letter 01-22, Attachment #1 and #5, and GO Memorandum 02-22.

E. THE POPULATIONS OF ELIGIBLE 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);

New Jersey has expanded the definition of dislocated workers to include military spouses consistent with WIOA. Military spouses who have lost employment as a direct result of a relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of the spouse, if family income is significantly reduced because of a deployment, a call to active duty, a permanent change of station, or the service connected death or disability of a service member, or if they are unemployed or underemployed and are experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

Military service members preparing to return to civilian life will also be afforded the opportunity to receive training and services under WIOA Adult and/or Dislocated Worker by discounting military pay that would otherwise disqualify them for program eligibility. NJDOL has a long-standing relationship with the military leaders at Joint Base Maguire-Dix-Lakehurst. While state staff no longer deliver Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshops, staff of the Burlington County One-Stop Career Center regularly visit the Joint Base to assist veterans and transitioning service members. This relationship will be reviewed to ensure that a formal mechanism exists to communicate to transitioning service members the services offered through New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center system and understand the steps needed to avail themselves of those services. The goal is to provide a seamless transition from military to civilian life with little or no intervening period of unemployment during the transition period. A tangible example of New Jersey's efforts to ensure a seamless transition is the Military Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Skills Waiver Program. The New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission is helping military personnel transition their military driving experience into civilian employment. By waiving the CDL Skills Test (behind-the-wheel exam) qualified military

applicants will no longer have to provide a commercial vehicle in order to obtain a New Jersey CDL license.

New Jersey will continue to distinguish military service veterans according to USDOL guidance primarily to determine eligibility for DVOP services. 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” and are identified as having a significant barrier to employment (SBE) should be referred to the DVOP consistent with VPL 03-14 with changes 1 & 2 or current guidance. DVOPS will also provide services to additional populations as outlined in VPL 03-19 or current guidance.

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; and/or
- 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 most current guidance, NJDOL 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. NJDOL’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. NJDOL 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 stationed at the VA/VR&E office at 20 Washington Place in Newark. While 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;

The description of how the state implements and monitors priority or service to covered persons is included in the Common Elements of the WIOA State Plan.

G. HOW THE STATE PROVIDES OR INTENDS TO PROVIDE AND MEASURE, THROUGH BOTH THE DVOP AND AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF:

1. JOB AND JOB TRAINING INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES,

Per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

2. EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT SERVICES, AND

Per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

3. JOB-DRIVEN TRAINING AND SUBSEQUENT PLACEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS;

Per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

H. THE HIRE DATE ALONG WITH MANDATORY TRAINING COMPLETION DATES FOR ALL DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF; AND

- Per VPL 01-22 a response to this section is not required.

I. SUCH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE.

- JVSG Performance Measures:
- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit: 38.8%
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit: 38.0%
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit: 6,043

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)

(OMB Control No. 1205-0040)

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.)

Governor Murphy's vision of a stronger and fairer New Jersey reflects the administration's obligation to all the state's residents, including a clear commitment to advancing our work to support older workers in obtaining employment and achieving self-sufficiency. The state's increased focus on using data to inform investments and emerging strategies to work more collaboratively with employers to support and amplify this goal. The chart below projects industries in New Jersey that may provide potential employment opportunities for older workers.

Industry	Total Workers	Workers 55 and Over	Percent Age 55 and Over
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	10,634	3,428	32.2%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1,403	471	33.6%
Utilities	14,586	4,381	30.0%
Construction	153,002	41,547	27.2%
Manufacturing	241,759	81,669	33.8%
Wholesale Trade	201,971	62,111	30.8%
Retail Trade	408,230	98,395	24.1%
Transportation and Warehousing	205,337	49,460	24.1%
Information	71,098	17,585	24.7%
Finance and Insurance	182,587	49,584	27.2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	54,867	18,197	33.2%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	303,503	77,824	25.6%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	86,140	22,399	26.0%
Admin Support + Waste Management + Remediation Services	264,895	71,302	26.9%
Educational Services	79,209	20,888	26.4%
Health Care and Social Assistance	558,689	157,142	28.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	44,131	9,145	20.7%
Accommodation and Food Services	230,906	44,846	19.4%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	108,926	31,923	29.3%
Total Employment	3,221,873	862,296	26.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Local Employment Dynamics Quarterly Workforce Indicators, average of Q1, 2021 (most recent data) + 3 prior quarters (Private Ownership).

To focus its work with older workers, SCSEP intends to target employers in the following four (4) industries to increase training and unsubsidized employment opportunities for seniors:

Health Care Industry

- Contributed over \$44 billion to New Jersey 's Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
- in 2020, roughly 8.2percent of all state output;
- Added234,200 new jobs (from 1990 through 2020) while all other private sector employment had a net gain of 211,400;
- Projected from 2018 through 2028 to add more than 64,860 jobs, an annual increase of 1.2 percent; and
- Paid nearly \$30.3 billion in total wages in 2020, or about 12.8 percent of all wages paid statewide.

Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics

- Jobs totaled 401,000 in 2020, or 12.5percent of all jobs statewide and higher percentage than the nation, 9.5percent;
- Contributed more than \$62.5billion to the state’s Real Gross Domestic Product in 2020; and
- Paid \$30.2 billion in total wages in 2020, or 12.7percent of the state total.

Leisure and Hospitality

- Jobs totaled 281,800 in 2020, or 8.8percent of all jobs statewide;
- Paid \$8billion in total wages in 2020, or 3.4 percent of the state total. The average annual wage for the industry in 2020 was \$28,640;
- Jobs in Leisure and Hospitality are projected to grow by 49,400 from 2018 to 2028. Job growth is faster than that projected for the state overall (12.7 percent all industries of wages statewide); and
- Concentrated in three counties: Bergen, Atlantic and Monmouth. Middlesex and Essex ranked fourth and fifth respectively.

Retail

- Jobs totaled 405,800in 2018, or 12.7percent of jobs statewide;
- Paid \$16.2 billion in wages during 2020, or 6.8 percent of the state total. The average annual wage for the industry in 2020was \$39,800; and
- The retail segment industry that posted the largest employment gain from 2010 to 2020 was also the fastest-growing industry within retail in the state; non-store retailers (=4200 jobs or 34.7 percent). fastest-growing industry within retail was non-store retailers (43.5 percent). The significant gain could be partly attributed to an increase in online shopping and the influx of warehouses and fulfillment centers.

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 New Jersey’s emerging Industry Partnerships. Through these partnerships, seniors will have greater access to the training they need to acquire gainful and satisfying employment.

To further augment these efforts, 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))

SCSEP will continue to work with One-Stop Career Centers to ensure seniors have access to full portfolio of services available to them, as well as to the most current information about employment opportunities and related skill requirements.

The charts below reflect projected employment opportunities in New Jersey through 2026. It should be noted that the state’s emerging Industry Partnerships initiative, is anticipated to generate r opportunities and skill requirements that will further inform New Jersey’s work on behalf of and with the state’s seniors.

Occupations Projected to Add the Most Jobs	Employment		Change 2016-2026	
	2016 Actual	2026 Projected	Number	Percent
Total, All Occupations	4,318,450	4,671,200	352,750	8.2
Home Health Aides	42,550	63,500	20,950	49.3
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	120,400	138,300	17,900	14.9
Registered Nurses	87,000	97,700	10,700	12.3
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, (Incl. Fast Food)	49,000	59,600	10,600	21.6
Software Developers, Applications	45,450	55,700	10,250	22.5
Waiters and Waitresses	62,050	70,600	8,550	13.8
Nursing Assistants	59,900	67,150	7,250	12.0
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	69,850	76,450	6,600	9.4
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	26,650	33,050	6,400	24.0
Retail Salespersons	131,600	137,800	6,200	4.7

Occupations Projected to Grow the Fastest	Employment		Change 2016-2026	
	2016 Actual	2026 Projected	Number	Percent
Total, All Occupations	4,318,450	4,671,200	352,750	8.2
Solar Photovoltaic Installers	900	1,850	950	100.3
Home Health Aides	42,550	63,500	20,950	49.3
Tank Car, Truck, and Ship Loaders	650	950	300	42.4
Personal Care Aides	13,400	18,650	5,250	39.3
Mathematicians	250	350	100	35.8
Physician Assistants	2,350	3,150	800	33.0
Massage Therapists	5,500	7,250	1,750	32.3
Nurse Practitioners	5,100	6,700	1,600	30.7
Statisticians	1,100	1,400	300	30.0
Flight Attendants	5,600	7,300	1,700	29.6

SCSEP staff report the following skill profiles for SCSEP participants:

- Low levels of education:** The majority of SCSEP participants have low levels of education. Of all the SCSEP participants, 48 percent have a high school diploma or equivalent and 16 percent have a 9th grade - 11th grade education, making it very difficult for them to obtain unsubsidized employment opportunities in New Jersey's highly skilled job market. Additionally, 40 percent of participants enroll in the SCSEP program after using WIA Title 1 services and failing to find employment.
- Computer illiteracy:** In addition to low levels of education and income below the poverty level, the majority of participants lack computer skills or have very low computer skill levels that were acquired prior to all the advancements made in technology. Increasing computer skills or updating computer skills is necessary to help participants obtain and retain employment.
- Poor employment history and skill gaps:** Most participants have poor employment history and skill gaps from the time they were last employed to the time they seek help from SCSEP to re-enter the workforce. Thus, 96 percent of participants have low employment prospects.
- Homeless or At-Risk for Homelessness:** Most participants do not have stable or suitable housing and are very transient. Thus, making it difficult for them to obtain and retain employment as their home situation is often unstable. Thus, 77 percent of all participants are homeless or at-risk for homelessness.
- Late-onset physical limitations:** Many participants have physical or other health limitations that prohibit or impair their ability to perform physical duties.

- **Cognitive, mental or behavioral health needs:** Participants with more complex mental or behavioral health needs, cognitive impairment or trauma impacted have additional barriers to employment. Additionally, the number of participants impacted by opioids continues to increase.

Most SCSEP participants have some employment experience in service-type fields such as cooking, janitorial, manual labor, daycare, basic clerical and retail experience. In light of this and the above profile, NJ SCSEP will continue to work to:

- Identify available jobs, training, or certifications adequate for seniors;
- Assess participant skills and interests and place them into relevant training;
- Target senior friendly host sites and employers; and
- Promote on-the-job experience (OJEs) with private industries.

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 GRANTEEES 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 (NJDOL) Office of Transitional Workforce Services (OTWS). OTWS is directly responsible for providing seamless and comprehensive services to jobseekers and employers. SCSEP is fully integrated into the One-Stop Career Center System. This integration provides older workers with job placement assistance, vocational counseling, career exploration, and job search support, as well as access to foundational skill development, occupational training and a wealth of supportive services as required to achieve their career aspirations.

B. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEEES 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. SCSEP grantees work with various state and local agencies such as NJ Division of Human Services Office 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, SCSEP grantees continue 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))

SCSEP program staff will continue to strengthen partnerships with community-based, faith-based organizations, community colleges, and government organizations to increase participant access to training, transportation, programs, and services. The program will maintain its strong relationship with One-Stop Career Centers and work to increase participant access to training, transportation (via bus schedules and bus passes), and increase unsubsidized employment opportunities for participants. Moreover, SCSEP will continue to partner with One-Stop Career Centers Veteran Services to co-enroll veterans. Through this partnership, veterans are provided with cross-referrals to training, housing, employment, and other supportive services.

The chart below reflects organizations that have successfully partnered with SCSEP and continue to provide vital services and a wealth of training to participants:

Agency	Services/ Training
Area Agencies on Aging/Aging and Disability Resource Connection	Provide in-home support, home repairs, housekeeping, friendly visits, telephone reassurance, transportation and home delivered and congregate meals.
Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program	Deliver fruits, vegetables and Nutrition Education Training
Food Banks Statewide	Provide food weekly and Safe-Serve Training; Serve as host agency
Dress for Success	Provide clothing, accessories, shoes and Soft-skills Training
Image and Attitude	Provide clothing, accessories, shoes and Soft-skills Training
Housing Authority	Provide Housing and Financial Literacy Training; Serve as host agency and has hired participants
Catholic Charities	Provide emergency housing and furniture vouchers
Libraries	Provide free access to computers and basic computer, social media, and digital literacy training; Serves as host agency and has hired participants
Community Colleges	Provide training classes, counseling services and conference rooms for training + meetings; Serve as host agency and has hired participants
Family Success Centers	Provide computer access and ESL training; Serve as host agency
The Salvation Army and American Red Cross	Disaster Relief and Recovery

For participants with special needs or disabilities, the program will continue to partner with NJDOL's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS). Through this partnership, participants are evaluated and receive supportive services such as dental and medical care, that assists them with achieving employment and self-sufficiency. As a result of this dual enrollment, funding is leveraged so eligibility for supportive services often extends beyond the

durational limit of a single program. Additionally, participants continue to be trained and hired at DVRS.

In New Jersey, SCSEP will continue to strengthen its partnership with new and existing national grantees to ensure the equitable distribution of slots statewide. Quarterly meetings will continue to be held in which grantees will address and resolve issues regarding equitable distribution. Through continued review of slot distribution, SCSEP grantees will determine if moving slots between counties is necessary and leverage resources to ensure participants are serviced statewide.

D. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER LABOR MARKET AND JOB TRAINING INITIATIVES. (20 CFR 641.302(J))

SCSEP coordinates with other programs, initiatives and entities within NJDOL in an ongoing effort to train and increase employment opportunities for participants. Specifically, program staff works 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 staff will work with Industry Partnerships to ensure seniors have access to the fullest range of training and employment opportunities possible.

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 continues to be integrated within the One-Stop system. As such, participants receive the full range of services offered through that system, including training, supportive services, and job placement. In our commitment to continuous improvement, the Program Manager and staff are focused on collaborating with the One-Stop system to increase:

- Participant referrals to literacy labs, training, job clubs and supportive services;
- Access to basic skills training via county colleges and libraries;
- Senior access to occupational training developed out of the state's Industry Partnerships;
- Employment opportunities for participants via linkages with One-Stop job orders and job fairs ; and
- Referrals to supportive services such as housing, medical services, and safety services, via County Offices of Aging.

F. EFFORTS TO WORK WITH LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICES IN RURAL LOCATIONS.

The SCSEP program is integrated into the state's One-Stop system, and partners with the state's Business Representatives, who are located in every county statewide. Business Representatives work closely with economic development partners in both urban and rural areas, and with Chambers of Commerce and other business associations, to promote NJDOL programs. Thus, Business Representatives help market the SCSEP program to the business community in rural locations and statewide.

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.)

Through Industry Partnerships and myriad other efforts, SCSEP anticipates increasing its unsubsidized employment rate for seniors. Starting with labor market information, and augmented by intelligence gained through Industry Partnerships and other work with New Jersey’s employers and growth industry sectors, Business Representatives will be better equipped to actively solicit job openings that are appropriate for older workers and better focus their promotion of the SCSEP program, and program participants, to individual employers, economic development partners, Chambers of Commerce, business associations, and other appropriate groups 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 as well as 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 underserved or under-represented. During PY 2019, 77.2percent of those served by SCSEP were minorities, while the percent of minorities overall in New Jersey was 57.1percent. The percent difference of SCSEP minorities served, compared to the census percent in NJ was 135.2 percent.

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 the Puerto Rican Community for Progress, Hispanic Family Centers, and Family Success Centers. These organizations provide help with outreach to minority, older worker populations. SCSEP staff will analyze statistics from individual minority populations to identify areas that may be underserved or under-represented. Additionally, the program’s marketing materials and NJDOL’s website have 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)

New Jersey seniors must deal with the high cost of living, economic insecurity and often health issues. The following state agencies and partners listed in the chart below collaborate with SCSEP to provide on-going community programs and services that are vital to New Jersey seniors statewide:

SCSEP COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS	COUNTIES WHERE SERVICES MOST NEEDED	NJ PARTNER AGENCIES THAT PROVIDE SERVICE(S)
Quality Health Care &	Atlantic, Bergen, Cumber	NJ Department of Human Services/Division of Aging Services, Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD),

SCSEP COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS	COUNTIES WHERE SERVICES MOST NEEDED	NJ PARTNER AGENCIES THAT PROVIDE SERVICE(S)
Supportive Services such as long-term care, prescription drug programs, rehabilitation services, disease prevention education)	land, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex and Union	http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/doas/home/ap2.html
Mental Health	Atlantic, Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex and Union	NJ Department of Human Services, Mental Health, http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/clients/mental/
Disability Awareness & Treatment	Atlantic, Bergen, Camden, Hudson, Middlesex and Union	NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, http://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/plan/foryou/disable/vocational_rehabilitation_services.shtml
Housing Assistance	Bergen, Camden, Cumberland, Cape	NJ Housing Resource Center, http://www.njhrc.gov/

SCSEP COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS	COUNTIES WHERE SERVICES MOST NEEDED	NJ PARTNER AGENCIES THAT PROVIDE SERVICE(S)
	May, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, and Union	
Utility Assistance Programs	Atlantic, Bergen, Camden, Cumberland, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth and Union	Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), https://www.payingforseniorcare.com/longtermcare/resources/liheap_financial_aid.html
Transportation	Atlantic, Bergen, Camden, Cape May, Gloucester, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth and Union	NJ Find a Ride, https://www.nj211.org/resource-search/taxonomy/BT-4500.6500-800
Financial Literacy	Atlantic, Bergen, Camden, Cumberland, Hudson,	NJ Organizations Promoting Financial Literacy, https://www.nj211.org/financial-literacy-leads-to-empowerment

SCSEP COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS	COUNTIES WHERE SERVICES MOST NEEDED	NJ PARTNER AGENCIES THAT PROVIDE SERVICE(S)
	Middlesex and Union	
Food Banks/ Farm Fresh Foods/ Nutritional Education	Atlantic, Bergen, Camden, Cumberland, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Middlesex and Union	NJ Department of Health, Senior Nutrition, http://www.nj.gov/health/fhs/wic/senior-nutrition/senior-farmers/
Consumer Fraud & Protection Services (identity theft)	Atlantic, Cumberland and Hudson	NJ Consumer Affairs, Senior Protection Program, http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/News/Brochures/Senior-Fraud-Education-and-Protection-Program-Fedup-Handbook.pdf
Computer and Career Connections Training	Atlantic, Bergen, Camden, Cumberland, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Sussex and Union	NJ State Libraries, https://www.njstatelib.org/services_for_libraries/consulting_services/business-technology-services/workforce-development/

SCSEP COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS	COUNTIES WHERE SERVICES MOST NEEDED	NJ PARTNER AGENCIES THAT PROVIDE SERVICE(S)
Literary, Occupational and Vocational Training, Job Preparation and Readiness Skills	Atlantic, Bergen, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Sussex, and Union	NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, One-Stop Career Centers, http://nj.gov/labor/programs/workforce_programs_index.html
NJ Services for Seniors Website	All Counties	Web-site which lists all Senior Services, https://www.care.com/c/stories/5868/new-jersey-transportation-resources/

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 GRANTEEES 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))

Skilled program staff will continue to provide quality services to older workers. SCSEP is successfully integrated into the One-Stop delivery system and has a positive reputation with the employers, who have reported high satisfaction with SCSEP participants who have entered employment. NJDOL's long-term strategy is to continue to this work trajectory, to ensure a continuation of 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))

In an effort to improve the delivery of services and increase unsubsidized employment opportunities for participants, SCSEP continues to:

- Strengthen participant assessments, and IEPs;
- Help participants identify and obtain realistic employment goals;
- Identify participant training needs;
- Enroll participants in occupational and in-demand training;
- Provide participant referrals to supportive services to assist with job readiness;
- Recruit new host agencies to improve occupational skills training and job coaching; and
- Increase unsubsidized employment opportunities via employer outreach.

Host agencies are recruited and closely monitored to ensure participants receive strong work-based training opportunities and job coaching from supervisors. This ensures participants receive diverse learning experiences and are given training to further enhance sustainable employment. Additionally, host agencies that have the ability to provide specialized training and hire participants are targeted.

SCSEP utilizes the following strategies to help participants successfully transition into unsubsidized employment:

- Identify demand occupations, skills and target employers that are receptive to hiring older workers;
- Provide participants with job fair information and referrals;
- Recruit host agencies that have the ability to hire participants;
- Utilize business intelligence gained from New Jersey's Industry Partnerships to strengthen training and employment opportunities;
- Market SCSEP and the benefits of hiring older workers to the employer community; and
- Utilize On-the-Job Experience (OJE) and On-the-Job Training (OJT) to provide incentives to employers to hire participants;

Program staff will continue to strengthen its collaboration with DOL's workforce development system (Business Services, Industry Partnerships, 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 continued 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.

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019 estimates S0101

Prepared by: NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Bureau of Labor Market Information, February 2022

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.

NJDOL operates the SCSEP program in the following counties:

County Served	Authorized Positions PY 2020	Authorized Positions PY 2021	Difference
Atlantic	31	31	0
Camden	13	13	0
Cape May	10	10	0
Cumberland	21	21	0
Essex	39	39	0
Gloucester	9	9	0
Hudson	47	48	1
Middlesex	19	19	0

County Served	Authorized Positions PY 2020	Authorized Positions PY 2021	Difference
Monmouth	13	13	0
Sussex	8	8	0
Union	23	23	0
TOTAL	233	234	0

There was only one change (Hudson County +1) in Authorized Positions PY 2020 - PY 2021. However, there was a significant decrease in Modified Positions due to the increase of New Jersey's minimum wage. Due to New Jersey's yearly increase of its minimum wage, program slots continue to decrease.

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. In the event over-enrollment occurs, staff will increase employer outreach efforts, utilize business intelligence gained from NJ Industry Partnerships, and collaborate with Business Representatives to increase training and employment opportunities for participants. Additionally, On-the-Job Experience (OJE) funding will be utilized as an incentive for employers to hire participants.

Program staff will:

- 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;
- Utilize business intelligence gained from NJ Industry Partnerships
- Partner with Business Representatives to increase training and employment opportunities for participants;
- Recruit host agencies that will provide diversified training and employment opportunities for participants; and
- Improve participant access to One-Stop programs and services.

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.

The Program Manager will continue to work closely with all SCSEP National Grantees (listed below) to ensure the equitable distribution of slots statewide. Meetings and conference calls will be held to provide an opportunity for any issues surrounding equitable distribution to be cooperatively resolved between both State and national grantees. Through continued review of slot distribution, New Jersey grantees will determine if moving slots is necessary.

Current SCSEP National Grants are:

- Easterseals
- National Council on Aging
- National Urban League

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. SCSEP grantees will continue to work collectively to ensure participants are served equitably in rural and urban areas statewide.

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 65 years of age or older;
- Have a disability;
- Have limited English proficiency or low literacy skills;
- Reside in a rural area;
- Are veterans (or, spouses of veterans);
- Have low employment prospects;
- Have failed to find employment after using services provided through the One-Stop delivery system; and/or
- 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 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	Resident Population, July 2018 NJ Total Population Estimate	Residents 55+, July 2018 NJ Population 55+
Atlantic	266,105	86,017
Bergen	930,390	288,810
Burlington	445,702	138,399
Camden	506,738	145,737
Cape May	93,086	39,662
Cumberland	151,906	41,150
Essex	795,404	203,438
Gloucester	291,165	85,930
Hudson	670,046	149,794
Hunterdon	124,823	43,816
Mercer	367,922	103,044
Middlesex	825,920	228,172
Monmouth	621,659	202,946
Morris	493,379	154,115
Ocean	596,415	213,450
Passaic	503,637	135,043
Salem	62,990	20,815
Somerset	329,838	98,295
Sussex	141,483	47,257
Union	554,033	149,898
Warren	105,862	35,412
Statewide Total	8,878,503	2,611,200

Source:, US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019 5-year estimates S0101

Prepared by: NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development Office of Research and Information, Bureau of Labor Market Information, February 2022

6. THE RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO:

A. RESIDE IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS WITHIN THE STATE

New Jersey counties/cities that have the greatest economic need, minority populations, limited English proficiency, and the greatest social needs are:

- Atlantic
- Cape May
- Cumberland
- Hudson
- Essex (Newark)
- Camden (City)

New Jersey is one of the most diverse states in the nation across all generations. According to the 2010 Census there is a small number of New Jersey counties are rural. The following counties have small rural populations/cities: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Ocean. Thus, most New Jersey seniors and participants reside in urban/suburban areas. However, New Jersey SCSEP grantees work with One-Stop Career Centers statewide to provide services to all participants.

B. HAVE THE GREATEST ECONOMIC NEED

The 2010 Census and the Elder Security Index found that in 2017 in order to reach economic security, a single senior needed an annual income ranging from \$27,264 (for homeowners without a mortgage) to \$40,284 (homeowners with a mortgage). For couples, the standard ranged from \$38,376 to \$51,396. The standard for renters was roughly \$1,300 higher than for homeowners without mortgages. With more than 25 percent of seniors relying solely on their Social Security benefit, it is clear many older adults cannot adequately meet their basic living expenses. Census data reveals that between 2006-2010, 7.5 percent of New Jersey residents age 60 years and over had incomes below the poverty level, which is lower than the proportion for the population as a whole. The poverty rates were higher for minority seniors.

C. ARE MINORITIES

Among state residents aged 60 years and over, 42.6 percent are from racial or ethnic minority groups compared to 37.7 percent nationally. According to the 2010 Census, 9.8 percent were non-Hispanic black, 8.5 percent were Hispanic and 5.3 percent were Asian and Pacific Islanders.

D. ARE LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT

Within each of these groups, there is a tremendous diversity among ethnicities and primary languages spoken in the home. Census survey data shows that 22.1 percent of residents age 60 and older spoke a language other than English at home and 13.7 percent reported they spoke English less than very well.

E. HAVE THE GREATEST SOCIAL NEED. (20 CFR 641.325(B))

In the 60 and older age group, 55.9 percent are married and 24.7 percent are widowed. In addition, 40.8 percent are living alone. There is also a significant gender gap among New Jersey older adults. Women account for 56.8 percent of the population age 60 and older, and 68.6 percent of the population age 85 and older.

Approximately 20 percent of the statewide non-institutionalized population age 65 - 74 claimed a disability in 2010. The prevalence increased substantially with age. In the 75+ age group, 48.4 percent of men and 48.9 percent of women had a disability. Thus, service utilization of home and community-based services under NJ Family Care, New Jersey's Medicaid program continue to rise. As of June 2017, over 50,000 individuals were enrolled in Medicaid long term care with approximately 22,000 receiving home and community-based services.

F. FORMERLY INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS, AS DEFINED IN TEGL 17-20

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 ongoing 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 NJDOL Workforce Development Division, under the supervision of the Chief of Transition Services. As of July 1, 2021, DOL's SCSEP staff consist of the following positions:

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 older worker positions funded by the USDOL and administered by state and national 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 Innovation and Opportunity Act*** (WIOA), the Re-Authorized Older Americans Act, Senior Community Service Employment Program Final Rule and Economic Stimulus Legislation.

Program Coordinator

- Assist Program Manager with monitoring performance goals, program compliance and reporting requirements;
- Assist program staff with developing OJE contracts and employer relations;
- Monitors SPARQ and payroll to ensure accuracy of data and reports.
- Provides technical assistance with program operations to ensure compliance.

Payroll Administrator

- 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;
- Tracks program forms such as intakes, and
- Responds to all participant payroll inquiries.
- Logs and records participant community service hours in SPARQ.

SPARQ Administrator

- Collects and data enters participant intakes, community service assignments, and employer information into the SCSEP data collection;
- Logs payroll rosters and enters participant payroll and training hours;
- Verifies participant employment retention; and
- Assists with calculating community service hours.

Regional Coordinator

- Oversees and aids participant staff in assigned counties;
- Ensures timely development of participant IEPs and re-certifications;
 - Develops participant employment goals and action plan;
 - Documents participant case notes and supportive services;
 - Develops participant IEP's, employment goals and action plan;
 - Maintains participant case notes and document supportive services and referrals;
 - Establishes partnerships with host agency supervisors and develops training;
 - 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 program performance goals are met.

Job Developer/Coach

- Supports participants in job search, placement and retention;
- Establishes and maintains working relationships with employers, industry organizations, and public agencies;
- Sources job openings and secures employment and vocational training opportunities for participants; and
- Works directly with Regional Employment Coordinator to review participant IEP's to match participants with employment based on their barriers, work experience, education and skills.

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;

DOL 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 and at month staff meetings. Additionally, staff is trained on the USDOL database (SPARQ and GPMS). Through the utilization of the Community of Practice, staff learns about SCSEP best practices.

(D) describe how projects will be monitored for program and financial compliance, including audit plans; and

The Program Manager will work with NJDOL Budget and Accounting to provide oversight and ensure program compliance. The Division of Budget and Accounting is 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 NJDOL'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, NJDOL administers the SCSEP 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 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 and faith-based organizations to recruit participants.

In selecting eligible individuals for SCSEP participation, priority is given to individuals who have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Are 65years 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; and/or
- Are homeless or are at risk of homelessness; or
- Are formerly incarcerated or on supervision from release from prison or jail within five years of the date of initial eligibility determination.

Recruitment efforts are ongoing in order to maintain full enrollment throughout the year. New Jersey markets the SCSEP program through participant recruitment posters and pamphlets, senior citizen newsletters, radio and television interviews, announcements and presentations. These tools are widely used; however, targeted outreach is focused in One-Stop Career Centers and through other partners such as state and county agencies (including vocation rehabilitation, welfare offices, veterans' programs, local offices on aging) and community and faith-based organizations.

(3) Income Eligibility: describe how participant income will be recertified each year, including where eligibility records will be maintained.

All SCSEP participant income is recertified annually in March. Participants are notified 30 days prior to the date of recertification. A recertification package is completed by the Regional Employment Coordinator with proof of income documentation. The participant is offered an annual physical assessment if eligible to continue in the program. All paperwork is reviewed and approved by Regional Employment Coordinators and central staff. Eligibility records and documents is maintained only in the Trenton central office to protect participants' personal identification information (PII).

(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 Coordinator. 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 Participant Bill of Rights and attendance policy;
- NJ Division Civil Rights, Lipman Bill, and Hatch Act; and
- 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 Participant Bill of Rights and attendance policy;
- NJ Division Civil Rights, Lipman Bill, and Hatch Act; and
- 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.

DOL strictly adheres to the 48-month durational limit policy and does not grant exceptions to extend the timeframe for participation in the SCSEP 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 ongoing 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 to employment;
- Training needs;
- Specialized skill development needs;
- Education needs; and
- 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. Their employment interests and goals are evaluated during the initial enrollment process.

Participants are assigned to community service based on their initial assessment, former work experience, training and IEP. Participants are recertified at least once annually to ensure they meet income eligibility and ensure their waiver factors.

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;

Since PY 2015, the program has utilized participants as staffers to assist with recruitment and enrollment activities. Participant staffers work no more than 25 hours a week. Regional Employment Coordinators ensure participant staffers receive on-the-job and classroom training as indicated in their IEPs 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); and
- Community-Based Organizations (Puerto Rican Action Committee – PRAC)

The host site provides the SCSEP 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 oversees 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

The USDOL Office of Apprenticeship is responsible for all Registered Apprenticeships in New Jersey. NJDOL works closely with USDOL to support pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship program expansion. Many of the local Workforce Development Boards and One-Stop Career Centers work with these programs to assist in identifying qualified candidates. For some programs, the local areas have become part of the recruitment process, as with the New Jersey Locals of the Carpenters Union - Sisters in the Brotherhood (SIB) program. New Jersey is expanding these successful models into other occupational areas by continuing to build high quality partnerships that meet the needs of employers in growth and non-traditional industries, and older workers will be connected to these programs through the One-Stop Career Centers as appropriate.

(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 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;
 - DOL's job board with contains over 16,000 job 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 is 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 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, or larceny. 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 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 and render 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, DOL, through the Director, Transition Services 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**

SCSEP Performance Measure PY 2019	GOAL
Service Level	122.9%
Community Service	74.1 %
Service to Most in Need	2.90%
CM Employment Rate - 2nd Quarter	55.5%
CM Employment Rate - 4th Quarter	35.3%
CM Median Earnings	\$4,025
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	85.8%
Effectiveness in Serving Participants	82.3%
Effectiveness in Serving Host Agencies	81.9%

(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, NJDOL will request additional administrative funding on an as-needed basis.

SCSEP 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 provided 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.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR APPENDIX

ALL WIOA CORE PROGRAMS

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each state must submit expected levels of performance for the first two years of its Combined State Plan as described in 20 CFR § 677.170(a) and 34 CFR § 361.170(a) and § 463.170(a). After the Unified or Combined State Plan submission, the state must negotiate and reach agreement with the respective Federal agency on the negotiated levels of performance for each of the core programs under WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv).

Note to the public: The following are expected performance levels for Program Years 2022 and 2023 as of April 5, 2022. Expected levels are developed based on past performance; as performance data continues to come in for the current Program Year, the expected levels below may be adjusted prior to final submission of this Plan.

Expected Levels of Performance

WIOA Title I Adult Program

Primary Indicator of Performance	PY 2022	PY 2022	PY 2023	PY 2023
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	61.0%		62.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	60.8%		61.8%	
Median Earnings	\$5,046		\$5,146	
Credential Attainment Rate	60.3%		61.3%	
Measurable Skill Gains	51.3%		52.3%	

WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program

Primary Indicator of Performance	PY 2022	PY 2022	PY 2023	PY 2023
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	61.4%		62.4%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	61.2%		62.2%	
Median Earnings	\$7,192		\$7,292	
Credential Attainment Rate	64.1%		65.1%	
Measurable Skill Gains	53.1%		54.1%	

WIOA Title I Youth Program

Primary Indicator of Performance	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	61.4%		62.4%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	58.2%		59.2%	
Median Earnings	\$1,824		\$1,924	
Credential Attainment Rate	52.7%		53.7%	
Measurable Skill Gains	60.9%		61.9%	

WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Program

Primary Indicator of Performance	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	47.9%		48.9%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	47.4%		48.4%	
Median Earnings	\$5,501		\$5,601	
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable		Not Applicable	
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable		Not Applicable	

NJ Title II Negotiated Performance Indicators Table

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	44.0%		46.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	43.0%		45.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$4800		\$4900	
Credential Attainment Rate	36.0%		37.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	50.1%		51.5%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹ "Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

Title IV Performance

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	44.0%		46.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	40.0%		43.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,300.00		\$5,500.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	30.0%		31.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	35.0%		36.0%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹ "Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

All WIOA Core Programs

Primary Indicator of Performance	Expected Levels of Performance - PY 2022	Expected Levels of Performance - PY 2023
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

The Departments of Labor and Education determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2022 and PY 2023. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2022 and PY 2023 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans and for PY 2020-2021.

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Additional Indicators of Performance

Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I and WIOA Title II

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

With regard to these measures WIOA for Titles I and II, the state continues to collect baseline data in an effort to examine yearly changes and make comparisons across program years. For WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) customers, NJDOL needs to initiate talks with NJ Department of Human Services (NJ DHS) to explore ways for further data collection in support of performance measurement, either through NJ DHS joining the state longitudinal data system or through a bilateral data sharing agreement.

OTHER APPENDICES

REENTRY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

Governor Murphy’s commitment to a stronger and fairer New Jersey is reflected in the priorities of NJDOL, including providing a full suite of employment services to returning citizens. This section describes the state’s efforts to build on its past work coordinating services for justice-

involved individuals to connect them to employment and help them along the pathway to a rewarding career.

Currently, there are about 215,000 justice-involved individuals statewide, including approximately 20,000 inmates in prison, 15,000 inmates in jail, 15,000 paroles, 15,000 in Drug Court, and 150,000 on probation. This number does not reflect the number of job seekers who are no longer justice-involved but do have a conviction that would preclude them from certain jobs. While this section of the 2020 WIOA Combined Plan focuses on strategies to serve those currently involved in the justice system, it should be noted the Governor and his administration are actively promoting initiatives to support record expungement and the amelioration of other barriers to employment, and the state's One-Stops help individuals with this barrier as part of the normal course of business on a daily basis.

Pre-Release Services

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 state correctional system so that work readiness services can be implemented prior to release. This approach supports a seamless transition to community-based One-Stop Career Center services and then into employment.

The 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; and
- Life skills and employability skill development to prepare students to gain employment.

NJDOL Office of Adult Literacy Services utilizes 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 and anticipates a 2020 NGO release and a July 1, 2020 program start for all selected NJ Title II providers. Grantees that receive funds to provide programs and services to correctional facilities 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.

NJDOL, through its Reentry Specialists (described below), works with the Department of Corrections and their newly created Providing Access to Community Employment (PACE) program to facilitate transition of incarcerated individuals into society and employment. The PACE program is currently at the following facilities:

- Bayside State Prison

- Edna Mahan Correctional Facility
- Mountainview Youth Correctional Facility
- Northern State Prison
- Southern State Correctional Facility
- South Woods State Prison

Currently, NJDOL is working with the PACE staff at the statewide level to develop a workflow model of collaboration between the PACE employment specialists and the One-Stop Reentry Specialists to assist in a seamless transition from incarceration to employment. Additionally, NJDOL will be assisting DOC with upcoming employer jobs fairs held at correctional facilities.

In FY 2018 NJDOL funded a “behind-the-walls” pre-apprenticeship program in the building and construction trades at Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women.

Further, NJDOL is a participant in a monthly workgroup, the Vocational Training Planning Board, which is addressing employment and training services for inmates in the State Penal system. Representatives include:

- NJ Department of Corrections
- NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL)
- NJ Department of Education
- NJ State Building and Construction Trades Council
- NJ Business & Industry Association
- NJ Council of County Vocational-Technical Schools
- Three public members

The goal of the Planning Board is to establish a pilot program within one of the Department of Corrections facilities in vocational trades. A report is to be filed annually with the Governor and the Legislature. The objectives of the planning board are to improve upon the facility's most successful vocational programming offerings; introduce new vocational programming offerings to inmates of the facility; and provide vocational programming which is consistent with actual post-release employment opportunities and reflects the State's emerging industry and business workforce needs.

It should also be noted that NJDOL is required to evaluate the relevance of vocational training services in the Department of Corrections to ensure that training services are in job demand occupations. The evaluation of vocational training services is to be accomplished on a semi-annual basis.

Post-Release Services

New Jersey's one-year recidivism rate is approximately 31 percent, far lower than the estimated national average of 44 percent as reported by the USDJ Bureau of Justice Statistics (see <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/18upr9yfup0514.pdf>). With the state's expansion of efforts to assist ex-offenders to return to work, we hope to lower that rate even further for the benefit of those who have served their time, their families, their communities, and the state as a whole.

To assist parolees in re-entering society following incarceration, NJDOL entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Jersey State Parole Board (SPB) to set forth their responsibilities for a collaborative reentry program, the Parolee Employment Placement Program (PEPP). NJDOL has allocated \$2.0 million for the period of July 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020. PEPP provides employment assistance and case management services to men and women under supervision of the State Parole Board.

Utilizing performance-based contracts, NJDOL provides grants for direct services to PEPP program enrollees to three community-based agencies. Grantee deliverables and fee-for-service schedule follow:

- Assessment/Job Coaching/Case Management - \$600 per participant
- Job Placement with 30-day employment retention - \$900 per participant
- 60-day retention - \$700 per participant
- 90-day retention - \$700 per participant
- 150-day retention - \$1,100 per participant
- Maximum payment for participant who completes all deliverables is \$4,000

Agency Roles

- Regional Parole Offices
 - Identification of eligible parolees and referral to designated grantees
 - Monitor the progress and attendance of all program participants
- Grantees
 - Coordinate case management services for parolees enrolled in the program
 - Placement of the program participants into sustainable employment
 - Case management of all program participants
 - Referral of program participants to the One-Stop Career Center for employment registration
 - Employment verification for all program participants who secure employment
- One-Stop Career Centers
 - Registration of all PEPP trainees in AOSOS
 - Assignment of PEPP, Parole, Legal and Wagner-Peyser identifiers in AOSOS Programs and Public Assistance drop-down screen
 - Delivery of appropriate labor exchange and employability development services per needs of registrant
 - Federal Bonding and WOTC certification, when appropriate
 - Linkage with special population's service staff (Veterans Services, WorkFirst New Jersey, Vocational Rehabilitation, etc.)

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 WIOA staff. Justice-involved populations often have significant barriers to employment that require more intensive services to attain employment goals. These barriers may 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 better address the challenges experienced by this population, New Jersey has created targeted programs with a dedicated Reentry Specialist on staff at each One-Stop Career Center.

- Some Reentry Specialists have obtained the Offender Employment Specialist Certification and/or Offender Specialist training. The Offender Employment Specialist Certification offered through the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) is being revised for release after July 2020; we plan to offer additional staff the opportunity to obtain this credential after July. Online courses are also available the NIC and staff members are encouraged to participate.
- Many Reentry Specialists have completed Mental Health First Aid Training, a program implemented at NJDOL to provide our One-Stop staff, especially those working with customers with multiple barriers, with additional tools for assisting customers. Mental Health First Aid is a course that builds learner competency to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The training gives participants the skills needed to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis.
- Reentry Specialists have also attended Reentry Simulation Training. During the simulation, participants assumed the identity of an offender reentering society. Participants had an hour to experience various scenarios such as obtaining a driver's license, visiting social services, finding housing, and visiting their parole officer. At the end, the participants' performance was evaluated to see if they had met enough goals to remain out of jail. The simulation showed the frustration and hopelessness many individuals reentering society face and offered ways to better support them to create safer communities and lower recidivism rates.

To assist in identifying this population, NJ created a "Legal" tab on AOSOS to track the number of ex-offenders/justice-involved individuals that we serve. NJDOL is also working with our reentry partners to ensure that individuals leaving the prisons and jails and those participating in the Drug Court Program and/or on probation are aware of the services offered at the One-Stops.

To further break the cycle of recidivism, NJDOL, along with the State Parole Board, is a partner with the New Jersey State Library in their \$628,774 National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Fresh Start @ Your Library. Six libraries (Atlantic City Free Public Library, Cumberland County Library, Long Branch Free Public Library, Newark Public Library, Trenton Free Public Library, and the Paterson Free Public Library) will serve as Reconnection Centers which will provide on-site social workers and referrals. The One-Stop Career Centers provide in-kind resources of education and training. A Fresh Start referral indicator has been added to AOSOS.

NJDOL is actively working with the State Parole Board to support and re-invigorate the local Reentry Task Forces. The goal of these task forces is to develop partnerships with all levels of government, local employers, churches and charities, county colleges and trade schools, housing facilities, and the community at large to actively assist post-incarceration individuals with the entire reintegration process, thereby decreasing recidivism and maintaining public safety. In an effort to promote safe and healthy communities, these task forces seek to support current collaborative efforts in New Jersey that are focused on crime prevention and prisoner reentry by:

- Creating a forum for the exchange of ideas and initiatives that will strengthen neighborhoods and help prevent crime;
- Identifying collaborative reentry efforts already present in the community, and developing working relationships to achieve common goals;
- Encouraging broad-based community support and involvement to assist formerly incarcerated individuals and their families striving to re-establish healthy, productive and rewarding lives.

In addition to our partnerships with the Department of Corrections, the State Parole Board and the State Library and Drug Courts, NJDOL also partners with Probation and has begun to hold joint employment specialist meetings on a regular basis. A presentation about emergency housing was a featured presentation at our first meeting.

NJDOL will continue to utilize the Federal Bonding Program to provide fidelity bonds to increase employment opportunities for justice-involved jobseekers, as well as to all other populations eligible under federal guidelines. Through this program, employers that hire justice-involved individuals may obtain up to \$25,000 of insurance for a period of 6 months. New Jersey is a nation leader in the utilization of this valuable resource. NJDOL has implemented a "Certification of Eligibility" for jobseekers, have provide literature and training to employers, agencies and jobseekers, and participate in job fairs as well as employer informational sessions. Additionally, NJDOL will continue to promote on-the-job training (OJT) and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) to improve employment outcomes for justice-involved individuals.

APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

The comments summarized below were received during the public comment period for the New Jersey Combined State Plan, held from February 27 through March 8, 2020.

Comment #2020-01

Topic: Services to Individuals with Disabilities

Summary:

- Raised a question about individuals with undiagnosed mental and physical disabilities and made suggestions regarding ways that services to individuals with disabilities might be enhanced.

Disposition: Referred to NJDOL Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS).

Comment #2020-02

Topic: Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

Summary:

- Recommended NJDOL allow all out of school youth 16 or older who earn their high school diploma or equivalent to access an ITA. The current policy, as documented on page 141 of the draft Combined State Plan, is to allow out of school youth 18 or older to access an ITA.
- Related to New Jersey’s development of revised guidance relating to ITA funding caps, the commenter welcomed the change from a hard cap to an average amount available model. However, it was noted that “average amount” requires clarification.

Disposition: Referred to the NJDOL Workforce Development - Division of Career Services.

Comment #2020-03

Topic: Apprenticeship

Summary: Complimentary of the State’s focus on growing apprenticeship opportunities and, in particular, the GAINS grants, of which the commenter is a recipient. Shared enrollment and design progress to date and reported the projected demand for over 12,000 new automotive technicians by 2026.

Disposition: Referred to the NJDOL Office of Apprenticeship.

Comment #2020-04

Topic: Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

Summary: Recommendations focused on enhancements to the SCSEP section of the Combined State Plan:

- Adding successful organizational partnerships in Union, Middlesex, Hudson, and Bergen Counties;
- Including additional demographic data for the four counties listed above; and
- A correction to an organization name in the Combined State Plan.

Disposition: Referred to NJDOL Workforce Development–SCSEP. Updates were made to the language in the SCSEP portion (Section VII) of the Combined State Plan as appropriate.

Comment #2020-05

Topic: Contributions of Libraries to Vocational Rehabilitation and SCSEP Programs

Summary: The recommendations focused on enhancing the Combined State Plan language to more fully and accurately reflect the role of the New Jersey State Library (NJSL) and the role that NJSL Talking Book & Braille Center programs play in helping New Jersey residents reach their career goals.

Disposition: Referred to NJDHS Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) and NJDOL Workforce Development–SCSEP. Updates were made to the Combined State Plan language as appropriate, including a correction to the NJSL link.

Comment #2020-06

Topic: Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities

Summary: Addressed the need for effective career pathways for individuals with disabilities. Included recommendations for expanding employment opportunities for these individuals.

Disposition: Referred to NJDOL DVRS and NJDHS CBVI.

Topic: Direct Care Workers for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD)

Summary: Addressed the shortage of I/DD direct care workers. Included recommendations for expanding programs to train such workers.

Disposition: Referred to NJDOL DVRS and NJDHS CBVI.

Topic: Certifications for Individuals with Disabilities

Summary: Noted in-demand certificates that could improve career outcomes for individuals with disabilities; expressed interest in seeing more outcome data for these programs available on New Jersey's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) website.

Disposition: Referred to NJDOL Office of Research and Information.

Topic: Tax Credits

Summary: Related to the \$10M annual tax credits offered to employers of individuals with disabilities to the extent they are impacted by the increases in the New Jersey's minimum wage. Expressed concern that the Employer Tax Credit Certification form for 2019 does not require evidence of the employee's impairment(s).

Disposition: Referred to NJDOL Office of Income Security.

Topic: Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

Summary: Indicated that there is an underutilization of Pre-ETS in New Jersey and attributes this in part to the absence of a fully executed Pre-ETS Memorandum of Understanding among NJDOL DVRS, NJDHS CBVI, and NJDOE Office of Special Education. Further, the comment includes several observations/recommendations to inform the development and success of the Pre-ETS program moving forward.

Disposition: Referred to NJDOL DVRS and NJDHS CBVI.

Topic: Vocational Rehabilitation/Workforce Development Collaboration

Summary: Recommended several strategies to strengthen services to individuals with disabilities through the work-based learning and pre-apprenticeship models that are outlined in the Combined State Plan.

Disposition: Referred to NJDOL DVRS and NJDHS CBVI.

The draft modification is currently posted on the SETC website and available for comment. following the comment period, an update including the comments shall be provided, shared as appropriate with partners and summarized for the State Workforce Board.

APPENDIX 3: NJ WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

NJ workforce development policies are posted at: <http://njsetc.net/njsetc/policy/resolutions/>.

The following is a list of policies included in this appendix.

- **SETC #2015-01:** Local Workforce Development Board Member Appointments and Process
- **SETC #2015-02:** New Jersey Local Area Designations
- **SETC #2015-03:** New Jersey Out-of-School Youth Definition and Youth Work Experience Definition
- **SETC #2015-04:** New Jersey Regional Designations
- **SETC #2015-06:** SCALES Policy Recommendations: Adult Basic Education – WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
- **SETC #2016-02:** New Jersey Subsequent Local Area Designation
- **SETC #2016-03:** New Jersey Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Programs Budget and Local Workforce Development Board (WDB) Budget and Staffing Requirements
- **SETC #2016-05:** College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education
- **SETC #2016-06:** New Jersey’s Definition for Employment First
- **SETC #2016-07:** *Employment First* Career Pathways Framework
- **SETC #2016-08:** 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)
- **SETC #2016-09:** SETC Approval of New Jersey Initial Local Area Designations
- **SETC #2016-11:** Industry-Valued Credentials
- **SETC #2016-13:** SETC Approval of Local Area Designation for Cumberland-Salem-Cape May
- **SETC #2016-14:** New Jersey Local One-Stop Career Center Certification Process
- **SETC #2017-01:** New Jersey Credential Attainment Goal, 65 by 25 Initiative
- **SETC #2017-02:** SCALES – Coordination of Adult Literacy Services
- **SETC #2017-03:** State Funding Mechanism for Local Infrastructure Costs
- **SETC #2018-02:** New Jersey Local Workforce Development Board Certification Process for 2018
- **SETC #2018-03:** Youth Council Vision and Mission
- **SETC #2018-05:** WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Funds Transfer Requests
- **SETC #2019-01:** Shared Youth Council Vision Tool
- **SETC #2020-01:** Approval of NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA, 2020

Also included in this Appendix are the following NJDOL workforce guidance policies:

- **WD-PY19-6.1:** WIOA Eligibility and Self-Attestation Policy
- **NJ WIN 4-15 Change 1:** WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Transfer Authority

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)

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, at a minimum, 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) (Included in 20% above)

- 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).
- 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, at a minimum
 - 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, at a minimum
 - 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, <http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dhcr/offices/caalist.html>
- 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.

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

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 Vision 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—

1. Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job;
2. 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
3. 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).

1. Approved training and curriculum
2. Strategies for long term success
3. Access to appropriate support services
4. Promotes greater use of Registered Apprenticeship
5. Hands on Training
6. 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:

1. The internship includes supervised practical training.
2. The internship is for the benefit of the interns.
3. The interns do not displace regular employees, but work under close supervision.
4. 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:

1. 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;
1. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
1. The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
1. 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;
1. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and
1. 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

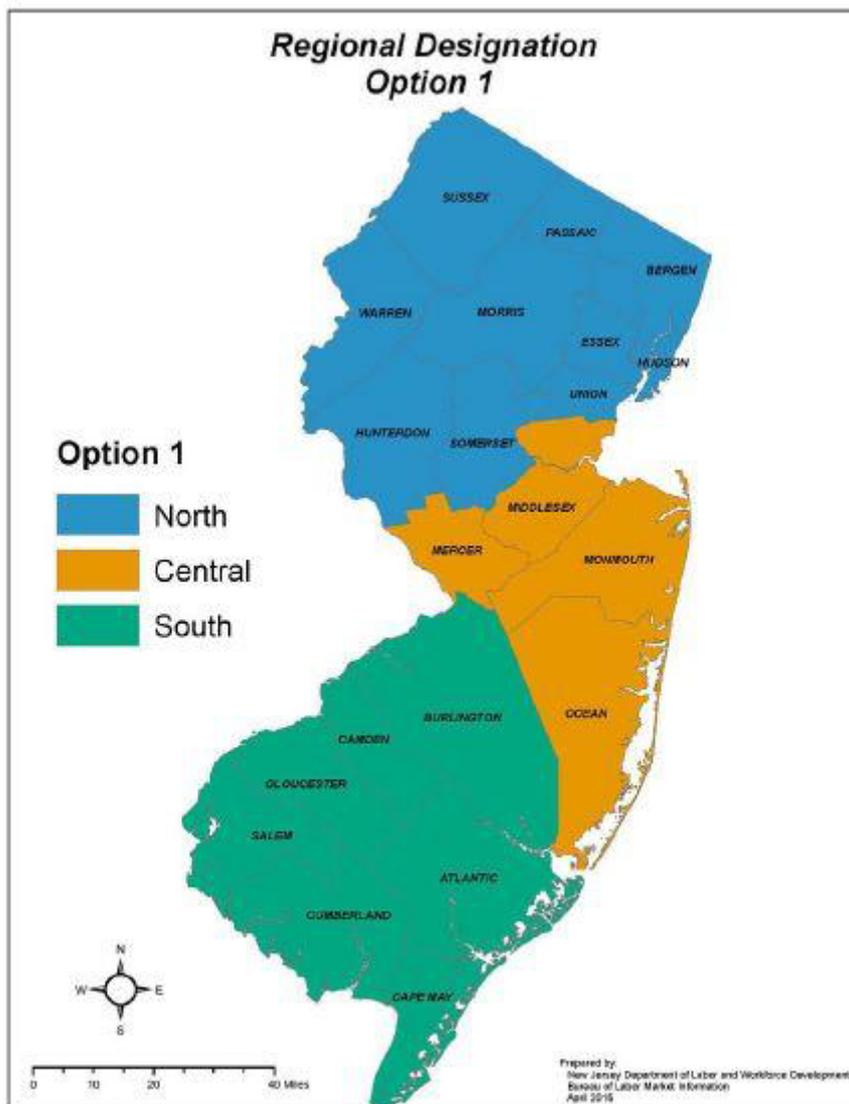
Upon formal resolution by the SETC, the policy will be posted on the SETC website and the policy document distributed to the Local Chief Elected Officials and Local Workforce Development Board Chairpersons and Directors. Subsequently, the policy will be submitted to

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

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 "siloes" 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?**
 - a. 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.
 - b. Programs need to tailor curriculum to each student's level;
 - c. 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;
 - d. For lower-level students, there needs to be recognition of realistic student outcomes, including indicators of "measurable skill gains".
1. **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?**
 - a. 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.

- b. Local planning must include identifying, combining and coordinating multiple sources of funding and directing the resulting “consolidated’ funding to adult literacy goal attainment.
 - c. 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.
1. **How to develop the skills and knowledge adult literacy teachers, administrators and counselors need to function effectively in the New Jersey Workforce System?**
- a. The state must develop, and adequately fund, a comprehensive, ongoing professional development system that enables adult literacy staff to meet new WIOA requirements,
 - b. 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
 - c. 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 #2016-02

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:

1. 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.”

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).
1. 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.
1. 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.
1. 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.
1. 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.
1. 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.
1. 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, 2016. 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

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, specifies 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

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

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

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

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

Local Area	Request Letter Received	Board Chair Signature	Local Elected Official Approval	Performance Success Confirmed (SETC)	Fiscal Integrity Confirmed (LWD)
Union	1/22/2016	1/7/2016	1/21/2016	Yes	Yes

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.

1. 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.

1. 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.

1. 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 #2016-13

SUBJECT: SETC Approval of Local Area Designation for Cumberland-Salem-Cape May

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). 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. Subsequent local area designations will be reviewed by the SETC in 2017, and will be effective July 1, 2017.

On March 29, 2016, the SETC approved the requests for initial designation from 18 local areas, including the Atlantic-Cape May and Cumberland-Salem areas. Each of these areas met the designation requirements, and sustained performance success and fiscal integrity, as required under WIOA and SETC Policy #2015-02.

Request and Process: The SETC has received a request for a new local area designation of Cumberland-Salem-Cape May. This request was received from the Cumberland-Salem Workforce Development Board, with the approval of Cumberland County, Salem County and Cape May County Freeholders. The attached letter of request and partnership proposal outlines the designation request for these three counties to form a local area, operating under one local Workforce Development Board. The approval of this request will establish the Cumberland-

Salem-Cape May Local Area, and as a result, Atlantic County will then operate as a separate local area.

Timeframe: The Cumberland-Salem-Cape May Local Area and the Atlantic County Local Area will be designated from July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. Subsequent local area designation requests will be required from all local areas, and will be effective July 1, 2017.

RESOLUTION: The State Employment and Training Commission hereby approves the local area designation request received from Cumberland-Salem-Cape May for designation as a Local Area, from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

Attachments: Cumberland-Salem Workforce Development Board Request Letter, 4/7/2016; Cumberland-Salem-Cape May Proposed Workforce Development Partnership

Commission Approved: May 3, 2016

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2016-14

SUBJECT: New Jersey Local One-Stop Career Center Certification Process

Purpose: Local One-Stop Career Centers are critical to the provision of programs and services in the local area. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 reinforces the importance of each Local One-Stop by requiring the Governor in partnership with the State Workforce Development Board and local workforce boards, to establish criteria based on items outlined in WIOA Section 121 to certify One-Stop Career Centers.

Background: WIOA Section 121, requires that local One-Stop Career Centers shall be certified. The law links such certification to the ability to receive potential infrastructure funding for the One-Stop. Such certification shall be based on established criteria and the extent to which the One-Stop provides programs and services in the local area that have enabled that area to satisfy or exceed performance and quality service criterion.

The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award principles establish an approach to performance excellence with a focus on continuous improvement. WIOA requires that the State establish a level of expectation for One-Stop certification that local boards must utilize (or may exceed) as a basis to certify a One-Stop under its auspices. The Baldrige approach to gauging efforts regarding leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, information and analysis, human resource focus, process management and business results has been adopted in many states as a format in establishing such a certification process.

The New Jersey State Combined Plan requires that local workforce areas competitively procure a One-Stop Operator every 2 years. While the WIOA law speaks to a 4-year requirement, New Jersey would need to be consistent with its existing plan.

New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center certification process will be put into effect as of July 1, 2017; consistent with the requirement for a competitively procured One-Stop Operator to be in place in each local workforce development area. Local procurement efforts typically require a multi-month process to complete. Having this information available should assist in establishing a baseline for One-Stop efforts.

The first part of the policy establishes a yes/no set of requirements to determine whether One-Stops satisfy a number of requirements. The policy further establishes a work group including

state and local representatives who would be charged with establishing future quantitative objective standards.

Under this policy local workforce boards must establish a local process of review that may include a qualified group of non-conflicted local board members or a qualified third party. All local areas will have the responsibility to ensure that the group established locally is qualified and able to perform such work.

Pre-requisites to certification are necessary. This recognizes essential elements of programming/service that must be in place prior to certification. This includes matters like accessibility standards, establishment of a grievance/complaint system for customers, a certified local Workforce Development Board and a local MOU that includes the workforce board and its partners.

A local workforce area will submit a request for local One-Stop Certification. The area will show to document that they have satisfied requirements by documenting that all pre-requisite matters and the Certification Checklist, or a similar document that satisfies the specific requirements of the Checklist and more, are completed. Those responses will be shared with the SETC/LWD which will review the request, assess its credibility and determine whether the request should be brought to the full SETC for consideration.

Timeframe: All items identified in the One-Stop Certification process are due to the SETC through the period July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2019.

Date	Activity/Outcome
October 2016	One-Stop Certification Process Rollout
November 2016 – June 2017	Technical Assistance and Capacity Inventory made available
April 1, 2017	SETC/LWD establish One-Stop Certification Request Review Panel(s)
July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2019	Local workforce board may refer locally approved certification request to the SETC
July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2019	SETC/LWD review panel approval process ongoing
September 2017 to June 2019	Full SETC consideration for recommended certifications
October 2017	Convene State/Local body to develop future certification criterion
July 2018	SETC consideration of State/Local body for future certification criterion
July 1, 2019	New certification criterion to be implemented

Process Guide	Required Materials and Information
1.	<p>Local workforce development boards will submit a One-Stop Certification package for SETC consideration during the two-year period. That request should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A transmittal letter indicating that the area is requesting certification; • A discussion of how the area went through the process ; • Where the related documentation used in determining suitability of the request is available for review; and, • Indication of who the local point of contact is for access to the documentation and associated staff.
1.	<p>Documentation of the pre-requisite requirements prior to certification consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of Workforce Development Board Certification; • Documentation indicating that One-Stop meets accessibility/disability standards; • Documentation of satisfactory grievance, complaints and EO standards; • Current effective local Memorandum of Understanding between local Workforce Development Board and its local One-Stop Partners; and, • Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A completed New Jersey One-Stop Certification Checklist; or, ○ A comparable local document that, at a minimum, includes all elements of the New Jersey One-Stop Certification Checklist.
1.	<p>Subsequent certifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission will reach out to local workforce development board chairs/directors and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development to form a One-Stop Certification Workgroup. Its purpose will be to establish ongoing objective certification criterion consistent with Baldrige principles that target continuous improvement. Recruitment for this group should begin in the spring of 2017 with its first meeting targeted for October 2017.

Attachments: NJ One-Stop Certification Checklist

Commission Approved: September 20, 2016

New Jersey One-Stop Certification Process Checklist

Background – The following documents are required to be submitted by each local Workforce Investment Area seeking One-Stop Certification. These may be considered gateways to certification consideration:

- A completed cover document / letter of transmittal requesting State of New Jersey One-Stop certification;
- Current/Full Workforce Development Board Certification
- Verification of meeting disability/accessibility standards;
- Verification of meeting grievance/complaint/EO standards;
- Local Memorandum of Understanding between the Workforce Board and its local one-stop partners;
- A completed Quality Benchmarking Tool;
- Completed Minimum Standard of Service Delivery Checklist.

ONE-STOP CERTIFICATION - QUALITY BENCHMARKING TOOL

Category No. 1: Leadership

Partners agree on a shared vision for a customer-driven service delivery system. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: A shared vision among all required partners is documented in MOU.

Agreements (e.g. MOUs) indicate that partners/suppliers have agreed to short/long-term goals regarding broader economic/political goals of the community. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Agreements recognize goals established by Workforce Development Board, State of New Jersey and United States Department of Labor.

Systems exist that demonstrate the existence and utilization of regional efforts including a collaborative plan and resource sharing that indicate efforts are not constrained by governmental or political boundaries. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Regional plans and service agreements indicate joint utilization of services with a breakdown of shared costs.

A local governance process that is charged with overseeing the planning and provision of one-stop services. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Workforce Board (or committee) includes this as among its charges and is corroborated by minutes/documentation.

Community partners have been educated in such a manner that a wide range of partners have participated in discussions regarding the model/management of the One-Stop. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Attendance/public hearing lists for presentations/meetings where the discussions are held are maintained/available.

Category No. 2: Strategic Planning

All required programs/partners are involved in strategy development and are appropriately represented in full service One-Stop Career Centers. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Records indicate participation and organizations are providing services in One-Stop on a regularly scheduled basis.

Process in place to document expectations of board, partners, staff and service clients. Provided in manner in which activity may be measured against goals. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Records maintained documenting efforts/results of associated groups.

Local certification plans exist for centers/affiliates as appropriate. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Copies of plans/associated guidelines.

Federal and NJ performance metrics are utilized for measuring performance against plan and as decision-making tool. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Documentation for decision-making maintained/reviewable. Confirms decisions.

Eligible Training Provider List, Consumer Report Card, performance data and evidence-based results are utilized in decision-making. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Documentation for decision-making Maintained/reviewable. Confirms decisions.

Training opportunities are linked, where appropriate, to career pathways and industry-based credentials. System ensures that service clients may build upon their skills throughout their career. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Client folder discusses career paths, future opportunities and manners of accomplishment.

Clear area commitment to Employment First for applicable service clients. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: File indicates placement/wages for service clients. Wage should satisfy requirements of Employment First.

Category No. 3: Customer and Market Focus

Public hearings/focus groups used to attain customer input as part of service planning. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Records/minutes of proceedings are kept and included in plans as appropriate.

Single points of contact have been established in the area for business and client customers. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Records indicate single point of contact for each appropriate client.

Client customer satisfaction data (e.g. surveys, etc.) is used as justification for service/products and as documentation of continuous improvement. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Records are maintained that indicate satisfaction and used as a basis for service/product provision.

Partnerships exist that cut across the market to ensure access to groups/individuals that may help ensure success. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Agreements/MOUs are maintained/signed that document relationships, and the basis of the relationship that include, but are not limited to organizations such as community colleges, employer groups, trade associations, talent networks/targeted industries, labor organizations and community/faith-based organizations.

Foundation for workforce development investments have been established with industry-focused Talent Networks, Targeted Industry Partnerships and Talent Development Centers. Yes No

Evidence Indicators: Records indicate service focus on supporting targeted fields.

Review local services/approach to examine how Career Center system determines customer/market requirements; expectations and preferences; successes/failures; and, adjusts to findings as step towards continuous improvement. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Records document that local determination took place, information reviewed, acted upon and that service/program structure reflects the results.

Category No. 4: Information and Analysis

Operator demonstrates how use of information and information technologies support/enhance customer service and staff effectiveness. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Documentation exists that demonstrates use of information/technology in supporting/enhancing customer service and staff effectiveness.

Local service audit utilized to identify areas/opportunities for new/improved products/services. Yes No

Evidence Indicators: Audit result leading to changes reviewed.

Stakeholder training teaching stakeholders how to analyze the relationship between quality improvement, customer satisfaction and financial performance. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Documentation of training/attendance exists and is reviewable.

System-wide method for collection, analysis and use for data exists and is used by Operator. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Documentation is reviewed that details methods of collection and use. Analysis is made available and is indicative of activities/actions taken in area.

Category No. 5: Human Resource Focus

Guidelines and a plan for ongoing capacity building have been developed to ensure that staff at all levels of process are trained and expert in providing customer oriented services at a high level. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Training schedules, content and attendance list are maintained and reviewable.

Process exists to identify and conduct necessary training sessions for all levels of system staff and program/service suppliers. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Process is documented; results are in reviewable form and attendance lists maintained.

Information systems and work processes are designed to promote collaboration and sharing of findings across multiple partner organizations and work units. Data is used as a basis for performance review. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Processes and systems for sharing are documented and use of data for performance is available for review.

Category No. 6: Process Management

Local certification process based upon quality/Baldrige criteria for performance measures and quality assurance has been established for product/service suppliers. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Process is documented and available for supplier review and adaptation.

A documented service flow for each One-Stop exists. The process indicates timelines and methods for referral and how Eligible Training Provider list and Consumer Report Card is managed and how ITAs are made available within process. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Service flow is available for review. It documents time lines and methodologies for potential actions/activities.

Processes for the handling of poor performance by Operator, partner and service/product provider are documented. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Documents are available; processes are realistic/implementable.

System has been established to document strengths/weaknesses of processes to develop more effective, customer-oriented processes. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Document is available; process improvement is realistic/implementable

Services/Programs are organized functionally; not by funding source, program or staff. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Documentation and physical structure demonstrate functional alignment.

Category No. 7: Business Results

Service renewal and incentive programs are linked to meeting/exceeding specific performance standards. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: A documented policy is available for review and any renewals are consistent with process stated.

Business results are defined within context of improved service quality for customers by center and by system. Success measures go beyond measures such as placement rates. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Performance is documented by measures beyond placement and consider referral location, one-stop (where applicable) and other factors (e.g. referral staff, skill levels, etc.)

Service supports are measured to determine impact on service results. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Measures/analysis is performed for various forms of support (e.g. transportation, counseling, child care etc.) has taken place and is documented/available for review.

Guidelines and a plan for ongoing capacity building have been developed to ensure that business volunteers at all levels of process are trained and prepared to understand the needs of the workforce system at a high level. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Training schedules, content and attendance list are maintained and reviewable.

Process exists to identify and conduct necessary training sessions for all levels of business volunteers. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Process is documented; results are in reviewable form and attendance lists maintained.

Business partners have been educated in such a manner that a wide range of partners have participated in discussions regarding the model/management of the One-Stop. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Attendance/public hearing lists for presentations/meetings where the discussions are held are maintained/available.

Processes for ongoing private sector membership, participation and outreach are in place along with systems that ensure linkages between ongoing workforce services with the needs of the business community and employers. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Levels of business board membership, business association memberships and links between program services and business/employer demand.

Employer customer satisfaction data (e.g. surveys, etc.) is used as justification for service/products and as documentation of continuous improvement. Yes No

Evidence Indicator: Records are maintained that indicate satisfaction and used as a basis for service/product provision.

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2017-01

SUBJECT: New Jersey Credential Attainment Goal, *65 by 25 Initiative*

Purpose: The New Jersey Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), 2016, focused on two critical goals - building an innovative skilled workforce to power economic growth and building economic opportunity for all New Jersey residents. The State Plan outlined a mission: *New Jersey will increase the number of residents with an industry-valued credential or degree through high quality partnerships and integrated investments.* **To support this effort, the State Employment and Training Commission endorses the creation of a statewide credential attainment goal, that 65 percent of the State's adult population, with a special focus on race and gender equity, complete education beyond high school by the year 2025, the 65 by 25 Initiative.**

Background: In September 2016, the SETC formed a Career Pathways Task Force, to continue the Policy Academy partnership of Education, Higher Education, Labor and Workforce Development, and Business. These agencies have worked together in unprecedented ways to

align resources and programs in support of career pathways and talent development in New Jersey.

In 2015, 48 percent of New Jersey's workforce had earned an associate's degree or higher and 13 percent had some college but no degree; the State's Governor's Higher Education Council in its 2015 report, *Strategic Priorities for New Jersey Higher Education*, recommended that 65% of New Jersey's workforce attain a post-secondary degree or certificate by 2025.

The SETC Career Pathways Task Force recognizes that credential attainment is an integral component and building block of a career pathway system. In order for New Jersey to remain competitive in a global economy, there is a critical need to focus workforce and education efforts on the attainment of credentials by our students and workers, which supports their individual growth and economic success. New Jersey will encourage students and job seekers to complete an associate or baccalaureate degree or a credential through the **65 by 25 Initiative**.

RESOLUTION: The SETC calls upon New Jersey's workforce development system, high schools, training providers, higher education institutions, organized labor and the business community, to work collaboratively to increase the number of degrees or credentials attained by New Jersey's workforce, so that 65 percent of the state's adult population, with a special focus on race and gender equity, will have completed a post-secondary degree or credential beyond high school by the year 2025.

Commission Approval: February 7, 2017

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2017-02

SUBJECT: SCALES - Coordination of Adult Literacy Services

Purpose: The State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) recommends establishing a policy that recognizes the various sources of adult literacy education program resources; and that notes the importance of coordinating related programs locally in order to maximize services to people needing such services.

Background: The primary funding source for adult literacy in the State of New Jersey is the federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). Formerly incorporated as Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), in 2014 it continued as Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Final regulations for Title II were published in the Federal Register in the summer of 2016. Changes in these regulations may be summarized as:

1. Restates the purpose of the AEFLA;
2. Updates and revises regulations regarding the suitability of testing for use in the National Reporting System for Adult Education;
3. Describes the process and requirements to award contracts/grants including new requirements associated with WIOA and the required involvement of local Workforce Development Boards in the review of applications and the alignment of activities;
4. Describes how Title II funds may be used to support programs for corrections education and the education of other institutionalized individuals;
5. Clarifies the use of funds for new and expanded activities under the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program; and,

6. Removal of sections no longer in effect

Realizing the goals of WIOA, requires reexamination of the way programs are organized in light of available resources.

Discussion: In New Jersey, more than 800,000 adults lack a high school diploma. Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act, the largest funding source for adult literacy services, provides resources to serve only about 3 percent of this population. Although other programs fund adult literacy education, these programs are located in different funding areas and have not been historically coordinated with Title II in a holistic manner. Examples include:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training – SNAP is the program that replaced traditional food stamps. SNAP Employment & Training dollars may be used to provide services that allow able-bodied individuals to return to work. These resources may be used to provide Title II-style services, as needed;
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/Work-First New Jersey – Welfare-to-work dollars allow for the provision of services to eligible recipients. Adult education, literacy and English language services, comparable to Title II are included in its service availability in a number of cases;
- Higher Education Pell Grants (developmental skills) – Pell grants are historically used as a financial aid instrument for programs approved by the federal government to award these funds. While they may be used towards improving literacy skills as part of a more aspirational goal, these resources which do not require any input from a local workforce development board. The literacy programs in institutions that provide these services may accept students through a local workforce process with the hope that these organizations would be open to discussion to link these efforts to the existing literacy system in the area;
- Workforce Development Partnership – A State program that provides resources for employment and training purposes. Resources are used in local workforce areas as part of what is called the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills (SWFBS);
- Literacy New Jersey (formally Literacy Volunteers of New Jersey) – As a major provider of instruction for adults who need assistance with reading, writing, math and speaking English, this group provides volunteer tutors and works with small groups of those in need. SCALES recognizes their value and suggests that a successful literacy system would be able to integrate these and similar services; and,
- Community Services Block Grants (CSBG) – Federal anti-poverty funds allocated to 25 agencies across the state that provide a broad range of support services and training opportunities to families at or below 125% of the federal poverty guideline. Comprehensive case management assists families in accessing services that enhance self-sufficiency, and address the causes and conditions of poverty. Services include housing assistance, child care, ESL and literacy services, job training, youth and senior programs, and health care.

In order to maximize efficiency in a resource scarce environment, it is important that the funding streams for adult literacy be coordinated as best possible within the guidelines of laws and regulations.

Equally important is the emphasis in WIOA on the transition of learners from their beginning levels to higher education and family sustaining employment. When learners transition, they

move across existing programs, hopefully, in a seamless way. Their transitions cannot take place, unless the various literacy programs within a community are coordinated.

In consideration of this need for resource coordination, SCALES recommends that guidelines for local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) ask that they develop plans which seek to join together local literacy resources, including, but not limited to those included in this document into a more comprehensive and coordinated local literacy system. Local WDBs should specify in local and regional plans a priority for the development of such a system that is tied to local and regional planning data that indicates the need for the programming. Further, such plans should indicate how such efforts would be co-planned and co-joined throughout their respective communities. This plan should identify local and regional needs and, prioritize, in consideration of the applicable funding sources, how the resources should be used to advance learners along the educational spectrum to meet their needs and employer needs. SCALES further recommends that the state work with local providers to develop appropriate program standards for the professional development and technical assistance local WDBs will need to implement this resolution.

Commission Approved: June 6, 2017

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2017-03 (Updated)

SUBJECT: State Funding Mechanism for Local Infrastructure Costs

As a result of the USDOL-ETA Combined Compliance Review (CCR) conducted in July 2018, this policy is updated to reflect that the Governor will determine One-Stop Partner contributions if consensus is not reached in the local area, in compliance with 20 CFR 678.730(b) and TEGL No. 17-16.

Resolution: It is the policy of the SETC that it shall ensure that each local Workforce Development Board (WDB) will comply with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 and make every effort to reach consensus with its local partners to implement a local Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA), as part of the One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). As required by WIOA, the SETC hereby approves the New Jersey State Funding Mechanism for Local Infrastructure Costs, and the process as described below, for use in the event that any local area in New Jersey is unable finalize its local IFA by January 1, 2018.

Purpose: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) requires that local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) establish, as part of their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), an Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) for non-personnel One-Stop related costs (including rent, security, technology and utilities). The law further requires the establishment of a State Funding Mechanism (SFM) to be used ONLY if local areas are unable to finalize a local IFA by **January 1, 2018**. This policy establishes the State Funding Mechanism for New Jersey.

Background: WIOA requires that each local board, as part of its MOU with its partners, indicates how partners shall contribute to the infrastructure needs of the one-stop system as part of a Local Funding Mechanism (LFM). Contributions may be made in cash or in appropriately evaluated in-kind contributions. The MOU shall detail in the IFA how infrastructure funding shall be contributed. If a local area cannot reach consensus on a LFM, a State Funding Mechanism (SFM), as outlined in this policy, shall be utilized. As stated in WIOA, the local WDB has the responsibility for the MOU and the LFM.

This is based upon the requirements provided at:

- Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) PL 113-128, July 22, 2014; WIOA Sections 107, 111(b) and 121(c), (d), (g), and (h)
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 17-16: *Infrastructure Funding of the One-Stop System*
- WIOA US Department of Labor/US Department of Education Joint Rule (81 FR 56016, August 19, 2016), Subpart E, 678.700 – 678.760; 361-70 – 361.760; 463.700 – 463.760

Discussion: WIOA requires that all one-stop partner programs appropriately contribute to infrastructure funding of the one-stop system. According to WIOA, the following programs must be considered:

Required Partners:

- Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Job Corps, YouthBuild, Native American, and migrant seasonal farmworkers);
- Title II (WIOA) adult education and literacy activities;
- Wagner-Peyser Act (Title III of WIOA) employment services programs;
- The Vocational Rehabilitation program under the Rehabilitation Act (Title IV of WIOA);
- The Senior Community Service Employment Program authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act;
- Trade Adjustment Assistance authorized under the Trade Act;
- State unemployment compensation (UI) programs;
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants programs authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, USC;
- Ex-offender programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act.
- Postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) programs authorized under Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act;
- Employment and Training activities under the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD);
- Employment and Training activities under the Community Services Block Grant; and
- Welfare-to-Work (WFN) programs being utilized to serve the TANF, GA and SNAP populations

Additional Partners:

May be included in the local funding mechanism (LFM) with the approval of the local WDB and local chief elected official:

- Social Security Administration (SSA) programs;
- Small Business Administration employment and training programs;
- Client Assistance Program (CAP) under Title IV of WIOA;

- National and Community Services Act programs;
- Registered Apprenticeship Programs; and
- Other appropriate federal, state or local programs, such as employment, education or training programs operated by libraries or the private sector; also programs providing transportation and services for those with substance abuse or mental health issues;

The SFM is only applicable to **required** one-stop partners and cannot be triggered by additional one-stop partners not reaching consensus.

Definitions: WIOA law as outlined in TEGL #17-16 defines **Infrastructure Costs** as non-personnel costs that are necessary for the general operation of the one-stop center, including:

- Rental of Facilities
- Utilities and Maintenance
- Equipment
 - Assessment related products
 - Assistive technology for individuals with disabilities
- Technology to facilitate access to the one-stop center (OSCC)
 - OSCC planning and outreach activities
 - OSCC record-keeping activities
 - Electronic and other linkages that are established to seamlessly transition customers between programs.
- Common identifier costs as applicable, including signage and supplies

One-Stop Career Centers may be either:

- **Comprehensive Center:** A one-stop center that includes multiple (two or more) required partners and, in addition, where job seekers and employers may access the programs, services, and activities of all required one-stop partners.
- **Affiliate Center:** A one-stop center that includes at least two co-located required partners, but does not have access to the services of all required partners.

A stand-alone facility dedicated to any one of the required partners that does not include any other partners, and does not provide access to the services nor supports of any other partners, shall be considered a separate office and not appropriate to share in any established Infrastructure pool.

This policy specifies contribution requirements based upon the **proportional use and benefits of the system of each partner**. New Jersey recognizes that law requires co-location within a comprehensive one-stop of a limited number of partners (e.g. Title I and Title III) and their respective services. While the State recognizes that local areas may best optimize the delivery of services to customers through their own determination of where services are located, the SETC also appreciates the benefits to customers of the system from the establishment of comprehensive centers with co-located programs and encourages such approaches.

Consideration of Co-Located Partners

Co-located partners include any program that is placing staff members in the same facility that is identified as a comprehensive one-stop center by a local board, or in an affiliate center, for the purposes of providing appropriate career services or business services as defined in WIOA or the applicable legislation and/or its rules at an appropriate level. Contributions must be made by all co-located partners in either type of facility as warranted. If partners cannot reach consensus on cost contributions, they will be required to follow the process as established in the WIOA regulations for a State Funded Mechanism (SFM).

In all cases, it is encouraged that local workforce areas develop/implement a Local Funding Mechanism (LFM). According to WIOA rules, the State may only access funds from a set list of program partners and caps those contributions. A locally developed mechanism may not have such constraints. These same rules reserve the right for the State to require local areas to provide all necessary information to the State. The State also has the authority to require that a local area carry through on stalled negotiations.

Components of a Funding Mechanism

Either funding mechanism must recognize certain factors within the local workforce area. These may include:

- Staff numbers
- Financial contributions
- Space/square footage
- Utilities
- Maintenance
- General IT
- Security
- Assessment equipment/assistive equipment
- Joint phone systems
- Shared subscriptions

An annual allotment for Infrastructure should be determined in consideration of the historical use proportion for the bullet points indicated above.

Consideration of Non Co-Located Partners

LFMs should recognize all non-co-located partners as referenced in WIOA (Section 121) who do not have staff physically based at the local one-stop. Local Funding Mechanisms should indicate resources contributed by these partners to support the infrastructure of the one-stop system in the local area.

These contributions should be determined by examining the number of customers receiving services at these organizations who may also be enrolled in a program at the comprehensive one-stop. The proportionate cost of these services should be counted as non-cash contributions to cover the proportionate use of the one-stop.

Process

Local Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) must be completed and included in a local MOU by January 1, 2018. It is the responsibility of the local Workforce Development Board (WDB) Director to inform the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission by December 1, 2017 if the local WDB believes they are at impasse locally and will require the use of the State Funding Mechanism (see attachments). Questions regarding infrastructure cost funding issues should be directed to Jerry Calamia, Director of the LWD Office of Internal Audit. Questions regarding signatories for any of the partner programs should be directed to the office of Ms. Patricia Moran, LWD Assistant Commissioner of Workforce Programming.

It is important to note that it is and shall be in any case, the responsibility of the local Workforce Development Board to obtain the information required to complete the State Funding Mechanism. Should the area choose to revert to the State Funding Mechanism, it is still the local workforce area's responsibility to provide the information necessary to complete the computation to the Governor.

Local workforce areas have the primary responsibility to develop a local formula, all data required to effectuate the formula and drive agreement/consensus amongst its partners. If an area believes it cannot achieve an agreement or attain such consensus, the Local Workforce Development Board Director must inform the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission, **in writing, by no later than the close of business on Friday, December 1, 2017.** That written notification must be sent to:

- Jerry Calamia, Director, LWD Office of Internal Audit, Gerald.Calamia@dol.nj.gov
- Gary Altman, Acting Executive Director, New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission, Gary.Altman@dol.nj.gov

A team representing both organizations shall review any request for use of the State Funding Mechanism with the Governor who will make a determination consistent with the WIOA Joint Rules Sections 678.700 through 678.760. This determination may include requiring additional information, a recommendation that the local area complete the work or the use of the State Mechanism. The simple request of the State Mechanism does not ensure its implementation nor does it absolve a local area of providing the information required to make a decision. This process includes the option to appeal a State Funding Mechanism decision, as outlined in Attachment 1.

Program Caps on Contributions: WIOA rules, and the associated TEGL #17-16, cap the amount of contribution that may be provided by organizations under the State Funded Mechanism. Should an area request implementation of the State Funded Mechanism, these caps will be respected and the result may impact the ability of a local area to meet its infrastructure costs.

Monitoring of Implementation: Local Workforce Development Boards are required to establish the MOUs that indicate how infrastructure costs are contributed and whether a local or state formula is being used. As part of its annual budget requirements, each local board shall indicate to the state which formula is being followed, the amount of the agreement and whether necessary steps have been taken to effectuate the effort including adjustments to the formula, funding or transfer of funds between partners.

Attachment 1: State Funding Mechanism

Attachment 2: Programmatic Statewide Caps

Attachment 3: New Jersey Determining Factors

SETC Approved: November 14, 2017 / SETC Approved as Updated: March 21, 2019

ATTACHMENT 1: STATE FUNDING MECHANISM

This reflects the steps required should a local workforce area be unable to reach consensus for a locally developed effort.

Related Definitions:

- IFA: Infrastructure Funding Agreement; part of the local one-stop partners' memorandum of understanding (MOU)
- LFM: Local Funding Mechanism (effectuated by local partners)
- SFM: State Funding Mechanism
- MPC: Maximum Potential Cap

State Formula Steps

Step 1: Notice of failure to reach consensus given to the Governor

If the Local WDB, local one-stop partners, and CEO(s) cannot reach consensus on methods of sufficiently funding a one-stop center's infrastructure costs and the amounts to be contributed by each local partner program, **the Local WDB is required to notify the Governor by December 1, 2017.**

In subsequent years in which agreements are renewed, notification must be given by March 1st. In years during which a grant competition takes place that may impact the formula, alternative timing may be necessary.

Step 2: Local negotiation materials provided to the Governor

In order to assist the Governor in making these calculations and determinations, **the Local WDB must provide the appropriate and relevant materials and documents** used in the negotiations under the LFM, preferably when notifying the Governor of the failure to reach consensus.

At a minimum, the Local WDB must give the Governor:

1. the local WIOA plan;
2. the cost allocation methodology or methodologies proposed by the partners to be used in determining the proportionate share;
3. the proposed amounts or budget to fund infrastructure costs and the amount of partner funds included;
4. the type of funds (cash, non-cash, and third-party in-kind contributions) available;
5. any proposed or agreed upon one-stop center or system budget; and
6. any partially agreed upon, proposed, or draft IFAs.

The Local WDBs shall also provide the Governor additional materials that they or the Governor find to be appropriate.

Step 3: The Governor determines one-stop center infrastructure budget(s).

The Governor must determine the infrastructure budget(s). Depending on the local delivery system structure, there may be more than one infrastructure budget, each of which is contained in a one-stop operating budget. While the Governor should take into account the one-stop center's operating budget, the Governor only has the power to determine the infrastructure budget under the SFM. The Governor must determine the infrastructure budget in one of two ways. If, as a result of an agreed upon infrastructure budget, only the individual programmatic contributions to infrastructure funding based upon proportionate use of the one-stop centers and relative benefit received are at issue, the Governor may accept the infrastructure budget, from which the Governor must calculate each partner's contribution consistent with the cost allocation methodologies contained in the Uniform Guidance.

If, however, an infrastructure budget or budgets were not agreed upon in the local negotiations, or the Governor determines that the agreed upon budget does not adequately meet the needs of the local area or does not reasonably work within the confines of the resources available to that local area in accordance with the LWD/SETC guidance on one-stop infrastructure funding, then the Governor must use the State Funding Mechanism. **This mechanism must identify the factors, as well as each factor's corresponding weight, that the Governor must use in determining the one-stop center infrastructure budget.** At a minimum, these factors should include:

1. the number of one-stop centers in a local area (each facility should warrant separate consideration);
2. the total population served by such centers;
3. the services provided by such centers; and
4. any 2 factors relating to the operations of such centers in the local area that the State WDB determines are appropriate (20 CFR 678.745, 34 CFR 361.745, and 34 CFR 463.745).

Step 4: Governor establishes cost allocation methodology. *

After an infrastructure budget has been determined, the Governor must establish a cost allocation methodology that determines the distribution of infrastructure funding costs among the local one-stop partners in accordance with the principles of proportionate use of the one-stop center and relative benefit received. This allocation methodology must be consistent with the Federal Cost Principles of the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR part 200, all relevant Federal regulations and statutes, further regulatory guidance, and the partner programs' authorizing laws and regulations. Beyond these requirements, the determining factor can be a wide range of variables, such as number of customers served, square footage used, or a different basis that is agreed upon for determining each partner's contribution level for infrastructure costs.

** A local area may use more than one cost allocation methodology to distribute costs.*

Step 5: Partners' proportionate shares are determined.

Once a methodology is established, the Governor must use this methodology to determine each required one-stop partner's proportionate share of infrastructure funding costs. The Governor

must take into account a number of factors in reaching a proportionate share determination including:

1. the costs of administration of the one-stop delivery system for purposes not specifically related to a one-stop center for each partner (such as costs associated with maintaining the Local WDB or information technology systems);
2. statutory requirements for each partner program;
3. each one-stop partner's ability to fulfill such requirements; and
4. all other applicable legal requirements.

The Governor may draw upon any proportionate share determinations made during the local negotiations, including any agreements reached at the local level by one or more partners, as well as any other materials or documents from the negotiating process.

In some instances, the Governor does not determine each one-stop partner's contribution amounts for infrastructure costs. Should there be a partner where the policy-making authority is placed in an entity or official that is independent of the authority of the Governor with respect to the funds provided for the AEFLA program, postsecondary career and technical education activities authorized under Perkins IV, the VR program, or any other partner program, the determination of the amount each of the applicable partners must contribute to assist in paying the infrastructure costs of one-stop centers must be made by the official or chief officer of the entity with such authority, in consultation with the Governor.

For other required partner programs in which grant awards are made to entities that are independent of the authority of the Governor, such as Job Corps center contractors or grant recipients of the DOL-administered national programs, the determination of the amount each of the applicable partners must contribute to assist in paying the infrastructure costs of one-stop centers continues to be made by the Governor, through the authority granted to the entities by WIOA and its implementing regulations.

Step 6: Governor calculates statewide caps.

Once the Governor has created a cost allocation methodology, the Governor then must calculate the statewide caps to determine the maximum amounts that required partner programs could be *required* to contribute toward infrastructure funding in that local area. There are no statewide caps for additional partners because the SFM does not apply to them.

The statewide caps are a statutory requirement for purposes of the SFM, even when only one local area is unable to reach consensus on an IFA through the LFM. However, the caps only restrict the infrastructure cost contributions required of one-stop partners within the local area(s) that has (or have) not reached consensus. The caps used in the application of the SFM are referred to as the applicable program caps, which must be calculated by the Governor using the five sub-steps listed below.

In the event that more than one local area in a State does not reach consensus, then the aggregate of the infrastructure funding costs that must be contributed by each required one-stop partner in all of the local areas that did not reach consensus is restricted by the applicable program cap.

For example, if three of ten local areas did not reach consensus, then the required infrastructure funding contributions of each required one-stop partner under a particular program in these

three areas would be added together, the sum of which could not exceed the calculated applicable program cap.

The Governor must take five sub-steps to calculate the applicable program cap for any given program.

Sub-Step 1: The Governor must apply a partner’s individual applicable limiting percentage (the statutory percentages listed in WIOA sec. 121(h)(2)(d))—which is dependent on the type of program (see chart in Attachment 2)—to the total Federal funding which that program receives for the affected program year to reach the maximum potential cap (MPC). The applicable limiting percentage for a program is listed in Attachment 2 and in WIOA sec. 121(h)(2)(d), 20 CFR 678.738(c), and 34 CFR 463.738(c). Some programs will use previous years’ funding to determine the cap due to internal program funding allocation or re-allotment methods

Sub-Step 2: The Governor must select a determining factor or factors that reasonably indicate the use of one-stop centers in the State. This will be the percentage of Title I-B and WFNJ funding each local area receives.

Sub-Step 3: The Governor applies the determining factor(s) to all local areas across the State, and then determines the percentage of the factor(s) that is applicable to those areas that reached consensus, or the consensus areas’ factor percentage.

Sub-Step 4: The Governor then applies the consensus areas’ factor percentage to the MPC to find the consensus areas’ portion of the MPC

Sub-Step 5: The Governor subtracts the amount equal to the consensus local areas’ portion of the MPC from the MPC. The remaining amount is the applicable program cap for use in the local areas that have not reached consensus and are subject to the SFM.

Step 7: Governor assesses the aggregate total of infrastructure contributions as it relates to the statewide cap.

Once the Governor has determined the applicable program cap for each program, as well as the proportionate share of the infrastructure costs that the Governor has determined under Step 5 would be required of each local required one-stop partner in a non-consensus area without regard to the cap, the Governor must ensure that the funds required to be contributed by each partner program in the non-consensus local area(s), in aggregate, do not exceed the applicable program cap.

If the aggregate total contributions are below the applicable program cap, then the Governor must direct the one-stop partners to contribute what was determined to be their proportionate shares. If the aggregate total contributions exceed the cap, then the Governor may either:

1. Inquire as to whether those local partner programs that have pushed the aggregate total contributions above the applicable program cap (i.e., those whose contributions would have otherwise exceeded the Statewide cap on contributions) are willing to contribute beyond the applicable program cap in accordance with their proportionate share; or
1. Allow the Local WDB, one-stop partners, and CEO(s) to:
 - a. Re-enter negotiations to reassess each one-stop partner’s proportionate share and make adjustments and identify alternate sources of funding to make up the difference between the capped amount and the proportionate share of infrastructure funding of the one-stop partner; and

- b. Reduce infrastructure costs to reflect the amount of funds available without exceeding the applicable program cap level.

Step 8: Governor adjusts proportionate shares.

The Governor must make adjustments to specific local partners' proportionate share in accordance with the amounts available under the applicable program cap for the associated program, if the Local WDB, CEO(s), and the required one-stop partners fail to reach agreement on how to address the situation in which the proportionate share exceeds the cap using the approaches described in Step 7. The aggregate total contribution of a program's local one-stop partners under the SFM may not exceed the applicable program cap.

Appeals Process

1. If a local area and/or local board, partner program or Chief Elected Official (CEO) disagrees with the State determination of the local area infrastructure budget, the local area and/or local board may submit an appeal to the LWD Commissioner in writing no later than 30 days after having received notice of the corrective action and/or penalty determination being appealed.
2. All appeals submitted to the LWD Commissioner in writing under (a) above shall state the basis for the appeal and shall include any documentary evidence that the local area and/or local board would like the LWD Commissioner to review prior to rendering his or her decision.
3. The LWD Commissioner shall review the documentary evidence presented by the local area and/or local board and shall request any additional information or conduct any investigation necessary to render a decision.
4. The LWD Commissioner's decision shall be based on the written record and shall be rendered within 30 days after receipt of the appeal.

Basis for Appeal: A local WDB, partner program, or Chief Elected Official may appeal the State determination based on the following:

1. The determination is inconsistent with the proportionate share requirements of 20 CFR 678.735(a);
2. The determination is inconsistent with the cost contribution limitations in § 678.735(b);
3. The determination was inconsistent with the cost contributions caps as described in 20 CFR 678.738.

ATTACHMENT 2: PROGRAMMATIC STATEWIDE CAPS

Limiting Percentages for Programmatic Statewide Caps on Infrastructure Funding under the State Funding Mechanism

Program Type	Limiting Percentage
WIOA title I programs (youth, adult, or dislocated worker)	3%
Wagner-Peyser Act ES	3%

Program Type	Limiting Percentage
WorkFirst New Jersey (TANF, GA and SNAP E&T)	1.5%
AEFLA	1.5%
Perkins IV	1.5% of funds made available for postsecondary level programs and activities and funds used to administer postsecondary level programs and activities in the prior year
VR	
PY 2017	0.75% of Fiscal Year 2016 Federal VR funding
PY 2018	1% of Fiscal Year 2017 Federal VR funding
PY 2019	1.25% of Fiscal Year 2018 Federal VR funding
PY 2020 and subsequent years	1.5% of Fiscal Year 2019 (or applicable previous year) Federal VR funding
CSBG	1.5% of funds from the previous year spent by local CSBG-eligible entities to provide employment and training activities, plus any associated administrative costs
Other required partners including Job Corps; YouthBuild; Native American programs; MSFW (NFJP) programs; SCSEP; TAA; UC; HUD employment and training programs; and programs authorized under sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007	1.5%
Additional (non-required) partners	SFM does not apply

ATTACHMENT 3: NEW JERSEY DETERMINING FACTORS

When the State Funding Mechanism (SFM) is used, the total amount that any one partner can contribute is limited by a “determining factor.” New Jersey is using the Title I-B and WorkFirst New Jersey funding formulas as the determining factor.

To reach the percentages shown below, the funding allocations for Program Year (PY) 2016 were reviewed. Each local area’s allocations were averaged across the Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker and WorkFirst New Jersey programs. The total of those allocations that each local area received was then calculated as a percentage of the statewide total allocations.

These percentages will be used to reduce the maximum contribution under the State Funding Mechanism, based on which local areas do not reach agreement.

	% of State Total
Atlantic	5.96%
Bergen	4.96%
Burlington	4.01%
Camden	6.82%
Cumberland/Salem/Cape May	7.23%
Essex	10.07%
Gloucester	3.51%
Greater Raritan	2.82%
Hudson	7.38%
Jersey City	2.55%
Mercer	4.97%
Middlesex	6.52%
Monmouth	4.56%
Morris/Sussex/Warren	4.64%
Newark	5.04%
Ocean	4.12%
Passaic	9.30%
Union	5.53%
Total	100%

USDOL recommends that the determining factor should reasonably indicate the use of one-stop centers in the state. The funding allocations were chosen because they already represent a proportionate need for the system based on demographic and unemployment data. New Jersey has consolidated its workforce development services, including WIOA and WFNJ (welfare-to-work) program funding; these represent significant investments and provide services to large numbers of customers at the One-Stop Career Centers in New Jersey.

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2018-02

SUBJECT: New Jersey Local Workforce Development Board Certification Process for 2018

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 WIOA as of July 2016.

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 2018 LWDB Certification process are due to the SETC by **December 1, 2018.**

Date	Activity/Outcome
September 2018	WDB Certification 2018 Process Rollout
Sept – Nov 2018	Technical Assistance and Capacity Inventory
December 1, 2018	Required Local Area Documents due to the SETC
December 1, 2018	Final Application Form, Signed by Chief LEO, WDB Chair and WDB Director
January-March 2019	SETC vote to approve/deny LWDB Certification Requests
April 2019	LWDB Certification Completed

Commission Approved: September 18, 2018

Attachment: *LWDB Certification Application/Checklist*

Application for Workforce Development Board 2018 Certification

Date: (Date Submitted) **Due by December 1, 2018**

To: **New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission**

This application for recertification is submitted on behalf of the (Local Area) 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), Chairperson, (Local Area) Workforce Development Board

(Name), Director, (Local Area) Workforce Development Board

Item	Required Materials and Information
1.	<p>Current List of Local WDB Members appointed by the chief elected official in a local area in accordance with SETC Policy Resolution #2015-01</p> <p>– Local Workforce Development Board Member Appointment and Process. The list will show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the WDB membership follows the guidelines set forth in the WDB Member Handbook, SETC Policy Resolution #2015-01, and WIOA Section 107 • 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 provide a plan to achieve board membership compliance, including the recruitment and orientation process for new board members.
1.	<p>The Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Programs Budget, required under N.J.S.A. 34:15C-15e(4), and the Local WDB Staff Budget, as outlined in SETC Policy Resolution #2016-03</p> <p>, for the extant and two preceding program years (Program Years 16, 17, and 18).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Local WDB Staff Budget, with a list of current WDB staff, titles/reporting structure, and percent of time allocated to the WDB. • <i>Summary of Leveraged Resources, including Grants and Special Initiatives, if applicable</i> • <i>IRS Tax Status Letter / 501(c)3 Status documentation must be provided, if applicable.</i>
1.	<p>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 15, 16 and 17).</p>
1.	<p>The local board Meeting Minutes for extant and two preceding program years (Program Years 16, 17 and 18)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes should reflect regular meetings, held at least quarterly • Minutes should reflect the LWDB budget approval process

Item	Required Materials and Information
1.	<p>Current</p> <p>WDB-CLEO Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</p> <p>, signed by the local board and local elected officials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
1.	<p>Current One-Stop Partner MOU*, signed by the local board, One-Stop Operator and One-Stop Partners. The local Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) must be included with the MOU, as outlined in SETC Policy Resolution #2017-03.</p> <p><i>*To be coordinated with LWD MOU process.</i></p>
1.	<p>The local</p> <p>WDB Website</p> <p>: (URL location)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published List of local WDB members: (URL location) • Published local WDB meeting minutes: (URL location)
1.	<p>WDB Committees, Councils and Task Forces</p> <p>Information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of active WDB committees, councils and task forces, including those required under N.J.S.A. 34:15C-15, and as outlined in the WDB Member Handbook: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Executive Committee (recommended) ○ Youth Investment Council (required) ○ Literacy Committee (required) ○ One-Stop/Operations/OS Partners Committee (required) ○ Disabilities Committee (required) ○ Other committees or task forces, as established by the local board ○ <i>The list should indicate which council or committee is responsible for Business Engagement.</i> • Current Membership List for each WDB committee/council/task force, including the name, title, and agency of each member. • Committee, council and task force meeting minutes for Program Year 2016 and Program Year 2017, reflecting regular meetings.

Item	Required Materials and Information
1.	<p>Current local WDB By-Laws, addressing at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election of WDB Officers • WDB attendance policy • Conflict of Interest policy
1.	<p>Current Contract, MOU, or Letter of Agreement demonstrating the WDB competitive selection of a qualified One-Stop Operator.</p>
1.	<p>Approved Local and Regional Workforce Plans for WIOA on WDB website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Plan: (URL) • Regional Plan: (URL)
1.	<p>The local board's Annual Evaluation of the local workforce and/or One-Stop delivery system for Program Years 2016 and 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evaluation may be system-wide or may focus on one or more programs and/or services conducted in the One-Stop Centers.
1.	<p>Local Performance Measures:</p> <p>As outlined in the Local Workforce Investment Boards: Certification, Recertification and Decertification Rule, N.J.A.C. 12:42-4.4(e):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <i>20 CFR 661.305</i>, that either the local board, or any of its members, has engaged in fraud or abuse, as those terms are used within <i>29 U.S.C. §2832(c)(3)(A)</i>, 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 negotiated performance outcomes for the area's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding for Program Year 2016 and Program Year 2017. The recommendation for WDB

Item	Required Materials and Information
	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.

Resource Materials provided:

- SETC Policy Resolutions are available at njsetc.net/njsetc/policy/resolutions/
- SETC WDB Certification materials are available at njsetc.net/njsetc/policy/certification/
 - WDB Membership List Template in Excel (Updated version 9-19-2018)
 - WDB Membership List for Website (Updated version 9-18-2018)
 - WDB Annual Report Guidance (Updated version 9-19-2018)
 - Guidance on WDB Evaluation Reports (Updated version 9-19-2018)
- WDB Member Handbook, published by SETC, May 2007 – available at njsetc.net/njsetc/policy/wibhandbook/

POLICY RESOLUTION SETC #2018-03

Subject: Shared Youth Vision Council - New Vision and Mission

Purpose: The State Employment and Training Commission serves as an entity that provides policy guidance and strategic leadership on state and federal regulations, coordinates various aspects of the workforce board, and ultimately serves the public to ensure that resources are maximized and fair for all. The Shared Youth Vision Council adheres and works under this mission, respectively. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Youth programs provide services through New Jersey’s local One Stop Career Centers to low-income youth, aged 14-24, who face barriers to employment. Youth services strategies developed by New Jersey’s workforce providers, prepare youth for employment and/or post-secondary education through strong linkages between academic and occupational learning. Due to the existence of multiple mission and vision statements, the Shared Youth Vision Council recommends establishing new, clear statements to reflect the intent of the council.

Background: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides resources to support services to three specific populations; Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth. As the State Workforce Board, the State Employment and Training Commission utilizes a committee structure to fulfill its responsibilities under WIOA. The Shared Youth Vision Council considers the needs of youth and the organizations providing related services to the population. It is currently one of five committees/councils under the auspices of the SETC:

- Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education
- State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES)
- Governance
- Performance

- Shared Youth Vision Council

In reviewing information related to the Shared Vision Youth Council, it was noted that there were multiple mission and vision statements in existence. With the Youth Council Chair, it was agreed that a single version of each should exist and that an iterative process should be used to develop consensus statements. The Youth Council and stakeholders, a group of approximately 30 people met to review the existing statements, the goals of WIOA and the needs of young people.

Members and stakeholders included representatives of State offices, leadership and youth program staff of local workforce development organizations and representatives of community/faith-based organizations. A Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) analysis was used by the group facilitator to develop the new vision and mission statements; subsequent edits were made and additional stakeholder input was solicited to develop the statements below. The Shared Youth Vision Council agreed in unanimity to move these statements to the full Commission for its consideration.

RESOLUTION: The Shared Youth Vision Council recommends that the SETC adopt the following Vision and Mission Statements to reflect the goals and purpose of the Shared Youth Vision Council.

SYVC Vision: *Providing and guiding youth to education, employment, retention of employment, and nationally recognized credentials.*

SYVC Mission: *The Shared Youth Vision Council recommends service, policy and program components that serve youth at the local level in the workforce system, and recommends or assists in the programs and services that focus on youth workforce policy that best serve the needs of clients. With a focus on ensuring quality services for NJ's youth, we will define success by the creation of a highly skilled, motivated, and conscientious workforce to help strengthen New Jersey's economic future.*

Commission Approved: November 13, 2018

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2018-05

SUBJECT: New Jersey WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Funds Transfer Requests

Purpose: This policy will identify the process for local workforce development boards (WDBs) in New Jersey to request a transfer of funds between WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, to ensure a transparent and equitable process for the use of such funds in New Jersey.

Background: The guidance letter, TEGL 19-16, issued by US Department of Labor-Employment and Training Administration (USDOL-ETA), indicates that WIOA sec. 133(b)(4) provides the authority for Local WDBs, with the written approval of the Governor, to expend up to 100 percent of the Adult activities funds on Dislocated Worker activities, and up to 100 percent of Dislocated Worker activities funds on Adult activities. Governors must have a written policy in place to evaluate transfer requests from local workforce areas which is documented in the State Plan or another written policy.

In TEGL 19-16, USDOL-ETA "encourages the Governor's policy to take into account the employment and service needs of the local area (both job seekers and employers), current labor market information and demographics, consistency with broader strategies in the local plan,

meeting the Local Area's negotiated levels of performance, and any other considerations the Governor considers necessary to determine the appropriateness of a transfer. Expenditures of monies transferred between the local dislocated workers and adult programs are reported on the ETA-9130 reports. ETA notes when considering such transfers that career and training services must continue to be made available to both adults and dislocated workers in the American Job Centers (see WIOA sec. 134(c)(1))."

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has created the attached process template for use by local WDBs in New Jersey, when requesting the transfer of funds between WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

RESOLUTION: The State Employment and Training Commission hereby resolves that the State of New Jersey and its WIOA programs, delivered through the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and New Jersey's local workforce development boards, will use the attached template and process to effect transfers of funds between WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker accounts at the local level.

Commission Approved: November 13, 2018

Attachment: Draft NJWIN 4-15 Adult-DW Funds Transfer Procedures (Change 2)

New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notice 4-15, Change 2 (F)

TO: Workforce Development system

SUBJECT: WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Funds Transfer Authority

DATE:

Purpose: To provide the revised procedures for the transfer of funds between the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

Background: Local workforce development boards, with the approval of the Governor, have the authority to transfer up to 100 percent of the Adult Activities funds to Dislocated Worker Activities, and up to 100 percent of the Dislocated Worker Activities funds to Adult Activities. There is no authority to transfer funds to or from the Youth Activities Program.

Procedure: To request a transfer of funds between the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker funds, a local workforce development board (LWDB) must complete the WIOA Title IB Adult and Dislocated Worker Transfer Request Form (attached). The form must be completed by the WDB Chair, the entire board must be notified and the transfer must be recorded in the LWDB's minutes.

Criteria: The WIOA Final Rules at 29 CFR 683.130 requires the development of criteria that will be considered when determining whether to approve transfer requests. The criteria are provided below:

Adult transfer to Dislocated Worker: The LWDB must certify that they have sufficient adult funds (i.e. TANF, GA, WIOA Adult) to serve the WIOA Adult priority population (public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals and basic skills deficient individuals) in the local area.

Dislocated Worker to Adult: The LWDB must determine that there will be enough funds available to serve dislocated workers in their area. The LWDB must also determine that there are no pending layoffs that may impact need for Dislocated Worker services in the local area.

Contracts: A local WDB may not request a transfer of funds if any local area contracts between LWD and the LWDB are outstanding.

Additional Factors: The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development will examine relevant fiscal and program data, including participant service levels and accruals/expenditure reports upon receipt of the transfer request as part of the review process. For requests to transfer funds from the Dislocated Worker Program, the State will consider any impact on potential eligibility for National Dislocated Worker Grants. LWDBs should be aware that under-spending and a lack of or limited number of participants for a particular funding stream does not automatically provide justification for transfer of funds to another program. The LWDB must make every available effort to (a) expend the program funds appropriately in accordance with the area's economic and business environment and for Adult funds, the mandatory priority of service; (b) explore innovative ideas for outreach/marketing services. Additional information may be required for any requests to transfers of greater than 50 percent. If the transfer is approved, a notification will be sent to the Chief Elected Official serving as the Grant Recipient, with a copy to the LWDB Director and Fiscal Coordinator. If the transfer is denied, the LWDB will be notified.

All transfer requests for a Program Year allocation must be received by LWD no later than June 30th, the last day of that Program Year.

Completing the Transfer Request Form: The following are the instructions for completing the Transfer Request Form.

1. Enter the Program Year, the date the form is being submitted and the name of the local Workforce Development Area.
2. Provide a detailed explanation of why the request is necessary. This explanation can be copied and pasted from a Word document into the text box in the form.
3. Specify whether the local area contracts between LWD and the local WDB for the current and previous two program years have been signed.
4. **Field A1:** Enter the current program year allocation for WIOA Title IB Adult funds.
5. **Field A2:** If there was a previous transfer from the Dislocated Worker Program into the Adult program in the current program year, enter the amount of that transfer, otherwise enter "0" or leave blank.
6. **Field A3:** If making a new transfer request from Adult to Dislocated Worker funds, enter the amount requested to be transferred into the Dislocated Worker funds.
7. **Field A4:** If there was a previous transfer from the Adult Program into the Dislocated Worker program in the current program year, enter the amount of that transfer, otherwise enter "0" or leave blank.
8. **Field B1:** Enter the current program year allocation for WIOA Title IB Dislocated Worker funds.
9. **Field B2:** If there was a previous transfer made from the Adult Program into the Dislocated Worker program in the current program year, enter the amount of that transfer, otherwise enter "0" or leave blank.

10. **Field B3:** If making a new transfer request from Dislocated Worker to Dislocated Worker funds, enter the amount requested to be transferred into the Dislocated Worker funds.
11. **Field B4:** If there was a previous transfer from the Dislocated Worker Program into the Adult program in the current program year, enter the amount of that transfer, otherwise enter "0" or leave blank.

NOTE: The percentages of funds being transferred, and the new total resulting from transfers will be calculated automatically.

1. Enter the currently available funds for each of the following programs:
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - General Assistance (GA)
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
1. Enter the amount of funds currently expended on occupational training in the program year on the following programs:
 - TANF
 - GA
 - SNAP

NOTE: The amounts of these funds are included to provide the full scope of the local area resources. The TANF, GA, and SNAP funds are not part of the transfer request.

1. If requesting to transfer funds from the Dislocated Worker program to the Adult program, the LWDB must ensure that there are sufficient funds to serve dislocated workers in their area. The local authorized personnel completing the form must initial and date this assurance.
1. If requesting to transfer funds from the Dislocated Worker program to the Adult program, the LWDB must determine that there are no pending layoffs in the local area that will impact the need for Dislocated Worker funding.
1. The LWDB Chair must provide the date, their name, and signature on the form. This request, and its outcomes, must then be shared with the full board and recorded in the board meeting minutes.

Once completed, the form must be e-mailed to William.sarboukh@dol.nj.gov; john.bicica@dol.nj.gov; and cc: joann.brooks@dol.nj.gov .

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2019-01

Subject: Shared Youth Vision Council – Decision Making Tool

Purpose: The New Jersey Shared Youth Vision Council has determined a need for a consistent discussion of local Workforce Development Board/Youth Council responsibilities. To allow for that consistency, a "Youth Council Decision Making Model" has been developed to be shared with local workforce development entities with associated technical assistance made available.

Background: The State Employment Training Commission serves as an entity that provides policy guidance and strategic leadership on state and federal regulations, coordinates various aspects of the workforce board, and ultimately serves the public to ensure that resources are maximized and fair for all. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides resources to support services to three specific populations; Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth.

As the State Workforce Board, the State Employment and Training Commission utilizes a committee structure to fulfill its responsibilities under WIOA. Specifically, the SETC's Shared Youth Vision Council (SYVC) represents the coordinated workforce partnership. The council considers the needs of youth and the organizations providing related services to the population.

In reviewing information shared by local Workforce Development Boards, it was noted that there were multiple interpretations of what a Youth Council is, its role, and the different approaches that may be utilized to serve the population. Given the volunteer nature of the Youth Councils, and also understanding that level of undertaking may differ by project and by local area, a draft decision-making aide was considered by the SYVC. Over time and with the SYVC guidance/input, the "*Youth Council Decision Making Model*" was created. It was derived and based upon the document ***Recipes for Success: A Youth Committee Guide Under WIOA*** (published by USDOL).

The purpose of the tool is to consider the role of the local Youth Council, its interaction with local workforce staff, and its level of involvement. This draft was shared with local workforce development areas to evaluate its focus and assist its local youth committee's understanding and focus of what may be effectuated as a result. The tool includes policy direction, resource leveraging, performance improvement, and planning.

With the SYVC Chair, it was agreed a "Youth Listening Tour" (7/23/19 – 08/29/19) take place. The purpose of the visits would be to review the tool and foster partnerships and consensus, evaluate and discuss the model, determine the need for associated technical assistance, and to collect meaningful information and best practices that may be helpful and actionable objectives to empower other areas in the state of New Jersey. This tour resulted in input/discussion with 12 of the 17 local workforce development areas in New Jersey.

RESOLUTION: The Shared Youth Vision Council recommends establishing an optional tool to assist local Youth Councils' understanding and to assist youth service staff that reflects the current distinctiveness of the Council.

Commission Approved: November 19, 2019



Youth Council Decision Making Model

Objectives	Level of Involvement				
	Staff Initiates	Staff Handles	Required	Board/Council Initiates	Board/Council Handles
Policy Direction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
System Design	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Resource Leveraging	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Performance Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Oversight	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Based upon "Recipes For Success: A Youth Committee Guide under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act WIOA."

Attachment 3: Based Upon, "Recipes For Success: A Youth Committee Guide under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act WIOA"

Glossary:

Policy Direction – Policy-related pieces that aim to inform and improve policy over a wide range of subjects by providing a broader policy context for the topic and relating it to the wider issues around constrained decision making. Moving board and system towards desired goal which should include a board collaborated mission and vision statement(s).

System Design – System design is the defining of the elements in a system including its structure, modules, and components; the different interfaces of those components, and the data that goes through that system. It is meant to satisfy the needs and requirements of a business or organization through the engineering of a coherent and well-running system. WIOA specifically includes the directives in youth procurement which is the act of obtaining or buying goods and services. The process includes preparation and processing of a demand as well as the end receipt and approval of payment.

Resource Leveraging - Propose the design of a comprehensive workforce development system to ensure a full range of services and opportunities for all youth, including disconnected youth: suggest ways to leverage resources and coordinate services among schools, public programs, and community-based organizations (CBOs) serving youth. This should also include employers who effectively employ or provide appropriate services to youth.

Planning - Youth Committees can provide a comprehensive program for youth development as well as determining the workforce needs of the area. The Committee can coordinate youth policy, ensure quality services, and leverage financial and programmatic resources. The committee can also recommend policy direction to the Local WDB for the design, development, and implementation of programs that benefit all youth.

Performance Improvement - Under the provisions of WIOA; Youth Committees can provide a

mechanism for leadership, advocacy for youth issues, and an enhanced focus on youth workforce development. The committee shall help to identify weaknesses and gaps in services to develop strategies to use in competitive selections or community partnerships to address the unmet needs of youth as well as provide ongoing leadership and support for continuous quality improvement for local youth programs. Youth councils also have responsibilities centered on the basis of making continuous modifications to enhance the daily operations of the programs; respectively.

Oversight – Oversee eligible youth providers, as well as other youth program oversight responsibilities. Youth councils are generally the leading bodies in the area and they are accountable for preparing strategic and restorative oversight plans and structures tailored to the needs of their board, and local workforce system. (Oversight and monitoring are not synonymous.)

Staff Initiates- The staff may compile youth data and present it to the Youth Committee. After discussion, the Committee may decide to have the program targeted towards certain industries or trends that the staff initiated research provided. (staff comes up with ideas)

Staff Handles- Refers to matters or information that related Youth staff may undertake/resolve on their own. An example may be the compilation of youth labor market information. A staff member may compile the data on their own and present it to the Board. (implementation)

Required- A federal or state requirement may ask that all services be tied to demand in the local/regional economy. The Youth staff and Board would need to discuss valid related data to document its program design.

Board/Council Initiates- At a meeting, a Youth Council member is made aware of demand in a certain industry. At the next Youth Council meeting, that member leads a discussion which resolves with the Council asking the staff to pursue the field as an area of opportunity in their service structure for youth. Youth Councils and WDB staff should also constantly find ways to reach and engage the business community and employers.

Board/Council Handles- On a voluntary basis, the Youth Council may go to different employers in a specific industry. As a part of this effort they develop a set of needs/training areas that they deliver to the Youth Council and staff at its next meeting.

Considerations for Shared Youth Vision Visit to Local Workforce Areas

1. Resource Leveraging - Propose the design of a comprehensive workforce development system to ensure a full range of services and opportunities for all youth, including disconnected youth: Suggest ways to leverage resources and coordinate services among schools, public programs, and community-based organizations (CBOs) serving youth. This should also include employers who effectively employ or provide appropriate services to youth.

Resource Leveraging Question: What sort of resources (levels) do you dedicate to your youth services? How do you decide what to internalize versus procurement to other entities? Are your Youth programs integrated with other services provided in your area or are they stand-alone efforts? If integrated, who are the partners and how do you make certain costs are pro-rated appropriately? In a joint effort, how are assessments and results handled (e.g. information shared among partners)? (i.e. – weaving of services)

2. System Design – System design is the defining of the elements in a system including its structure, modules, and components; the different interfaces of those components and the data that goes through that system. It is meant to satisfy the needs and requirements of a business or organization through the engineering of a coherent and well-running system. WIOA specifically includes the directives in youth procurement which is the act of obtaining or buying goods and services. The process includes preparation and processing of a demand as well as the end receipt and approval of payment.

System Design Question: How did you and your board/council develop your youth system

design? How has it changed over the years? How is the local workforce development board and youth council involved in the design and procurement of youth programs? Do they approve solicitations or recommendations? Are members involved in any facet of negotiation/contracting?

3. Policy Direction – Policy-related pieces that aim to inform and improve policy over a wide range of subjects by providing a broader policy context for the topic and relating it to the wider issues around constrained decision making. Moving Board and system towards desired goal which should include a board collaborated mission and vision statement(s).

Policy Direction Question: How do you consider the perspective and desires of young people in the design of youth services? Is there a Youth Council in the area? Does the committee aim to inform and improve youth related policies? Have these policies been approved/implemented? Who are the members of the youth board? Does it include community, faith-based or local service organizations? Are any service providers in the group? Businesses/Employers? How?

4. Performance Improvement - Under the provisions of WIOA; Youth Committees can provide a mechanism for leadership, advocacy for youth issues, and an enhanced focus on youth workforce development. The committee shall help to identify weaknesses and gaps in services to develop strategies to use in competitive selections or community partnerships to address the unmet needs of youth as well as provide ongoing leadership and support for continuous quality improvement for local youth programs. Youth councils also have responsibilities centered on the basis of making continuous modifications to enhance the daily operations of the programs; respectively.

Performance Improvement Question: Is there a specific group or population that is served in the local workforce board's youth program? Is there a stakeholder group in place that advocates for youth issues and identifies gaps in services in order to develop methods to address the unmet needs of the population? What are the important client and system characteristics shared with the Board/Council in the design of youth services? How does success get reported to the Youth Council and Workforce Development Board?

5. Planning - Youth Committees can provide a comprehensive program for youth development as well as determining the workforce needs of the area. The Committee can coordinate youth policy, ensure quality services, and leverage financial and programmatic resources. The committee can also recommend policy direction to the Local WDB for the design, development, and implementation of programs that benefit all youth;

Planning Question: How are service trends/enrollment levels shared with the Board/Council? How do they react to increases/decreases in clients or funding? How is that shared with the Board/Council; what is done? What stakeholders are involved in the design and planning of youth programs? How does the area ensure that Youth Programs satisfy the required 14 program elements? Is there a plan of some sort in place that coordinates and ensures quality services and the leveraging of financial and programmatic resources? Are there specific targets for those services?

6. Oversight – Oversee eligible youth providers, as well as other youth program oversight responsibilities. Youth councils are generally the leading bodies in the area and they are accountable for preparing strategic and restorative oversight plans and structures tailored to the needs of their board, and local workforce system. (Oversight and monitoring are not synonymous.)

Oversight Question: What is reported to Youth Council and Workforce Development Staff and what is the frequency of reporting? Is there a feedback loop? Are Youth services tied to needs?

a. Those of the youth?

b. Those of area employers

c. Is someone overseeing these youth/youth providers and ensuring that these responsibilities are properly allocated and completed? Has program performance been reviewed?

Please review the questions. Are there any you would like to change or anything you wish to include? These visits should be concluded by the Summer and will include a written comparison of the different areas and what he found. This will help us move the Council forward and hopefully provide some positive perspective in what may be done to improve services for young people.

SYVC Vision: Providing and guiding youth to education, employment, retention of employment, and nationally recognized credentials.

SYVC Mission: The Shared Youth Vision Council recommends service, policy and program components that serve youth at the local level in the workforce system. The council also recommends or assists in the programs and services that focus on youth workforce policy; with a focus on ensuring quality services for NJ's youth. We will define success by the creation of a highly skilled, motivated, and conscientious workforce to help strengthen New Jersey's economic future.

Purpose: The State Employment and Training Commission serves as an entity that provides policy guidance and strategic leadership on state and federal regulations, coordinates various aspects of the workforce board, and ultimately serves the public to ensure that resources are maximized and fair for all. The Shared Youth Vision Council adheres and works under this mission respectively. Under the new transition of leadership; there has been increased attention paid to the Youth of the State, as well as the staff that service them. Subsequently, a youth operations office was designed to better coordinate, align, and analyze the true issues and solutions that can impact youth. The SETC identifies and analyzes critical issues relating to workforce readiness and provides recommendations as a result. Subsequently, the SETC has found the endless value for effective youth programming; in the Spring 2017 edition of "Recipes For Success: A Youth Committee Guide under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)." This gives youth and the staff that serves them all the information that they need to run a successful youth council that is proactive, equipped, and dedicated to serving the youth of the state of New Jersey.

Why: While the SYVC is not the operating body of the state, it is still imperative to have someone behind the scenes analyzing the fundamental services that are needed. Furthermore, the SETC has researched, collected, and promulgated the aims and ideals of the Spring 2017 "Recipes For Success: A Youth Committee Guide under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)" article and summarized the information into a graph reflective of the key elements in establishing and maintaining a dynamic and proactive youth committee.

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2020-01

SUBJECT: NJ Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 2020

Collaborative Process to Develop the NJ Combined State Plan: The SETC partnered with the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL), and other key stakeholders, to create the NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA, 2020. The foundation of this Combined Plan commenced with Governor Murphy's vision for a stronger and fairer New Jersey. Over the last two years, NJDOL and SETC have established more intentional and regular input and feedback mechanisms with the wide range of stakeholder groups and, where applicable, the associations and organizations that represent them. In building a foundation for this plan, NJDOL and SETC also collaborated with and received input from the Governor's Jobs and Economic Opportunity Council and the NJ Future of Work Task Force, and engaged with partner agencies and groups to

inform their plans, such as the NJ Department of Education (NJDOE) Perkins V Plan for Career and Technical Education and the NJ Department of Human Services.

The primary foundation of this Combined State Plan is Governor Murphy's *Jobs NJ: Developing Talent to Grow Business in the Garden State*, which was published in January 2020. Coinciding with its release, the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, under the auspices of the SETC, conducted eight stakeholder sessions with the purpose to gain insight and input to inform this Combined Plan from across five major stakeholder groups:

- Practitioners of literacy, youth, social services and supports, and disability services
- Local Workforce Development Boards
- Employers and Business Associations
- Education Partners, including state government agencies, community colleges, vocational/technical council, school boards and education associations
- State Partners, including state government agencies, planning authorities, labor and industry organizations and community and faith-based groups

The sessions were focused broadly on the ways in which New Jersey's workforce development ecosystem – including but not limited to the programs included in this Combined Plan – could be aligned and advanced to provide equal access to opportunity for all while supporting the growth of the State's economy. They were anchored in the three strategies outlined in *Jobs NJ*: expand access to opportunity, train individuals for in-demand jobs, and match talent to jobs.

Public Comment Period and Submission: The draft New Jersey Combined State Plan for WIOA, 2020 will be released for Public Comment in March 2020. The Combined State Plan will be submitted to USDOL/USDOE prior to April 1, 2020, with the public comment period completed. Any comments received will be included in the State Plan and updates will be made to the Plan as appropriate. The final State Plan will be posted on the SETC website at www.njsetc.net.

RESOLUTION: The State Employment and Training Commission hereby resolves to approve the release of the draft NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA, 2020 for public comment, and the subsequent submission of the State Plan 2020, with associated public comments, to the US Departments of Labor and Education by March 31, 2020, as required.

Commission Approval: February 26, 2020

WD-PY19-6.1: WIOA Eligibility and Self-Attestation Policy

New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notice

Issued By: Workforce Development Division of Career Services

Approved By: Hugh Bailey, Assistant Commissioner, Workforce Development

Issued Date: Revised January 13, 2020

1. SUBJECT: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Eligibility and Self-Attestation Policy

2. PURPOSE: This policy is intended to outline the baseline criteria that local areas, one-

stop operators, vendors and providers should apply to determine eligibility for WIOA career services.

3. EFFECTIVE DATE: This NJWIN is effective immediately.

4. BACKGROUND: Registration is the process of collecting information to support a determination of eligibility. This information may be collected through methods that include electronic data transfer, personal interview, and/or an individual's application. Participation occurs after the registration process and begins when the individual receives a staff-assisted WIOA service, which does not include self-service or informational activities.

5. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY:

I. Title I Adult: To be eligible to participate in the WIOA Title I Adult program, that is, to receive career services, and to meet the eligibility requirements for training services, the individual must be:

- Age 18 or older;
- A citizen or noncitizen authorized to work in the United States; and
- Meet selective service registration requirements, if a male 18 or older, born on or after January 1, 1960.

II. Title I Dislocated Worker: To be eligible for participation in the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program, that is to receive career services, and to meet the eligibility requirements for training services, the individual must meet 75% of the WIOA adult eligibility requirements and at least one of the following five categories:

1. Terminated/Laid off:

1.1 Has been terminated or laid off or has received a notice of termination or layoff from employment;

1.2 Is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation;

or:

a) Has been employed for a duration sufficient to demonstrate attachment to the workforce, but is not eligible for unemployment compensation due to insufficient earnings or having performed services for an employer that were not covered under State unemployment compensation law; and b) Is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation.

2. Permanent Closure/ Substantial Layoff:

2.1 Has been terminated or laid off, or has received a notice of termination or layoff, from employment as a result of any permanent closure of, or any substantial layoff at, a plant, facility, or enterprise;

2.2 Is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close within 180 days; or

2.3 Is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close.

3. Formerly Self-Employed: Was self-employed (including employment as a farmer, a rancher, or a fisherman) but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community in which the individual resides or because of natural disasters.

4. Displaced Homemaker:

4.1 Has been dependent on the income of another family member, but is no longer supported by that income; or

4.2 Is the dependent spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty and whose family

income is significantly reduced because of a deployment, a call or order to active duty, a permanent change of station or the service-connected death or disability of the member; and

4.3 Is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

5. Spouse of a member of the Armed Forces:

5.1 Is a spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty and who has experienced a loss of employment as a direct result of relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of such member; or

5.2 Is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty who is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

Ill. Title I Youth: To receive WIOA youth services, an individual must be enrolled as a youth participant. Enrollment requires the collection of information to support an eligibility determination. A youth applicant's eligibility is determined at registration. Accordingly, a youth remains eligible to receive youth services within their originally designated category until exited from the program. Both in-school (ISY) and out-of-school youth (OSY) must meet the following basic eligibility requirements: 1) Be a citizen or non-citizen authorized to work in the United States, and 2) Meet selective service registration requirements, if applicable.

1. To be eligible as a WIOA ISY, an individual must be:

1.1 Attending school, including secondary and post-secondary school;

1.2 Between 14 years of age or 21 at time of enrollment² (unless the youth is an individual with a disability who is attending school under state law);

1.3 A low-income individual; and

1.4 One or more of the following:

a) Basic skills deficient;

b) An English language learner;

c) An offender;

d) A homeless individual (as defined in sec. 41403(6) of the Violence Act of 1994, a homeless child or youth (as defined in sec. 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Act, or a runaway;

e) An individual in foster care or who has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of aged and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under Sec. 477 of the Social Security Act, or in an out-of-home placement;

f) An individual who is pregnant or parenting;

g) An individual with a disability; or

h) An individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

2. To be eligible as a WIOA OSY, an individual must be:

2.1 Not attending any school

2.2 Between 16 years of age or 24 at time of enrollment; and

2.3 One or more of the following:

a) A school dropout;

b) A youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter, based on the definition of the

local school district of school year quarters. In cases where schools do not use quarters, local programs must use calendar year quarters;

c) A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner;

d) An offender;

e) A homeless individual (as defined in sec. 41403{6} of the Violence Act of 1994, a homeless child or youth (as defined in sec. 725{2} of the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Act, or a runaway:

f) An individual in foster care or who has aged out of the foster care system or who has attained 16 years of aged and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, a child eligible for assistance under Sec. 477 of the Social Security Act, or in an out-of-home placement;

g) An individual who is pregnant or parenting;

h) An individual with a disability; or

i) A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

6. ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION GUIDELINES: Workforce system staff must verify eligibility prior to the provision of services. Individuals whose eligibility is not yet determined may receive interim support from Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Title III services as they are universally available without eligibility requirements.

7. SELF-ATTESTATION: Self-attestation should be an option of "last resort" for documenting Title I program eligibility with an exception for OSY.

7.1 Eligible Categories:

a) Adult: Homeless

b) Dislocated Worker:

- Date of actual dislocation
- Displaced homemaker

- Reemployment opportunity is poor/Unlikely to return to work
- Permanently or temporarily laid off as a consequence of a disaster

c) Youth:

- English language learner
- Homeless
- Offender
- Pregnant or parenting
- Requires additional assistance
- In/aged out of foster care
- Runaway
- School status at time of registration

d) Income: Proof of income for individuals with little or no income (statement should indicate means of support).

e) Dependent Status: Used if a person would normally be included in the definition of a family, but is claiming to no longer be dependent (statement should be from made by the head of household, not the applicant).

7.2 Permissible Circumstances:

- Acceptable Use: To ease burdens on both applicants and providers who serve OSY who are most in need, self-attestation for OSY for WIOA eligibility determination will be permitted.
- Undue Hardship: Self-attestation is permissible in rare instances in which it may cause undue hardship for applicants to verify eligibility, particularly those with barriers to employment.
- Lost Documentation: Self-attestation may be accepted from an individual who has experienced a loss of documentation due to natural or man-made disasters (fire, flood, tornado, etc.);

eviction from residence resulting in a loss of supporting documentation; or individual is fleeing or has fled an abusive or untenable home situation. Staff may utilize supportive services to assist

participants recover their legal documents. Once recovered, their file must be updated to contain required documentation.

7.3 Types of Self-Attestation:

- **Applicant Statement:** A Self-Attestation form (Attachment A) is the least preferred method of documenting and verifying eligibility. If an applicant statement is used, a rationale must be provided via case notes in America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS) describing other attempts at verifying eligibility prior to allowing self-attestation.

- **Telephone Verification and Document Inspection:** Preferred over self-attestation, providers/vendors are encouraged to use telephone verification with recognized governmental or social service agencies and/or by documentation inspection verification to verify eligibility, especially in consideration of individuals with barriers to employment. The information obtained must be verified and recorded on a Telephone/Document Inspection Verification form (Attachment B). Information recorded must be adequate to enable a monitor or auditor to report back to the cognizant agency or the document used.

8. SELF-ATTESTATION VERIFICATION: To ensure optimum compliance with this policy and the guidelines set forth by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL), all Youth and Adult and Dislocated Workers who use self-attestation will be randomly verified.

9. KEY DEFINITIONS:

"Attending School" - Youth are considered to be "attending school" if they receive services from any one of the public or non-public institutions listed in the table below. Those being home-schooled or privately tutored would be considered attending school for the purpose of WIOA Title 1-B youth eligibility determination. A youth enrolled at a post-secondary institution would also be considered attending school. (See related "Enrolled in School.")

Public Schools	Non-Public Schools
School Districts	Sectarian Schools
Charter Schools	Private Schools
Cyber Charter Schools	
Area Vocational Technical Schools	

"Age of Compulsory School Attendance" - The period in a child's life when he/ she is required to enter and attend school. In general, all children must continue education through high school. According to New Jersey education law, the timeframe for compulsory school attendance is no later than age 8 up to the age of 17 or graduation from a high school, whichever occurs first (except as otherwise provided by law). Students of compulsory school age are not required to enroll in public school if they:

- Have already graduated from high school;
- Are employed consistent with the applicable provisions of Section 1330;

Are enrolled in a private tutoring program;

- Are participating in a home education program; or
- Are enrolled in a non-public school.

"Basic Skills Deficient" - A youth, who has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test;5 or is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

"Displaced Homemaker" - An individual who has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home, and has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income; is the dependent spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty and whose family income is significantly reduced because of a deployment, a call or order to active duty, a permanent change of station or the service-connected death or disability of the member; and is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

"Eligible Spouse" - A spouse:

- Of any veteran who died of a service-connected disability;
- Of any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for the priority, is listed in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days: missing in action, captured in the line of duty by a hostile force, or forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power;
- Of any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, as evaluated by the Department of Veterans Affairs; or a spouse of any veteran who died while a disability was in existence;
- Who is a dependent spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty whose family income is significantly reduced because of a deployment, a call or order to active duty, a permanent change of station, or the service-connected death or disability of the service member; and/or
- Who is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

"English Language Learner" - Individual who has limited ability in reading, writing, speaking or comprehending the English language, and his/her native language is a language other than English, or lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.

"Enrolled in School" - A student on the attendance rolls whether or not the student is physically present on any given day.

"Not Attending School" - For the purpose of WIOA Title I-B, a youth is determined to not be attending school if the youth is not receiving services from any one of the public or non-public institutions listed in Table 1 (See page 6). Individuals who are enrolled in adult basic education/GED preparation under Title II of WIOA, skills training, or other remedial education programs, including those offered through publicly and privately funded adult basic education programs, YouthBuild or Job Corps programs, or drop-out re-engagement programs are categorized as not attending school. Eligibility for these services is to be based on the educational status of a youth, not on the location or funding source of the entity providing the service(s). Therefore, such youth must be categorized as OSY for the purposes of registration in New Jersey's system of record, America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS). Youth attending high school equivalency programs funded by the public K-12 school system who are classified by the school system as still enrolled in the school are an exception, they are considered in-school youth. (20 CFR 681.220)

"Homeless Individual" - An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes an individual who is: sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; is living in a motel, hotel, trailer park or campground due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; is living in an emergency or transitional shelter; is abandoned in a hospital; is awaiting foster care placement; and/or has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

"Low-Income Individual" - A recipient of public assistance; is underemployed; is in a family with a total family income that does not exceed the higher of the poverty line or 70% of the lower level standard income level; has a disability whose own. income meets the income requirements outlined above but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet this requirement; is homeless; a foster child; and/or receives or is eligible to receive a free or reduced priced lunch.

"Participant" - A reportable individual who has received services, except individuals in an Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program who have not completed at least 12 contact hours or individuals who only use the self-service system, after satisfying all applicable programmatic requirements for the provision of services, such as eligibility determination. For WIOA Title I youth programs, a participant is a reportable individual who has satisfied all applicable program requirements for the provision of services, including eligibility determination, an objective assessment and development of an Individual Service Strategy, and received 1 of the 14 WIOA youth program elements.

"Recipient of Public Assistance" - An individual who receives, or in the past six months has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving or in the past six months has received assistance through one or more of the following: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the program of block grants to States for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, or State or local income-based public assistance.

"Reportable Individual" - An individual who has taken action that demonstrates an intent to use program services and who meets specific reporting criteria of the program, including: individuals who provide identifying information, individuals who only use the self-service system, or individuals who only receive information-only services or activities.

"School Dropout" - An individual who is no longer 'attending any school' and who has not received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.

"Self-Attestation" - When an individual states his/her status for a particular data element and then signs and dates a form acknowledging this status. The key elements for self-attestation are: the individual identifying his/her status for permitted elements and signing and dating a form attesting that the information provided to demonstrate eligibility for a program under Title I of WIOA is true and accurate.

10. REFERENCES

- Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (VAWA), Public Law 103-322, enacted September 13, 1994
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Public Law 113-128, enacted July 22, 2014
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Regulations, 20 CFR Parts 675, 677, 680, 681

11. ATTACHMENTS:

- Self-Attestation form
- Telephone/Document Inspection Verification form

New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notice 4-15, Change 1(F)

TO: Workforce Development Boards, One-Stop Operators, Employment Service Managers

FROM: John Bicica, Chief

Office of WIOA Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

SUBJECT: WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Transfer Authority

DATE: January 4, 2017

Purpose: To provide the revised procedures for the transfer of funds between the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker programs based on additional requirements in the WIOA Final Rules at 683.130(c). The Final Rules require the State to establish the criteria for the approval of transfer requests; these criteria are provided in this guidance.

Background: Local workforce development boards, with the approval of the Governor, have the authority to transfer up to 100 percent of the Adult Activities funds to Dislocated Worker Activities, and up to 100 percent of the Dislocated Worker Activities funds to Adult Activities. There is no authority to transfer funds to or from the Youth Activities Program.

Requests:

Each request must include the following. Incomplete requests will be returned for additional information:

1. Signature of the local board chair
2. The transfer fund source
3. The dollar amount of the transfer request, including the percentage share of the base allocation (the initial allocation received by the local area at the beginning of the program year) represented by the dollar amount
4. Justification for the transfer that includes the following:
 - The reasons for the request for the transfer
 - An assurance that the transfer will not adversely impact services to participants.
 - All relevant data, including level of service reports and expenditures.

The following criteria will be used in evaluating the request for the transfer of funds:

Dislocated Worker transfer to Adult (Both criteria must be met):

1. The local board must certify that it lacks sufficient funds from other sources to adequately serve the WIOA Adult priority population:
 - Public Assistance Recipients
 - Other Low-Income Individuals
 - Basic Skills Deficient Individuals
2. The local board must certify that it has determined that there are no pending layoffs within their local area that will impact the dislocated worker program.

Adult transfer to Dislocated Worker: The local board must certify that they have sufficient adult funds (i.e. TANF, GA, WIOA Adult) to serve the WIOA Adult priority population (public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals and basic skills deficient individuals) in the local area.

Procedure

The following procedure must be followed when requesting to transfer Adult Activity funds to Dislocated Worker, and Dislocated Worker to Adult Activity:

1) Prior to requesting a transfer of funds, the local area's current program year's signed contract reflecting initial program allocations must have been received and accepted by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

2) A letter requesting a transfer of funds must be sent to Patricia Moran, Ph.D., Assistant Commissioner

Workforce Development, P.O. Box 055, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0055

Please include an electronic copy to John Bicica, Chief, Office of WIOA Technical Assistance and Capacity Building, at john.bicica@dol.state.nj.us.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development will examine relevant fiscal and program data upon receipt of the transfer request as part of the review of the request. For requests to transfer funds from the Dislocated Worker Program, the State will consider any impact on potential eligibility for National Dislocated Worker Grants. Additional information may be required for any requests to transfers of greater than 50 percent.

Reference and Links: WIOA Se. 133(b) (4); 20 CFR 683.130(b)

Rescissions: NJWIN 4-15

Authority: NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development

For any questions regarding this guidance, please contact John Bicica, Chief, WIOA Technical Assistance and Capacity Building at john.bicica@dol.nj.gov.

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2020-02

SUBJECT: New Jersey Local Workforce Development Board Certification Process for 2020-2022 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 WIOA as of July 2016.

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 2020 LWDB Certification process are due to the SETC by February 15, 2021.

Date Activity/Outcome

November 2020 WDB Certification 2020-2022 Process Rollout

Nov 2020 – Feb 2021 Technical Assistance and Capacity Inventory

February 15, 2021 Required Local Area Documents due to the SETC

February 15, 2021 Final Application Form, Signed by Chief LEO, WDB Chair and WDB Director

February – June 2021 SETC vote to approve/deny LWDB Certification Requests

July 2021 LWDB Certification Completed

RESOLUTION:

The State Employment and Training Commission hereby resolves to approve the New Jersey Local WDB

Certification Process for the 2020-2022 cycle, as outlined in the attached application. The signed application

and required documentation are to be provided to the SETC by each Local WDB by February 15, 2021, for

review and certification of the LWDB by the SETC.

Commission Approved: November 17, 2020

Attachment: LWDB Certification Application/Checklist

SETC Resolution #2020-02 (Attachment) Page 1

Application for Local Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification 2020 – 2022

Due Date: February 15, 2021

Submit to: NJ State Employment and Training Commission

Email to: WDBCert2020@dol.nj.gov

Application Submitted by:

This application for recertification is submitted on behalf of the (Local Area) 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 list below, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 12:42-4.

Signature Date

Chief Elected Official: Name, Title, City/County

WDB Chairperson: Name, Local Area Workforce Development Board

WDB Director: Name, Local Area Workforce Development Board

Application for Local WDB Certification 2020-2022

SETC Resolution #2020-02 (Attachment) Page 2

Application materials to be submitted:

1. Local WDB Member List

Use WDB Membership List Template (Excel) provided at <https://www.nj.gov/njsetc/policy/certification/>.

Compliant with SETC Policy Resolution #2015-01 / WIOA Section 107, including:

- o WDB Chairperson is a Business member.
 - o WDB Membership has a 51% business membership.
 - Provide a board development plan to address any membership compliance issues.
2. Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Programs Budget and Local WDB Staff Budget for
- Program Years: PY 2018, PY 2019, and PY 2020
- Required under N.J.S.A. 34:15C-15e(4) for the extant and two preceding program years.
 - Compliant with SETC Policy Resolution #2016-03
 - 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.
 - Local WDB Staff Budget, with a list of current WDB staff, titles/reporting structure, and percent of time allocated to the WDB.
 - Summary of Leveraged Resources, including Grants and Special Initiatives, if applicable.
 - IRS Tax Status Letter / 501(c)3 Status documentation must be provided, if applicable.
3. Local WDB Annual Reports for Program Years: PY 2018 and PY 2019
- Required under N.J.S.A.34:15C-15e(5) for the extant and two preceding program years.
 - Program Year 2017 Annual Reports were collected in the 2018 certification process.
4. Local WDB (Quarterly) Meeting Minutes for Program Years: PY 2018, PY 2019, PY 2020
- For the extant and two preceding program years.
 - Minutes should reflect regular meetings, held at least quarterly.
 - Minutes should reflect the annual LWDB budget approval process.
5. Local WDB Website: (provide URL location)
- Published list of local WDB members: (URL location)
 - Published local WDB meeting minutes: (URL location)
6. Local WDB Committees: List of Active Committees and Membership Lists
- Provide a cover list of all active WDB committees, councils and task forces.
 - Provide a membership list for each active WDB committee, council and task force, including the members' titles and affiliations.
 - Compliant with requirements of N.J.S.A. 34:15C-15, and as outlined in the WDB Member Handbook:
 - o Recommended: Executive Committee
 - o Required: Youth Investment Council; Literacy Committee; One-Stop Operations/OS Partners Committee; Disabilities Committee.
 - The list should indicate which council or committee is responsible for each of the required roles, if the name of the committee/council differs from the required list above. Also indicate which committee is responsible for Business Engagement.
 - Statement of Attestation that regular committee meetings are held (at least quarterly) and that minutes are taken (and approved by members) for these meetings.
- Application for Local WDB Certification 2020-2022
SETC Resolution #2020-02 (Attachment) Page 3
7. Local OSCC Certification: Local WDB confirms its review of the OSCC management and operations:
- OSCC Certification approved by local WDB: Date
 - OSCC Certification package submitted to SETC: Date

8. Local WIOA Plan and Regional WIOA Plan on posted on WDB website: (URL location)
9. Current Contract, MOU, or Letter of Agreement demonstrating the WDB competitive selection of a qualified One-Stop Operator.

Provide copy of the signed document of agreement.

Provide proof of full WDB execution/approval of agreement

10. Local WDB Evaluation Capacity Building:

Local WDB designates a LWDB evaluation officer/liaison and provides their contact information to the

SETC. This staff person will work with SETC and NJDOL staff on evaluation capacity building and future

statewide evaluation activities.

Provide statement of commitment to participate in state-led evaluations, with capacity building

opportunities (for future training/capacity building with SETC and NJDOL staff).

If evaluation activities have been conducted by Local WDB for PY 2018 and/or PY 2019, the local WDB may

provide a brief report on these activities; Include the question to be answered, the activities and the

outcomes of the evaluation (as outlined in the evaluation guidance document provided on the SETC

website: njsetc.net/njsetc/policy/certification/).

Provide any existing tools, including customer satisfaction survey instruments, that are currently used by

the local area for evaluation purposes. (These are being collected for information purposes only.)

Provide suggestions for statewide evaluations, with activities that could be undertaken by all local WDBs in

partnership with NJDOL and SETC.

11. Local Performance Measures – No submission of material required: Local Performance Measures will be

considered per NJAC 12:42-4.4(e), and recommendation for certification will be based on PY 2018 and PY 2019

performance, with consideration for any corrective actions/penalties instituted under NJAC 12:42-3.

Resource Materials provided:

SETC Policy Resolutions are available at njsetc.net/njsetc/policy/resolutions/

SETC WDB Certification materials are available at njsetc.net/njsetc/policy/certification/

o WDB Membership List Template in Excel (version date)

o WDB Membership List for Website (version date)

o WDB Annual Report Guidance (version date)

o Guidance on WDB Evaluation Reports (version date)

WDB Member Handbook, published by SETC, May 2007 – available at

njsetc.net/njsetc/policy/wibhandbook/

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2022-01

Subject: Shared Youth Vision Council – Youth Voice Framework

Purpose

The New Jersey Shared Youth Vision Council has determined a need for a consistent discussion of an authentic youth voice throughout New Jersey's workforce development areas. To allow for

that consistency and inclusion, a “Youth Voice Framework” is being requested of local workforce development entities with associated technical assistance made available.

Background

The State Employment Training Commission (SETC) serves as an entity that provides policy guidance and strategic leadership on state and federal regulations, coordinates various aspects of the workforce board, and ultimately serves the public to ensure that resources are maximized and equitable for all. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides resources to support services to three specific populations; Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth.

As the State Workforce Board, the State Employment and Training Commission utilizes a committee structure to fulfill its responsibilities under WIOA. Specifically, the SETC’s Shared Youth Vision Council (SYVC) represents the coordinated workforce partnership. The council considers the needs of youth and the organizations providing related services to the population. As WIOA allows the State Workforce Board to develop other policies that may promote statewide objectives for and enhance the performance of the workforce development system in the State, the following request is brought to the SETC.

In reviewing information shared by federal, state and local youth leaders as well as considering how the current pandemic has impacted the development, delivery and provision of services for this population, it was noted that there may be multiple interpretations of Youth Voice, its role, and how it may be utilized to serve, enhance and engage the young people. Given the volunteer nature of the Youth Councils, and also understanding that level of undertaking may differ by project and by local workforce development area, a youth voice framework is suggested to create a consistency of understanding. Following four meetings with federal, state and local speakers, research, discussions, with the SYVC guidance/input, the SYVC initiated efforts and reached an agreement that the Youth Voice Framework is a needed area of inclusion. The purpose of the policy resolution is to initiate consideration of efforts to raise awareness, importance, and value of the youth population in the state of New Jersey. It requests that local workforce development areas develop a more formalized method to include the input of the young people to be served, in the design, development, implementation and delivery of services targeted to their participation. This construct should be developed in consideration of the diversity, inclusivity and equity needs of the respective workforce development area and the population which it serves.

To ensure that this accumulated effort and related information benefits young people at a state level and

that it may be shared and used as an effective tool in shaping programs and services for young people, it is also strongly recommended the SYVC construct a mechanism where the input from the local frameworks are made available on a larger scale and that it works with and recognizes these local efforts.

RESOLUTION:

The New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission strongly urges the local workforce development areas to develop, effectuate, and include a Youth Voice framework that utilizes the direct input of the target population to be served and that their input be used in the design, development, implementation and delivery of youth services.

Commission Approved: April 6, 2022

POLICY RESOLUTION: SETC #2022-02

Subject: NJ Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 2022 Modification

Process to Modify the NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA

In December of 2021, the US Departments of Labor and Education jointly released guidance for the required modification of existing State Plans under WIOA, with a required submission date of March 15, 2022. Prior to the due date, due to the impacts of the pandemic and resource implications, both federal parties were informed of a submission delay.

The SETC partnered with the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD), and other key stakeholders, to review and modify the existing Plan. Special attention was given to areas of the Plan where activities were successfully completed, where planned activities did not occur, or where new information was now available. These changes were included on the agenda with the SETC on April 6, 2022.

Public Comment Period and Submission

The draft New Jersey Combined State Plan for WIOA, 2018 Modification will be released for Public Comment in April 2022 for a period of approximately one month. The Combined State Plan Modification will be submitted to USDOL/DOE, with the public comment period completed after comments are received, catalogued and shared as appropriate. Any comments received will be included in the State Plan Modification, and updates made to the Plan as appropriate. The Plan will be submitted to USDOL/DOE and the final State Plan Modification will be posted on the SETC website at www.njsetc.net.

RESOLUTION: The State Employment and Training Commission hereby resolves to approve the release of the draft NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA, 2022 Modification for public comment, and the subsequent submission of the State Plan Modification, with associated public comments, to the US Departments of Labor and Education upon completion, as required.

Commission Review: April 6, 2022

From the NJ SETC meeting of April 6 - modification presentation



2022 Combined State Plan Modification

Workforce Partnership

NJDOL and NJDHS

Changes and Purpose



2022 Combined State Plan Modification

- December '21 USED and USDOL issued guidance for WIOA plan modifications (4-year plan was submitted in 2020)
- Plan guidance shared with respective partners
- Modifications to be noted include:
 - Impact of pandemic on labor markets
 - Lessons learned from pandemic including virtual services
 - Considerations for diversity, equity and inclusivity
- Board needs to approve modifications to the plan
- Presentations to be made by partners who have done the work

2022 Combined State Plan Modification

Jason Timian

NJDOL, Office of Research and Information

Changes and Purpose



Labor Market Information Updates

- ❖ Pandemic effects in 2020 changed the narrative
 - ❖ New charts and language added to reflect
- ❖ Use of annual average data creates misleading assumptions
 - ❖ Second straight decade of little to no growth?
- ❖ Scales busted, records broken
- ❖ LMI remains a valuable resource to track economy
- ❖ IVCL language removed as we reconsider better methods
 - ❖ Currently published listed should be used as guidance

2022 Combined State Plan Modification

Sheryl Hutchison

NJDOL, Office of Research and Information

Changes and Purpose



NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA, Modification 2022 – NJDOL ORI

- **ETPL Quality Assurance Project: Enhanced data collection to establish quality performance measures and scorecards for training providers**
 - Protect Career Seekers
 - Improve Effectiveness and Efficiency
 - Culture of Transparency and Responsibility for Continuous Improvement
 - New Training Provider Scorecards: Five Domains
 - New NJ Training Explorer Website
- **Evaluations - NJDOL Learning Agenda**
 - WIOA PY 2019 Evaluation of Title I and Title II Integration
 - WIOA PY 2020 Evaluation of Virtual Services (planned)
 - Workforce Data Quality initiative (WDQI) grants from USDOL
 - Leveraging New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System (NJEDS)
- **WIOA Performance Targets – Appendix 1**
 - State Targets for PY 2022 and 2023 – Titles I and III
 - USDOL-ETA Regression Model
 - Local Workforce Area Targets
 - Title II and Title IV Targets



2022 Combined State Plan Modification

Amanda Gerson

NJDHS, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Changes and Purpose



**2022 Combined State
Plan Modification**

**Amanda Gerson
Coordinator of VR and
Transition Services**

- Updated:
 - Program Information
 - WIPA Providers
 - Staffing and Personnel Development
- Added:
 - Collaborations with TACs (NTACT-C; VR TAC-QM and QE; CIT-TAC)
 - COVID response/adjustments (AT Training, Virtual Services)
 - CSNA
 - Employment Services
 - Deaf-Blind Services/Interpreters
 - Performance Targets

2022 Combined State Plan Modification

Karen Carroll

NJDOL, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Changes and Purpose



NJDVRS
2022 Combined State Plan Modification

Karen Carroll, Director



Updates since the prior State Plan:

- Moved out of Workforce Development, now part of the Office of Employment Accessibility Services
- Impact of COVID-19 pandemic- move to virtual services, increased need to focus on outreach
- No longer under an *Order of Selection*
- Implementation of state-wide Benefits Counseling Program for DVRS consumers, Out of School youth services

Current Priorities:

- Focus on Career Pathway Mindset
- WIOA Targeted Performance Metrics
- Collaborations with National Technical Assistance Centers (TACS), obtaining training and TA for staff
- CSNA- focus on underserved populations, collaboration with NJ DDD/developmental disabilities

2022 Combined State Plan Modification

Danielle Jubanyik

NJDOL, Adult Education & Literacy Services

Changes and Purpose



- ❖ Majority of plan updates are regarding the spring 2021 competition for AEFLA Title II funding;
- ❖ The Notice of Grant Opportunity is the application for providers of *demonstrated effectiveness* (past performance data) in order to apply for funding;
- ❖ Federal regulations governing AEFLA at 34 CFR part 463 clarify that only an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services is eligible to apply for AEFLA funds;
- ❖ Eligible applications were reviewed by a fully trained panel and received review/comments from local WDBs as part of the application process;
- ❖ 18 Lead Agencies selected; 66 partners statewide providing adult basic education, civics, and English Language instruction.

2022 New Jersey State Plan Modifications for WIOA Title II

Danielle Jubanyik, Ed.D.
State Director for Adult Education & Literacy Services

2022 Combined State Plan Modification

Patricia Robertson

NJDOL, Agricultural Outreach Plan

Changes and Purpose



NJ State Plan Modification 2022
Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP)

Patricia Robertson, Acting SMA
Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) Program
NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOLE)
April 6, 2022



Migrant and Season Farmworker (MSFW) Program Purpose

Purpose: To locate and contact MSFWs *who are not being reached by normal intake activities* conducted by Employment Service (ES) offices.

Method:

- Provide an adequate number of outreach staff to conduct MSFW outreach in their service areas. Outreach workers must speak the language of a significant proportion of the state MSFW population and be from MSFW backgrounds.
- Coordinate outreach efforts with National Farmworker Jobs Programs (NFJP), public and private community service agencies, and MSFW groups.

Assessment of Needs

- Farmworkers are still in need of COVID related services, including vaccination and testing resources. NJDOL will continue to collaborate with its sister agencies and community partners to ensure MSFWs are made aware of available resources, including appropriate referral methods
- Improved referral systems to pandemic related programs and services, including COVID-19 vaccination, testing, and symptoms management.
- Increased awareness regarding CDC and NJ DOH COVID-19 related guidance and safety recommendations, using culturally and linguistically appropriate tools.

Outreach Activity

Outreach staff will now contact **40 MSFWs** per day on average with a goal of reaching a total of **3,600** through the four local offices during the growing season.

The update to this number reflects:

- NJDOL's reduction in outreach staff: Cumberland Outreach worker
- Implementation of COVID safety precautions for the return of in-person outreach (lesser farms visited)
- Alignment of the definition of outreach with USDOL regulations.

Local Office	# of MSFWs to be Contacted	Staff Days Conducting Outreach	# of Days per Week	# of Farms, Campsites or Gathering Places per Day	# of MSFW Contact per Day
Atlantic	3,600- 900-	90	4	5-2	40-10
Cumberland	3,600-900	90	4	5 2	40-10-
Gloucester	3,600 900-	90	4	5 2	40-10-
Somerset	3,600 900-	90	4	5 2	40-10

Outreach Timeline

Outreach visits are made to the agricultural community from **April to November** with the vast majority of the visits between **May 15 and October 1** to locate and contact MSFWs at their working, living and/or gathering areas to inform them of current One-Stop Career Center



Questions??

2022 Combined State Plan Modification

Sherie Jenkins

NJDOL, Senior Community Service Employment Program

Changes and Purpose



Senior Community Service Employment Program



Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

A community service and work-based job training program for older Americans. Authorized by the Older Americans Act. The program provides training for low-income, unemployed seniors.

Eligibility

- 55 years of age or older
- Have a family income of no more than 125% of the federal poverty level
 - Unemployed
- Willing to participate in training
- Actively seeking employment



Training

The program provides over 40 million community service hours to public and non-profit agencies, allowing them to enhance and provide needed services.



Employment

Training serves as a bridge to increase unsubsidized employment opportunities for participants.



WIOA Mandate



SCSEP Mandated Partner

Links the One-Stop partners in the One-Stop delivery system. The overall effect is to provide universal access for SCSEP participants to career services.

SCSEP resources may only be used to provide services that are authorized and provided under the SCSEP to eligible individuals.

Note: The one allowable SCSEP cost is a SCSEP project's proportionate share of One-Stop costs.
9641.850(d)



Co-enrollment of participants with One-Stops

Individuals who are enrolled in SCSEP should be provided the full array of WIOA training and supportive services.

Individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria to enroll in SCSEP, should be referred to or enrolled in WIOA or other appropriate partner programs. WIOA sec. 121(b)(1).

These arrangements should be negotiated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which is an agreement developed and executed between the Local Workforce Development Board.
20 CFR 678.500 through 678.510

Thank You



2022 Combined State Plan Modification

Yolanda Allen

Sarah Singer-Quest

NJDOL, Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Services

Changes and Purpose



WIOA State Plan Modifications – Workforce Strategy

APRIL 2022

One Stop Career Center Support

Our goal at the state level is to provide resources and tools to our local WDBs that allows for the ongoing innovation and development of services that can help NJ's One Stop Career Centers meet the dynamic needs of our jobseekers and employers.

NJDOL and SETC are committed to:

- Building out centers of **training and technical assistance** across workforce program areas, e.g.:
 - Development of a new learning management system (LMS)
 - Development of new training partnership with GSETA
- Supporting efforts to continue **modernization of systems and investments in technology**, e.g.:
 - Data system modernization
 - Investment in tools like SkillUp New Jersey

Three key support goals for NJDOL and SETC:

1. Integrating partners and services into One Stops
2. Supporting customized strategies for jobseekers and employers
3. Strengthening local governance

Goal 1: Integrating partners and services in One Stops

Functional Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alignment of state staff and local area staff (e.g., ES and Title I) to promote seamless transitions and/or coordinated engagement through co-enrollment
Relationship-Building with Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engagement of all WIOA and NJ required One Stop partners and the various employment and training opportunities they offer into One Stop Career Center service delivery
Service Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of MOUs/IFAs to help support planning and implementation around these relationships

Goal 2: Supporting customized strategies for jobseekers and employers

Business Services (and Work-Based Learning)	Virtual Services	Career Services	Supportive Services
Building capacity to match and fill gaps between employer needs and jobseeker skills and interests through state and local business service functions, particularly in developing and operationalizing work-based learning	Increasing access and engagement through investments in tools that support virtual intake, assessment, and service delivery; thinking about accessibility not only through the lens of physical space but also through virtual service	Emphasizing work readiness and career advisement across WIOA services, including in Wagner Peyser and Title I programs specifically	Leveraging resources across required partners and additional community partners to provide services that reduce barriers to employment beyond specific training-related needs

Goal 3: Strengthening Local Governance

Key Local Workforce Development Board Functions

Procurement	Oversight and Monitoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One Stop Operator Procurement• One Stop Career Services Procurement• Youth Services Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AJC/One Stop Certification• Oversight of contracts:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operator• Career Services• Youth Services

Additional priorities: Expanding use of data

Data Entry Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing quality of data in existing systems through clear and common expectations around data entry
Data Dashboards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working across NJDOL units and SETC to continue to build out data dashboards and tools that support ongoing monitoring
Data System Modernization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engaging in workforce modernization project to update data systems that ease data entry and enhance data use

Additional priorities: Continuing to strengthen youth services

One Stop Integration

Developing systems of youth services that connect to our One-stop Career Centers through direct provision of services, procurement of services, and partnership agreement to provide services

Use of Virtual Technologies

Integration of virtual technologies and mediums to enhance and expand delivery of youth services

Expansion of Pathway Opportunities

Expanding the diversity of youth we serve – providing opportunities at all levels of skill and experience – from individuals with low literacy to individuals with high school degrees disconnected from school or work

Upcoming PY21/PY22 Focus

1. **Local Workforce Development Board governance** – supporting stronger firewalls between governance and operations; supporting key board functions
2. **One Stop Partnerships** – supporting our system in leveraging the full range of resources and expertise available through partners
3. **Expansion of services and populations served** – working as a state and local areas to expand, target, and serve additional priority groups
4. **Expansion of work-based learning opportunities** – supporting local areas in developing systems of work-based learning that draw on local postsecondary, employer, and workforce partners

2022 Combined State Plan Modification

Dennis M. Bone

Chairman

Acceptance of Modifications





New Jersey State Employment
and Training Commission