WIOA STATE PLAN FOR THE STATE OF FLORIDA FY-2018

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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),
- the Wagner-Peyser Act program (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III), and
- the Vocational Rehabilitation program (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 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 and III 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 (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 Program (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))*
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

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* 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 and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 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, and
- 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 and Innovation 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.* States must develop strategies that look beyond strategies for the general population and develop approaches that also address the needs of target populations.

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

Florida is submitting its Unified State Plan Two-Year Modification which includes the following required programs:

- Adult Program
- Dislocated Worker Program
- Youth Program
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
- Wagner-Peyser Act
- Vocational Rehabilitation Program, including Blind Services Program

A unified plan approach was selected for the first plan submitted under WIOA. This plan includes required core partners: CareerSource Florida, the Department of Economic Opportunity and the Department of Education's Divisions of Vocational Rehabilitation, Blind Services and Career and Adult Education.

Florida built on the collaboration established through its WIOA Task Force and smaller workgroups by involving other programs and organizations as needed in workforce system updates and by identifying opportunities for partnerships. This has allowed Florida to be deliberate and thorough in its strategic planning efforts across programs.

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

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. No

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

Indicate which Combined State 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 (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.)) No

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.) No

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.)) No

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development No

Community Services Block Grant Program (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)) No

Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))] No

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 OCCUPATION

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 1 and 2 above, provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

Existing Demand Industry Sectors

As of November 2017, industries with the most demand were all services-producing industries with trade, transportation and utilities generating the most demand (1,767,600 jobs), followed by professional and business services (1,342,800 jobs), education and health services (1,276,900 jobs) and leisure and hospitality (1,197,700 jobs). Construction (+8.7 percent) and manufacturing (+3.9 percent) were the fastest growing major industries over the year.

As of November 2017, the national annual growth rates (seasonally adjusted) in construction (+2.8 percent), manufacturing (+1.5 percent), trade, transportation and utilities (+0.4 percent), information (-1.9 percent), financial activities (+1.8 percent), professional and business services (+2.7 percent), other services (+1.4 percent) and government (+0.2 percent) were less than the expansion rates for Florida.

In November 2017, Florida (+2.3 percent) had the second strongest over-the-year growth rate in total nonagricultural employment among the 10 most populous states, behind Texas (+2.7 percent). Among all states, Florida ranked fourth in over-the-year growth rate.

Figure 2.01

Nonagricultural Employment in Florida, Seasonally Adjusted

Industry Title	November 2017	October2017	November 2016	Over the Month Change Level	Over the Month Change %	Over the Year Change Level	Over the Year Change %
Total Nonagricultural Employment	8,676,400	8,663,300	8,481,400	13,100	0.2	195,000	2.3
Total Private	7,565,700	7,551,800	7,382,900	13,900	0.2	182,800	2.5
Goods Producing	902,900	896,500	847,000	6,400	0.7	55,900	6.6
Mining, Logging and Construction	530,300	524,000	488,500	6,300	1.2	41,800	8.6
Construction	524,600	518,400	482,800	6,200	1.2	41,800	8.7
Manufacturing	372,600	372,500	358,500	100	*	14,100	3.9
Durable Goods	256,900	255,800	243,400	1100	0.4	13,500	5.5
Nondurable Goods	115,700	116,700	115,100	-1000	-0.9	600	0.5
Service Providing	7,773,500	7,766,800	7,634,400	6,700	0.1	139,100	1.8
Private Service Providing	6,662,800	6,655,300	6,535,900	7500	0.1	126,900	1.9
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	1,767,600	1,762,100	1,734,100	5500	0.3	33,500	1.9
Wholesale Trade	354,000	353,000	338,800	1,000	0.3	15,200	4.5
Retail Trade	1,125,600	1,123,600	1,114,200	2,000	0.2	11,400	1

Industry Title	November 2017	October2017	November 2016	Over the Month Change Level	Over the Month Change %	Over the Year Change Level	Over the Year Change %
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	288,000	285,500	281,100	2500	0.9	6,900	2.5
Information	141,000	139,800	138,000	1,200	0.9	3,000	2.2
Financial Activities	567,400	562,200	551,900	5,200	0.9	15,500	2.8
Finance and Insurance	374,200	372,100	369,800	2,100	0.6	4,400	1.2
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	193,200	190,100	182,100	3,100	1.6	11,100	6.1
Professional and Business Services	1,342,800	1,348,500	1,301,800	-5,700	-0.4	41,000	3.1
Professional and Technical Services	556,800	557,900	536,400	-1100	-0.2	20,400	3.8
Management of Companies and Enterprises	105,200	104,800	102,500	400	0.4	2,700	2.6
Administrative and Waste Services	680,800	685,800	662,900	-5,000	-0.7	17,900	2.7
Education and Health Services	1,276,900	1,275,300	1,261,700	1,600	0.1	15,200	1.2
Educational Services	159,900	157,700	160,100	2200	1.4	-200	-0.1
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,117,000	1,117,600	1,101,600	-600	-0.1	15,400	1.4
Leisure and Hospitality	1,197,700	1,195,900	1,192,500	1,800	0.2	5,200	0.4
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	221,900	224,700	223,500	-2,800	-1.2	-1,600	-0.7

Industry Title	November 2017	October2017	November 2016	Over the Month Change Level	Over the Month Change %	Over the Year Change Level	Over the Year Change %
Accommodation and Food Services	975,800	971,200	969,000	4,600	0.5	6,800	0.7
Other Services	369,400	371,500	355,900	-2,100	-0.6	13,500	3.8
Total Government	1,110,700	1,111,500	1,098,500	-800	-0.1	12,200	1.1
Federal	139,100	139,800	138,700	-700	-0.5	400	0.3
State	212,300	212,600	212,500	-300	-0.1	-200	-0.1
Local	759,300	759,100	747,300	200	*	12,000	1.6

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, December 2015

Existing Demand Occupations

Existing demand occupations are occupations that have the highest number of projected total job openings. Starting with the release of the 2017-2025 projections, job openings will be calculated using the new Separations Method. Total job openings reflect (1) job openings resulting from employment growth, (2) job openings resulting from workers permanently exiting an occupation and (3) job openings resulting from workers transferring to other occupations. In most occupations, replacement needs provide many more job openings than employment growth does.

Existing demand occupations tend to be occupations that serve the most basic societal needs. The most common existing demand occupations in the U.S. labor market are low-skill, hourly wage occupations with high turnover. Florida follows the national pattern, with common existing demand occupations in the state, including retail salespersons, food preparation and serving workers, waiters and waitresses, and cashiers. Some existing demand occupations in Florida are relatively high skill. Such occupations include registered nurses, accountants and auditors and elementary school teachers.

The top five existing demand occupations for Florida statewided are related to customer service and hospitality. Retail salesperson is the top existing demand occupation, with 482,959 projected total job openings between 2017 and 2025. Two of the top existing demand occupations are healthcare occupations: registered nurses and nursing assistants, which have a relatively high turnover rate and will experience employment growth because of the increasing demand for healthcare services, driven by population growth and aging, expanding insurance coverage and technological change. Only two of the top existing demand occupations require significant technical training: registered nurses and accountants and auditors.

The following table displays the top 15 existing demand occupations (based on 2017-2025 total job openings) for Florida statewide.

	Code	Occupation	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Level Change	2017-25 Percent Change	2017-25 Total Job openings	2017 Median Hourly Wage	2017 Entry Wage	2017 Experienced Wage
1	412031	Retail Salespersons	351,545	397,545	46,000	13.09	482,959	10.36	8.9	14.21
2	353021	Combined Food Prep. and Serving Workers, Inc. Fast Food	238,814	277,504	38,690	16.20	417,337	9.47	9.14	10.44
3	412011	Cashiers	248,045	261,482	13,437	5.42	391,038	9.31	8.88	10.48
4	353031	Waiters and Waitresses	226,204	247,019	20,815	9.20	374,691	10.03	9.13	15.49
5	434051	Customer Service Representatives	244,276	278,142	33,866	13.86	289,913	14.43	10.65	17.78
6	436014	Secretaries, Except Legal, Medical and Executive	194,145	211,512	17367	8.95	182,226	15.78	11.44	19.05
7	439061	Office Clerks, General	173,867	188,359	14,492	8.34	177,435	13.4	9.78	17.06
8	537062	Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers, Hand	132,364	146,186	13,822	10.44	163,604	11.92	9.58	15.32
9	435081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	140,166	152,582	12,416	8.86	161,332	11.59	9.58	14.08
10	372011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping	131,143	147,628	16,485	12.57	160,755	10.60	9.15	12.70
11	352014	Cooks, Restaurant	105,686	125,554	19,868	18.8	151,110	12.55	10.20	14.42

	Code	Occupation	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Level Change	2017-25 Percent Change	2017-25 Total Job openings	2017 Median Hourly Wage	2017 Entry Wage	2017 Experienced Wage
12	373011	Landscaping and Grounds keeping Workers	115,326	130,911	15,585	13.51	131,690	11.74	9.94	13.84
13	372012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	95,320	107,252	11,932	12.52	121,572	10.34	9.15	11.73
14	311014	Nursing Assistants	96,804	114,430	17,626	18.21	115,808	12.15	10.59	13.50
15	291141	Registered Nurses	188,202	218,508	30,306	16.1	113,795	30.79	24.84	35.18

Figure 2.02

Top 15 Existing Demand Occupations

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, December 2017

(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Emerging Demand Industries

Figure 2.03

Top Emerging Industries

Code	Title	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Total Change	2017-25 Percent
621900	Other Ambulatory Health Care Services	14,156	18,467	4,311	30.5%
454100	Electronic Shopping and Mail-Order Houses	29,722	37,825	8,103	27.3%
611205	Private Junior Colleges	5,616	6,877	1,261	22.5%

Code	Title	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Total Change	2017-25 Percent
621500	Medical and Diagnostic Laboratories	22,878	27,857	4,979	21.8%
611700	Educational Support Services	7,082	8,561	1,479	20.9%
622305	Private Specialty (Except Psychiatric and Substance Abuse)	15,297	18,274	2,977	19.5%
523900	Other Financial Investment Activities	20,804	24,773	3,969	19.1%
511200	Software Publishers	14,073	16,523	2,450	17.4%
541700	Scientific Research and Development Services	18,215	21,385	3,170	17.4%
532400	Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment Rental and Leasing	9,635	11,272	1,637	17.0%
517400	Satellite Telecommunications	643	752	109	17.0%
327300	Cement and Concrete Product Manufacturing	15,065	17,618	2,553	16.9%
423300	Lumber and Other Construction Materials Merchant Wholesalers	15,003	17,528	2,525	16.8%
519100	Other Information Services	6,858	7,998	1,140	16.6%
623200	Residential Mental Retardation, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Facilities	22,836	26,530	3694	16.2%

Code	Title	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Total Change	2017-25 Percent
334300	Audio and Video Equipment Manufacturing	936	1,087	151	16.1%
492200	Local Messengers and Local Delivery	3,676	4,266	590	16.1%
622205	Private Psychiatric and Substance Abuse Hospitals	10,814	12,542	1,728	16.0%
488900	Other Support Activities for Transport	2,410	2,776	366	15.2%
332500	Hardware Manufacturing	514	592	78	15.2%

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, December 2017

Emerging Occupations

Emerging occupations consist of (1) new occupations in the workforce and (2) traditional occupations whose requisite knowledge, skills and abilities are currently evolving in response to altered market conditions, new technology and societal changes.

Some of the factors that cause occupations to emerge are changing technology, laws, demographics and business practices. In Florida, the fastest growing among the emerging occupations are statisticians, solar photovoltaic installers, nurse practitioners, cartographers and photogrammetrists. The most common industry sectors for emerging occupations are healthcare and professional services, due to ongoing advances in medical technology; life, physical and environmental sciences; engineering, mathematics and computer sciences; and psychology and the social sciences.

Most top emerging occupations occur in the healthcare (11 of top 20) and professional services (6 of top 20).

The growth in healthcare sector emerging occupations reflects an increasing demand for medical services due to population aging, expanding medical insurance coverage and technological innovation.

The following table shows the top 20 emerging occupations for Florida statewide. This list is based on 2017-2025 projections of percent job growth for occupations with less than the average employment level.

Figure 2.04

Top Emerging Occupations

Rank	Code	Occupation	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Level change	2017-25 Percent Change	Industry Sector Linkage	2017 Median Hourly Wage	2017 Entry Wage	2017 Experienced Wage
1	152041	Statisticians	931	1,307	376	40.4	Professional Services	30.01	19.85	41.02
2	472231	Solar Photovoltaic Installers	928	1,271	343	37.0	Clean Tech	14.93	12.76	17.73
3	291171	Nurse Practitioners	9,504	12,801	3,297	34.7	Healthcare	46.25	37.17	51.86
4	171021	Cartographers and Photogrammetrists	579	775	196	33.9	Professional Services	29.04	17.09	37.24
5	291071	Physician Assistants	5,631	7,512	1,881	33.4	Healthcare	48.62	38.38	56.82
6	312011	Occupational Therapy Assistants	2,262	3,005	743	32.8	Healthcare	31.07	23.64	34.11
7	499092	Commercial Divers	491	647	156	31.8	Professional Services	19.41	13.71	29.12
8	312021	Physical Therapist Assistants	5,482	7,208	1,726	31.5	Healthcare	30.60	24.28	34.58
9	473011	Helpers--Brickmasons, Blockmasons, Stonemasons and Tile and Marble Setters	1,159	1,477	318	27.4	Construction	11.50	9.67	13.36
10	299092	Genetic Counselors	110	140	30	27.3	Healthcare	36.22	19.70	43.75
11	472171	Reinforcing Iron and Rebar Workers	1009	1284	275	27.3	Construction	18.06	14.22	22.15
12	312022	Physical Therapist Aides	2,640	3,352	712	27.0	Healthcare	12.57	10.76	13.89
13	273091	Interpreters and Translators	2,978	3,766	788	26.5	Professional Services	17.23	9.61	26.27
14	152031	Operations Research Analysts	6,634	8,368	1734	26.1	Professional Services	29.51	19.77	37.80

Rank	Code	Occupation	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Level change	2017-25 Percent Change	Industry Sector Linkage	2017 Median Hourly Wage	2017 Entry Wage	2017 Experienced Wage
15	292032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	5,723	7,205	1,482	25.9	Healthcare	30.40	24.58	33.85
16	291151	Nurse Anesthetists	2,245	2,825	580	25.8	Healthcare	72.38	49.52	95.57
17	151134	Web Developers	9,752	12,248	2,496	25.6	Professional Services	28.26	18.75	36.52
18	291061	Anesthesiologists	2,380	2,985	605	25.4	Healthcare	NR	NR	NR
19	292057	Ophthalmic Medical Technicians	3,466	4,345	879	25.4	Healthcare	17.61	13.97	19.82
20	291181	Audiologists	742	930	188	25.3	Healthcare	35.58	23.55	41.34

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, December 2017

(iii) Employers' Employment Needs

The needs of employers with respect to knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) are provided for each occupation in the labor market by the O*Net system (see https://www.onetonline.org/).

By using the content in the O*Net database, it is possible to analyze the knowledge, skills and abilities for individual occupations, occupational groups, or targeted occupations. The following is an analysis of occupations that are emerging, have rapid growth and have numerous job openings. O*Net level and importance scores for the various KSAs were matched to the relevant occupational groups. The level and importance score were added together and standardized to a 100-point scale. The following nine graphs show the knowledge, skills and abilities for (1) emerging occupations, (2) occupations with numerous job openings and (3) rapid growth occupations as defined in the O*Net system.

The highest KSAs for emerging occupations are knowledge of English Language, Customer & Personal Service, Active Listening, Reading Comprehension, Oral Comprehension and Oral Expression.

Figure 2.05 Emerging Occupations - Top Knowledge Scores can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Emerging_Occupations-Top_Knowledge_Scores.png. This graph displays the knowledge components that were reported most important for Emerging Occupations. Knowledge of English Language and Customer & Personal Service were identified as most important for the Emerging Occupations. English Language 64, Customer & Personal Service 62, Mathematics 53, Education & Training 53, Administration & Management 41, Public Safety & Security 34, Engineering & Technology 30, Mechanical 27, Design 25, Building & Construction 19.

Figure 2.06 Emerging Occupations - Top Skills Scores can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Emerging_Occupations-Top_Skills_Scores.png. This graph displays

the skills components that were reported most important for Emerging Occupations. Skills in Active Listening and Reading Comprehension were identified as most important for the Emerging Occupations. Active Listening 62, Reading Comprehension 62, Critical Thinking 61, Speaking 59, Judgement & Decision Making 54, Monitoring 54, Social Perceptiveness 54, Complex Problem Solving 54, Coordination 51, Service Orientation 49.

Figure 2.07 Emerging Occupations - Top Abilities Scores can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Emerging_Occupations-Top_Abilities_Scores.png. This graph displays the ability components that were reported most important for Emerging Occupations. Abilities of Oral Comprehension and Oral Expression were identified as most important for the Emerging Occupations. Oral Comprehension 66, Oral Expression 64, Problem Sensitivity 63, Near Vision 61, Written Comprehension 61, Deductive Reasoning 60, Inductive Reasoning 59, Speech Recognition 55, Speech Clarity 54, Arm-Hand Steadiness 40.

The highest KSAs for occupations with the most job openings are knowledge of Customer & Personal Service, English Language, Active Listening, Speaking, Oral Comprehension and Oral Expression.

Figure 2.08 Occupations with Most Job Openings - Top Knowledge Scores can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Occupations_with_Most_Job_Openings-Top_Knowledge_Scores.png. This graph displays the knowledge components that were reported most important for Occupations with the Most Job Openings. Knowledge of Customer & Personal Service and English Language were identified as most important for Occupations with the Most Job Openings. Customer & Personal Service 65, English Language 58, Administration & Management 47, Mathematics 46, Education & Training 46, Public Safety & Security 38, Mechanical 24, Engineering & Technology 23, Design 21, Building & Construction 17.

Figure 2.09 Occupations with Most Job Openings - Top Skills Scores can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Occupations_with_Most_Job_Openings-Top_Skills_Scores.png. This graph displays the skills components that were reported most important for Occupations with the Most Job Openings. Skills in Active Listening and Speaking were identified as most important for Occupations with the Most Job Openings. Active Listening 57, Speaking 55, Critical Thinking 53, Reading Comprehension 53, Monitoring 50, Social Perceptiveness 50, Coordination 50, Service Orientation 49, Judgement & Decision Making 48, Complex Problem Solving 46.

Figure 2.10 Occupations with Most Job Openings - Top Abilities Scores: can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Occupations_with_Most_Job_Openings-Top_Abilities_Scores.png. This graph displays the ability components that were reported most important for Occupations with the Most Job Openings. Abilities of Oral Comprehension and Oral Expression were identified as most important for Occupations with the Most Job Openings. Oral Comprehension 62, Oral Expression 61, Problem Sensitivity 55, Near Vision 55, Abilities -Speech Recognition 54, Written Comprehension 54, Deductive Reasoning 53, Speech Clarity 53, Inductive Reasoning 51, Arm-Hand Steadiness 33.

The highest KSAs for occupations with the most job openings are knowledge of Customer & Personal Service, English Language, Active Listening, Critical Thinking, Oral Comprehension and Oral Expression.

Figure 2.11 Rapid Growth Occupations - Top Knowledge Scores: can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Rapid_Growth_Occupations-Top_Knowledge_Scores.png. This graph displays the knowledge components that were reported most important for Rapid Growth

Occupations. Knowledge of Customer & Personal Service and English Language were identified as most important for Rapid Growth Occupations. Customer & Personal Service 67, English Language 61, Education & Training 50, Mathematics 47, Administration & Management 46, Public Safety & Security 41, Engineering & Technology 27, Mechanical 26, Design 24, Building & Construction 19.

Figure 2.12 Rapid Growth Occupations - Top Skills Scores: can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Rapid-Growth-Occupations-Top-Skills-Scores.png. This graph displays the skills components that were reported most important for Rapid Growth Occupations. Skills in Active Listening and Critical Thinking were identified as most important for Rapid Growth Occupations. Active Listening 59, Critical Thinking 57, Speaking 57, Reading Comprehension 56, Monitoring 53, Social Perceptiveness 52, Judgement & Decision Making 51, Coordination 51, Service Orientation 50, Complex Problem Solving 49.

Figure 2.13 Rapid Growth Occupations - Top Abilities Scores can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Rapid-Growth-Occupations-Top-Abilities-Scores.png. This graph displays the ability components that were reported most important for Rapid Growth Occupations. Abilities of Oral Comprehension and Oral Expression were identified as most important for Rapid Growth Occupations. Oral Comprehension 64, Oral Expression 63, Problem Sensitivity 60, Near Vision 58, Deductive Reasoning 57, Written Comprehension 57, Inductive Reasoning 55, Speech Recognition 55, Speech Clarity 54, Arm-Hand Steadiness 37.

B. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

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

Jobs

There are many positive indicators of Florida's recovery from the Great Recession. Prior to September 2017, payroll employment (jobs) expanded at a rate exceeding that of the nation since April 2012. As of November 2017, Florida gained jobs over the year for the past 88 months. Prior to this, the state lost jobs for more than three years. In November 2017, 22 out of 24 Florida metro areas had over-the-year job gains. The Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford metro area (+38,800 jobs, +3.1 percent) added the most jobs in November 2017, followed by Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater (+30,600 jobs, +2.3 percent) and Miami-Miami Beach-Kendall (+27,100 jobs, +2.3 percent).

Labor Force and Unemployment

Florida's unemployment rate has declined since the November 2009 - January 2010 peak of 11.2 percent reached in the Great Recession. The number of unemployed persons peaked at 1,020,457 in January 2010 and has since dropped by 651,879 as of November 2017. The labor force has increased by 1,041,685 as of November 2017, from the low point reached in November 2009 (9,081,076).

The unemployment rate for the state of Florida declined by 1.3 percentage points over the year to 3.6 percent in November 2017. This was the 89th consecutive month where Florida's unemployment rate declined or held steady over the year.

Figure 2.14 Florida Unemployment Rate (Seasonally Adjusted) can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Unemployment-Rate.png. This line graph shows Florida's unemployment rate peaked in January 2010 at 11.2 percent with 1,020,457 people unemployed. Unemployment steadily declined, dropping by 651,879 as of November 2017. The labor force increased by 1,041,685 as of November 2017.

Florida's labor force increased steadily after reaching its low point in November 2009, declining slightly upon reaching a peak in May 2017 (10,147,870). The number of unemployed persons generally has been declining since reaching a peak in January 2010 (November 2017 unemployed persons = 368,578). The number of employed persons has been increasing since November 2009, although there was a dip in July - August 2017. There were 9,754,183 employed persons in November 2017.

The lower unemployment rates as of November 2017 have been in counties with large government employment sectors or stable tourism sectors: St. Johns County at 3.0 percent; Okaloosa County at 3.1 percent; and Monroe, Wakulla and Walton counties at 3.2 percent each. Higher unemployment rates are found in counties with large agricultural sectors: Hendry County at 7.3 percent; Hardee County at 6.1 percent; and Citrus County at 5.3 percent. County unemployment rates are not seasonally adjusted.

Figure 2.15 Florida's Labor Force and Employment (Seasonally Adjusted) can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Labor-Force-and-Employment.png. This line graph shows Florida's labor force increased steadily since reaching its low point in November 2009. The labor force declined some after reaching a peak in May 2017. The number of unemployed persons generally has been declining since reaching a peak in January 2010 (November 2017 unemployed persons = 368,578). The number of employed persons has been increasing since

November 2009. There was a dip in July - August 2017. November 2017 employed persons was 9,754,183.

Florida's unemployment rate was the same as the national rate in January 2008 (both at 5.0 percent seasonally adjusted), but Florida's rate began to exceed the national rate as the recession continued to develop. By January 2010, Florida's rate was 11.2 compared to 9.8 for the nation. The unemployment rates for Florida and the nation have been close in the current stage of the recovery, although Florida has been below the national rate since June 2017. Below are national and Florida statistics on full-term and part-time status of the employed.

Figure 2.16

Employment Status- U.S. Versus Florida November 2017

Employment Status	National November 2017(monthly)	National Over-the-Year Change (monthly)	Florida November 2017 (12-month movingaverage)	Florida Over-the-Year Change (12-month movingaverage)
Full-time	82.4%	0.7%	82.9%	-0.5%
Voluntary part-time	13.7%	-0.1%	12.5%	0.5%
Part-time for economic reasons	3.1%	-0.6%	3.6%	-0.3%
Part-time but not at work	0.8%	0.0%	1.1%	0.3%

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, December 2017.

- Florida housing foreclosures were 2,201 in September 2017 (latest data available). Foreclosures were down 2,547 (-53.6 percent) over the year.
- Florida building permits for one-unit structures were up 1,418 (+25.3 percent) compared to the same month a year ago in October 2017 (latest data available).
- Florida's median home price was up 9.1 percent over the year in November 2017.
- November 2017 sales tax collections were up 12.7 percent compared to a year ago. Sales tax collections have been above the previous peak (June 2006) since June 2014.
- An estimated 112.4 million visitors came to Florida in 2016, an increase of 5.5 percent over 2015. During the third quarter of 2017, 27.9 million (3.4 percent increase over the year) tourists visited Florida.
- The Florida Consumer Sentiment Index level was 96.7 in November 2017, up 6.4 points from November 2016.
- Florida job postings compiled by the Help Wanted OnLine data series totaled 254,611 openings (seasonally adjusted) in November 2017. November job demand represented an increase of 1,202 openings (+0.5 percent) over the year.
- Florida's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2016 was up 2.4 percent from 2015.

In conclusion, Florida's recovery is strong. Most of the major industry sectors have returned to growth patterns in evidence before the recession and many of these have higher rates of growth compared to the previous major expansion. While construction has not returned to the previous peak number of jobs, current growth rates (November 2017, +8.7 percent) are healthy and construction is the fastest growing industry in the state. There are no indicators of overbuilding or bubbles in the current housing market. Tourism looks healthy as reflected in the increased number of visitors (+5.5 percent in 2016; +3.4 percent in 2017, Q3). Higher-paying industry sectors are experiencing healthy and sustainable expansion: manufacturing (+3.9 percent); professional and business services (+3.1 percent); financial activities (+2.8 percent); and information (+2.2 percent).

Over the past two years, the unemployment rate has continued to decline. Employment as measured in the household survey continues to expand and has exhibited a recent strengthening. Other indicators back up the overall conclusion about the strength and sustainability of the recovery over the near-term. Florida has a healthy labor market as of November 2017, which challenges Florida's workforce system on how to best mold and sustain this expansion and provide better economic opportunities for Florida's citizens.

Individuals with Barriers to Employment

Most persons with a disability who reside in Florida are not in the labor force (788,187 not in labor force; 467,081 in labor force). The Florida unemployment rate for persons with a disability was 13.4 percent in 2016 compared to 5.9 percent for all labor force participants. The unemployment rate in this population decreased 3.9 percentage points from 2015 to 2016 (the most recent year for which data are available) while the overall unemployment decreased 1.1 percentage points during that period.

Most American Indians and Alaska Natives who reside in Florida are part of the labor force (26,658 in labor force; 18,367 not in labor force) and the Florida unemployment rate for such persons was 9.6 percent in 2016, an increase of 2.0 percentage points from 2015. Most Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders who reside in Florida are part of the labor force (6,295 in labor force; 2,782 not in labor force) and the Florida unemployment rate for such persons was 12.0 percent in 2016, a decrease of 4.3 percentage points from 2015.

Most persons age 55 and older who reside in Florida are not in the labor force (4,558,479 not in labor force; 2,261,701 in labor force) and the Florida unemployment rate for such persons was 4.3 percent in 2016, a decrease of 0.7 percentage point from 2015.

The American Community Survey (ACS) estimates for 2016 indicate that approximately 13.6 percent (2.8 million) of Florida's total population (20.3 million) has a disability. Of those, it is estimated that almost 1.3 million are of working age -age 18 to 64—and an estimated 404,685 of working age Floridians with disabilities are employed.

During FFY (Federal Fiscal Year) 2014-15, the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), in partnership with the Florida Rehabilitation Council, conducted a comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) to identify factors that affect the ability of job seekers with disabilities to get and keep jobs and any barriers or limitations they may experience. The CSNA consisted of the following components: state demographic profiles, a statewide public survey, stakeholder interviews and additional information from agency performance data, customer satisfaction surveys and public input. Findings and recommendations from the CSNA guided agency planning and development of the VR state plan portion for federal fiscal years 2017-20. VR uses this

information to guide statewide and agency planning, as well as future collaborations with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core programs and other stakeholders.

CSNA survey results indicated factors rated most important to job seekers with disabilities. Percent for Very Important ratings are as follows:

- Type of job matches personal abilities: 82.88 percent
- Work location/available transportation: 78.31 percent
- Work environment (culture): 72.67 percent
- Wages or salary: 63.96 percent

Highest rated services in the survey item addressing the Importance of VR services to job seekers with disabilities (percent out of total responses) included the following three services. These three services were consistently rated highest across items polling *current need* and *future demand* for vocational rehabilitation services.

- Job Search, Job Placement or Job Coaching (e.g., help with resumes, interviews, job development, accommodations): 61.25 percent
- Training (e.g., college tuition, vocational, apprenticeship, on-the-job training, job readiness): 61.01 percent.
- Supported Employment Services (e.g., job placement, job coaching, planning for extended supports): 51.36 percent

(II) LABOR MARKET TRENDS

Demand Occupations and Occupational Groups

Figure 2.17

Percent Distribution of Employment by Major Occupational Group

Florida 2017

Occupational Group Code	Occupational Group Name	Florida Employment	Percent
110000	Management	413,213	4.4%
130000	Business and Financial Operations	499,904	5.4%
150000	Computer and Mathematical	210,670	2.3%
170000	Architecture and Engineering	113,063	1.2%

Occupational Group Code	Occupational Group Name	Florida Employment	Percent
190000	Life, Physical and Social Science	43,099	0.5%
210000	Community and Social Service	111,120	1.2%
230000	Legal	100,104	1.1%
250000	Education, Training and Library	448,660	4.8%
270000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media	147,010	1.6%
290000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	560,499	6.0%
310000	Healthcare Support	258,835	2.8%
330000	Protective Service	244,726	2.6%
350000	Food Preparation and Serving Related	946,674	10.2%
370000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	393,692	4.2%
390000	Personal Care and Service	307,475	3.3%
410000	Sales and Related	1,190,169	12.8%
430000	Office and Administrative Support	1,544,493	16.6%
450000	Farming, Fishing and Forestry	53,770	0.6%
470000	Construction and Extraction	469,933	5.0%
490000	Installation, Maintenance and Repair	389,505	4.2%
510000	Production	328,953	3.5%
530000	Transportation and Material Moving	540,653	5.8%

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, December 2017

Local area employment by major occupational group is displayed in the following tables. Variation results from the dissimilarity of economic focus and industry mix of Florida's geographic areas. For example, Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) 1 (Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties) has a higher share of employment in food preparation and serving occupations and office and administrative support than the state due to tourism and government-related industries, respectively. LWDA 2 (Okaloosa and Walton Counties), with its emphasis on defense research, has 3.2 percent of total jobs by occupation in computer and mathematical occupations, while LWDA 5 (Gadsden, Leon and Wakulla Counties), which contains several higher educational institutions, has 9.2 percent of jobs in the Education, Training and Library occupational group.

The following tables show the percent distribution of employment by major occupational group for all workforce local areas in Florida grouped by geography.

For a graphic depicting each LWDA, please refer to section VI(a)(1)(A).

Figure 2.18

Percent Distribution by Major Occupational Group

Local Workforce Development Areas 1-7

Occupational Group Code	Occupational Group Name	Florida	LWDA 1	LWDA 2	LWDA 3	LWDA 4	LWDA 5	LWDA 6	LWDA 7
110000	Management	4.4%	3.4%	3.8%	3.1%	3.4%	4.8%	5.6%	3.3%
130000	Business and Financial Operations	5.4%	4.5%	6.5%	2.9%	4.5%	10.6%	2.3%	3.0%
150000	Computer and Mathematical	2.3%	1.8%	3.2%	0.7%	1.3%	3.7%	0.5%	0.7%
170000	Architecture and Engineering	1.2%	1.1%	3.2%	1.6%	2.4%	1.1%	1.1%	0.9%
190000	Life, Physical and Social Science	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	0.7%	1.3%	0.4%	0.4%
210000	Community and Social Service	1.2%	1.5%	1.2%	3.2%	1.4%	1.6%	1.5%	1.7%
230000	Legal	1.1%	1.0%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	2.1%	0.4%	0.5%

Occupational Group Code	Occupational Group Name	Florida	LWDA 1	LWDA 2	LWDA 3	LWDA 4	LWDA 5	LWDA 6	LWDA 7
250000	Education, Training and Library	4.8%	6.9%	4.7%	8.3%	5.3%	9.2%	6.8%	6.9%
270000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media	1.6%	1.2%	1.4%	0.5%	0.9%	2.4%	0.7%	0.5%
290000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	6.0%	7.1%	5.1%	6.4%	5.6%	5.2%	3.9%	7.4%
310000	Healthcare Support	2.8%	3.1%	1.8%	3.6%	2.5%	2.4%	2.8%	3.5%
330000	Protective Service	2.6%	2.8%	2.0%	8.9%	3.2%	2.6%	8.1%	8.6%
350000	Food Preparation and Serving Related	10.2%	11.1%	14.3%	7.3%	12.8%	9.1%	6.6%	8.4%
370000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	4.2%	3.8%	4.2%	2.5%	4.1%	3.4%	4.0%	3.9%
390000	Personal Care and Service	3.3%	3.0%	3.1%	4.0%	2.3%	2.6%	1.9%	1.4%
410000	Sales and Related	12.8%	11.6%	13.8%	10.1%	12.7%	9.6%	9.4%	12.5%
430000	Office and Administrative Support	16.6%	17.9%	13.9%	12.4%	16.3%	14.6%	13.0%	14.6%
450000	Farming, Fishing and Forestry	0.6%	0.2%	0.1%	1.8%	0.3%	0.6%	5.0%	2.2%
470000	Construction and Extraction	5.0%	5.2%	4.9%	6.7%	5.8%	3.6%	3.4%	3.3%
490000	Installation, Maintenance and Repair	4.2%	4.4%	5.3%	3.7%	5.0%	3.6%	4.7%	3.9%
510000	Production	3.5%	3.5%	2.5%	4.2%	3.9%	2.1%	10.3%	4.9%

Occupational Group Code	Occupational Group Name	Florida	LWDA 1	LWDA 2	LWDA 3	LWDA 4	LWDA 5	LWDA 6	LWDA 7
530000	Transportation and Material Moving	5.8%	4.5%	4.2%	7.2%	4.9%	3.7%	7.5%	7.5%

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, December 2017

LWDAs 8, 14 and especially 15, have a high percentage of jobs in more skilled occupational groups with business and financial occupations, exceeding the state's share. Computer jobs and mathematical and engineering jobs are prevalent in LWDA 13 (the Space Coast). LWDA 8 (Northeast Florida which includes Jacksonville) has a greater share of production and installation occupations compared to the statewide shares. LWDA 9 (Alachua, Bradford) has the greatest share of education and training occupations of any local area.

Figure 2.19

Percent Distribution by Major Occupational Group

Local Workforce Development Areas 8-16

Occupational Group Code	Occupational Group Name	Florida	LWDA 8	LWDA 9	LWDA 10	LWDA 11	LWDA 12	LWDA 13	LWDA 14	LWDA 15	LWDA 16
110000	Management	4.4%	4.0%	3.5%	3.3%	3.6%	4.5%	3.9%	4.4%	5.1%	3.3%
130000	Business and Financial Operations	5.4%	6.4%	5.5%	2.9%	3.5%	5.5%	5.0%	6.2%	7.0%	3.8%
150000	Computer and Mathematical	2.3%	2.6%	2.5%	0.6%	1.2%	2.5%	4.4%	3.1%	3.7%	1.4%
170000	Architecture and Engineering	1.2%	1.4%	1.1%	0.9%	1.0%	1.2%	3.9%	1.3%	1.4%	0.8%
190000	Life, Physical and Social Science	0.5%	0.4%	1.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%
210000	Community and Social Service	1.2%	1.2%	1.9%	1.3%	1.4%	1.0%	1.2%	1.4%	1.1%	1.7%
230000	Legal	1.1%	0.8%	0.8%	0.5%	0.8%	0.9%	0.5%	1.1%	1.3%	0.7%

Occupational Group Code	Occupational Group Name	Florida	LWDA 8	LWDA 9	LWDA 10	LWDA 11	LWDA 12	LWDA 13	LWDA 14	LWDA 15	LWDA 16
250000	Education, Training and Library	4.8%	4.5%	13.0%	5.6%	5.3%	4.4%	4.2%	3.8%	4.7%	6.6%
270000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media	1.6%	1.4%	1.5%	0.9%	1.0%	2.1%	1.3%	1.7%	1.6%	1.0%
290000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	6.0%	6.4%	10.2%	7.2%	6.6%	5.0%	6.8%	7.1%	5.7%	7.4%
310000	Healthcare Support	2.8%	2.7%	3.2%	3.3%	3.6%	2.2%	3.5%	3.6%	2.3%	3.7%
330000	Protective Service	2.6%	2.4%	2.2%	2.7%	1.9%	2.4%	2.2%	2.2%	2.4%	2.1%
350000	Food Preparation and Serving Related	10.2%	9.3%	9.2%	9.9%	12.2%	11.8%	10.5%	9.9%	8.1%	11.6%
370000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	4.2%	3.4%	4.5%	4.3%	5.4%	5.2%	3.7%	3.2%	2.8%	3.7%
390000	Personal Care and Service	3.3%	3.3%	2.6%	3.7%	3.3%	4.0%	3.3%	3.4%	2.9%	3.8%
410000	Sales and Related	12.8%	11.7%	9.4%	13.3%	14.5%	13.3%	11.2%	11.7%	12.1%	13.3%
430000	Office and Administrative Support	16.6%	17.4%	13.3%	15.8%	15.3%	15.7%	15.4%	17.9%	19.1%	15.3%
450000	Farming, Fishing and Forestry	0.6%	0.2%	0.5%	1.2%	0.6%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.7%	0.3%
470000	Construction and Extraction	5.0%	5.2%	3.5%	6.5%	5.8%	4.9%	5.2%	4.3%	4.6%	6.0%
490000	Installation, Maintenance and Repair	4.2%	4.5%	3.4%	4.5%	4.0%	3.8%	4.4%	4.1%	3.9%	4.3%
510000	Production	3.5%	3.7%	2.7%	5.4%	4.8%	3.0%	4.4%	5.1%	3.3%	3.3%

Occupational Group Code	Occupational Group Name	Florida	LWDA 8	LWDA 9	LWDA 10	LWDA 11	LWDA 12	LWDA 13	LWDA 14	LWDA 15	LWDA 16
530000	Transportation and Material Moving	5.8%	7.1%	4.4%	5.8%	3.9%	5.8%	4.3%	4.1%	5.5%	5.5%

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, December 2017

LWDA 21 (Palm Beach County) has 12 of 22 major occupational groups exceeding the state's share of jobs. The higher skills occupational groups of management and business and financial operations exceed the Florida percent distributions for the groups. LWDA 17 (Polk County) has a greater share in construction, installation, production and transportation occupations. Transportation and material moving occupations was much higher than the state's (9.2 percent vs. 5.9 percent), reflecting the local area's significance in moving Florida's products to local and state markets.

Figure 2.20

Percent Distribution by Major Occupational Group

Local Workforce Development Areas 17-24

Occupational Group Code	Occupational Group Name	Florida	LWDA 17	LWDA 18	LWDA 19	LWDA 20	LWDA 21	LWDA 22	LWDA 23	LWDA 24
110000	Management	4.4%	3.9%	4.8%	7.2%	3.9%	5.0%	4.4%	4.6%	4.8%
130000	Business and Financial Operations	5.4%	4.0%	4.1%	2.1%	3.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.4%	3.4%
150000	Computer and Mathematical	2.3%	1.5%	1.2%	0.6%	0.8%	2.0%	2.5%	1.9%	1.0%
170000	Architecture and Engineering	1.2%	1.0%	0.9%	0.8%	1.0%	1.2%	0.9%	0.9%	0.7%
190000	Life, Physical and Social Science	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
210000	Community and Social Service	1.2%	1.3%	1.1%	1.6%	1.6%	1.1%	1.3%	1.0%	1.0%
230000	Legal	1.1%	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%	0.8%	1.5%	1.3%	1.6%	0.7%

Occupational Group Code	Occupational Group Name	Florida	LWDA 17	LWDA 18	LWDA 19	LWDA 20	LWDA 21	LWDA 22	LWDA 23	LWDA 24
250000	Education, Training and Library	4.8%	5.0%	3.9%	5.7%	4.7%	4.2%	4.4%	4.5%	3.9%
270000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media	1.6%	1.0%	1.6%	0.7%	1.2%	1.6%	1.4%	1.7%	1.4%
290000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	6.0%	5.3%	6.2%	5.8%	7.2%	5.7%	5.8%	5.8%	6.0%
310000	Healthcare Support	2.8%	2.4%	4.0%	3.4%	3.3%	3.1%	2.4%	2.6%	3.0%
330000	Protective Service	2.6%	1.9%	1.8%	3.7%	1.8%	2.9%	2.7%	3.5%	2.1%
350000	Food Preparation and Serving Related	10.2%	8.5%	11.0%	8.8%	10.9%	10.6%	9.0%	9.3%	12.1%
370000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	4.2%	3.8%	4.9%	3.9%	6.5%	5.3%	3.7%	3.8%	6.1%
390000	Personal Care and Service	3.3%	2.6%	3.6%	3.2%	3.6%	3.1%	3.4%	3.0%	3.6%
410000	Sales and Related	12.8%	12.7%	13.6%	10.7%	12.9%	12.8%	14.2%	13.2%	13.7%
430000	Office and Administrative Support	16.6%	16.1%	15.4%	15.6%	14.6%	16.0%	18.2%	17.5%	14.2%
450000	Farming, Fishing and Forestry	0.6%	1.1%	1.2%	6.8%	1.1%	0.9%	0.1%	0.5%	1.3%
470000	Construction and Extraction	5.0%	5.5%	6.4%	4.9%	6.3%	5.1%	4.9%	3.7%	8.5%
490000	Installation, Maintenance and Repair	4.2%	5.1%	4.4%	3.8%	4.7%	4.1%	4.5%	3.8%	4.4%
510000	Production	3.5%	6.3%	4.3%	3.3%	3.9%	2.9%	3.0%	3.5%	2.7%

Occupational Group Code	Occupational Group Name	Florida	LWDA 17	LWDA 18	LWDA 19	LWDA 20	LWDA 21	LWDA 22	LWDA 23	LWDA 24
530000	Transportation and Material Moving	5.8%	9.8%	4.4%	6.6%	5.4%	4.8%	5.8%	7.7%	5.0%

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, December 2017

The top occupations in the state's labor market can be represented in different ways. Below are two tables, the first showing percent change over the timeframe of the latest occupational projections (2017- 2025) and the second showing the level of change (2017-2025). Ten of the top 20 occupations ranked by percent change are in the health practitioner or healthcare support major occupational groups. The fastest-growing occupation is Nurse Practitioner (9,504 jobs in 2017, +34.7 percent growth). Several computer and mathematical occupations are prevalent in the top 20 list. Operations Research Analysts (6,634 jobs in 2017, +26.1 percent growth) is the top growth occupation in the computer and mathematical occupation group. The Medical Assistants occupation is the largest on the top 20 list with 53,577 jobs in 2017.

The occupations gaining the most new jobs represent a mix of occupations needed by tourism-related industries along with healthcare and construction occupations. Both registered nurses (30,306 new jobs) and nursing assistants (17,626 new jobs) are in the top 20 list. Combined food workers (38,690 new jobs), waiters and waitresses (20,815 new jobs) and restaurant cooks (19,868 new jobs) are employed in tourism-related industries. Many of the top occupations with the most new jobs are used by many different industries. These include secretaries (17,367 new jobs) and janitors (16,485 new jobs).

Figure 2.21

Fastest Growing Occupations Florida

Rank	Code	Occupation	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Level Change	2017-25 Percent Growth	Total Job Openings
1	291171	Nurse Practitioners	9,504	12,801	3,297	34.69	7,542
2	291071	Physician Assistants	5,631	7,512	1,881	33.4	4,426
3	312021	Physical Therapist Assistants	5,482	7,208	1,726	31.48	7,195

Rank	Code	Occupation	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Level Change	2017-25 Percent Growth	Total Job Openings
4	311011	Home Health Aides	27,494	35,955	8,461	30.77	37,952
5	152031	Operations Research Analysts	6,634	8,368	1,734	26.14	5,098
6	292032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	5,723	7,205	1,482	25.9	4,090
7	151134	Web Developers	9,752	12,248	2,496	25.59	8,817
8	291123	Physical Therapists	13,533	16,975	3,442	25.43	8,641
9	472021	Brickmasons and Blockmasons	6,688	8,349	1,661	24.84	7,251
10	319092	Medical Assistants	53,577	66,676	13,099	24.45	66,164
11	399021	Personal Care Aides	27,420	34,097	6,677	24.35	41,358
12	132052	Personal Financial Advisors	15,130	18,622	3,492	23.08	13,654
13	131161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	29,609	36,279	6,670	22.53	31,318
14	533041	Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs	14,686	17,948	3,262	22.21	16,499
15	291122	Occupational Therapists	6,495	7,927	1,432	22.05	4,281
16	151121	Computer Systems Analysts	19,586	23,811	4,225	21.57	14,937

Rank	Code	Occupation	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Level Change	2017-25 Percent Growth	Total Job Openings
17	292056	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	9,485	11,528	2,043	21.54	7,690
18	292081	Opticians, Dispensing	5,290	6,425	1,135	21.46	4,050
19	251071	Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	10,991	13,341	2,350	21.38	9,971
20	193031	Clinical, Counseling and School Psychologists	4,053	4,908	855	21.1	3,486

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, December 2017

Figure 2.22

Occupations Gaining the Most New Jobs in Florida

Rank	Code	Occupation	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Level Change	2017-25 Percent Growth	Total Job Openings
1	412031	Retail Salespersons	351,545	397,545	46,000	13.09	482,959
2	353021	Combined Food Prep. and Serving Workers, Inc. Fast Food	238,814	277,504	38,690	16.2	417,337
3	434051	Customer Service Representatives	244,276	278,142	33,866	13.86	289,913
4	291141	Registered Nurses	188,202	218,508	30,306	16.1	113,795

Rank	Code	Occupation	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Level Change	2017-25 Percent Growth	Total Job Openings
5	353031	Waiters and Waitresses	226,204	247,019	20,815	9.2	374,691
6	352014	Cooks, Restaurant	105,686	125,554	19,868	18.8	151,110
7	311014	Nursing Assistants	96,804	114,430	17,626	18.21	115,808
8	436014	Secretaries, Except Legal, Medical and Executive	194,145	211,512	17,367	8.95	182,226
9	372011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping	131,143	147,628	16,485	12.57	160,755
10	373011	Landscaping and Grounds keeping Workers	115,326	130,911	15,585	13.51	131,690
11	439061	Office Clerks, General	173,867	188,359	14,492	8.34	177,435
12	472061	Construction Laborers	83,289	97,474	14,185	17.03	87,430
13	537062	Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers, Hand	132,364	146,186	13,822	10.44	163,604
14	412011	Cashiers	248,045	261,482	13,437	5.42	391,038
15	319092	Medical Assistants	53,577	66,676	13,099	24.45	66,164
16	132011	Accountants and Auditors	86,098	99,027	12,929	15.02	76,220
17	434171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	86,701	99,264	12,563	14.49	107,457

Rank	Code	Occupation	2017 Employment	2025 Employment	2017-25 Level Change	2017-25 Percent Growth	Total Job Openings
18	435081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	140,166	152,582	12,416	8.86	161,332
19	431011	First-Line Supervisor of Office and Admin. Support Workers	102,164	114,225	12,061	11.81	91,268
20	372012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	95,320	107,252	11,932	12.52	121,572

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, December 2017

Occupational employment projections tables for all Florida geographic areas can be found on the Labor Market Statistics Website at http://floridajobs.org/labor-market-information.Tables for occupations adding the most new jobs, occupations with the fastest growth rates and declining occupations are available.

Florida Industries

Construction

Florida experienced large declines in construction employment from 2006 to 2011 due to the bursting of the housing bubble. Construction employment peaked in June 2006 at 691,900 jobs and is currently at 524,600 jobs (a decrease of 167,300 jobs). At the low point, construction employment was 332,800 (June 2011). Since June 2011, 191,800 jobs in the industry have been recovered.

As noted, construction employment in November 2017 was 524,600. The over-the-year change in November 2017 (+41,800 jobs, +8.7 percent) was 8,300 greater when compared to November 2016 (+33,500 jobs, +7.5 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has been trending upward over the past seven years.

Figure 2.23 Florida Construction Employment, Seasonally Adjusted is a line graph showing Florida experienced large declines in construction employment from 2006 to 2011. Construction employment peaked in June 2006 at 691,900 jobs and is currently at 524,600 jobs (a decrease of 167,300 jobs). At the low point in June 2011, construction employment was 332,800. Since June 2011, 191,800 jobs in the industry have been recovered. Construction employment in November 2017 was 524,600. The over the year change in November 2017 (+41,800 jobs, +8.7 percent) was 8,300 greater compared to November 2016 (+33,500 jobs, +7.5 percent). The number of jobs in this sector trended upward over the past seven years. This image can be found online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Construction-Employment.png

Manufacturing

Manufacturing in Florida is heavily dependent on construction and several subsectors of the industry lost jobs due to the decline in housing activity. From 2003 to 2006, manufacturing employment began to ramp up until the housing bubble burst. During the recession, there was a rapid decrease in manufacturing employment until 2010. Since the low in March 2010 (308,000 employed), 64,600 jobs in the industry have been recovered.

In November 2017, the employment was 372,600. The over-the-year change in November 2017 (+14,100 jobs, +3.9 percent) was 4,300 higher when compared to November 2016 (+9,800, +2.8 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has been trending upward over the past seven years.

Figure 2.24 Florida Manufacturing Employment, Seasonally Adjusted is a line graph showing that from 2003 to 2006, manufacturing employment increased. From 2006 to 2010 there was a rapid decrease in manufacturing employment. Since the low in March 2010 (308,000 employment), 64,600 jobs in the industry have been recovered. In November 2017, the employment was 372,600. The over the year change in November 2017 (+14,100 jobs, +3.9 percent) was 4,300 higher compared to November 2016 (+9,800, +2.8 percent). Jobs in this sector have trended upward over the past seven years. This image can be found online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Manufacturing-Employment.png

Trade,Transportation and Utilities

This industry is heavily dependent on tourism and the general economic vitality of the state's economy. The industry peaked in May 2007 at 1,647,600 jobs and began a rapid decline until 2010. Currently, industry employment is 120,000 jobs above its 2007 peak.

In November 2017, employment was 1,767,600. The over-the-year change in November 2017 (+33,500 jobs, +1.9 percent) was 1,400 less when compared to November 2016 (+34,900, +2.1 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has been trending upward over the past seven years.

Figure 2.25 Florida Trade, Transportation and Utilities Employment, Seasonally Adjusted is a line graph showing the trade, transportation and utilities industries peaked in May 2007 at 1,647,600 jobs and rapidly declined until 2010. Industry employment is 120,000 jobs above its 2007 peak. In November 2017, employment was 1,767,600. The over the year change in November 2017 (+33,500 jobs, +1.9 percent) was 1,400 less when compared to November 2016 (+34,900, +2.1 percent). Jobs in this sector trended upward over the past seven years. This image can be found online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Trade-Transportation-Utilities-Employment.png

Information

Florida experienced large declines in information employment from 2001 to 2004 due to the bursting of the tech bubble and from 2007 to 2010 due to the bursting of the housing bubble. Industry employment has remained steady since the trough of the Great Recession and is currently at 2009 levels.

In November 2017, employment was 141,000. The over-the-year change in November 2017 (+3,000 jobs, +2.2 percent) was 2,500 greater when compared to November 2016 (+500, +0.4 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has remained constant over the past five years.

Figure 2.26 Florida Information Employment, Seasonally Adjusted is a line graph showing Florida experienced large declines in information employment from 2001 to 2004 and from 2007 to 2010. Industry employment has remained steady and is currently at 2009 levels. In November 2017, employment was 141,000. The over the year change in November 2017 (+3,000 jobs, +2.2 percent) was 2,500 greater when compared to November 2016 (+500, +0.4 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has remained fairly constant over the past five years. This image can be found online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Information-Employment.png

Financial Activities

Financial activities employment in Florida peaked at 558,000 jobs in May 2006 and experienced a rapid decline until reaching 476,000 employed in April 2010. Since the low, 91,400 jobs in the industry have been recovered.

In November 2017, employment was 567,400. The over-the-year change in November 2017 (+15,500 jobs, +2.8 percent) was 3,200 more when compared to November 2016 (+12,300, +2.3 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has been trending upward over the past seven years.

Figure 2.27 Florida Financial Activities Employment, Seasonally Adjusted is a line graph showing financial activities employment in Florida peaked at 558,000 jobs in May 2006 and declined, reaching 476,000 employed in April 2010. Since the low in 2010, 91,400 jobs in the industry have been recovered. In November 2017, employment was 567,400. The over the year change in November 2017 (+15,500 jobs, +2.8 percent) was 3,200 more when compared to November 2016 (+12,300, +2.3 percent). Jobs in this sector has trended upward over the past seven years. This image can be found online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Financial-Activities-Employment.png

Professional and Business Services

Employment in Florida's professional and business services industry experienced a rapid decline during the Great Recession, bottoming out at 983,600 jobs in August 2009. Currently, industry employment is above its previous peak.

In November 2017, the employment was 1,342,800. The over-the-year change in November 2017 (+41,000 jobs, +3.1 percent) was 13,400 less when compared to November 2016 (+54,400, +4.4 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has been trending upward over the past seven years.

Figure 2.28 Florida Professional and Business Services Employment, Seasonally Adjusted is a line graph showing employment in Florida's professional and business services industry declined to 983,600 jobs in August 2009. In November 2017, the employment was 1,342,800. The over the year change in November 2017 (+41,000 jobs, +3.1 percent) was 13,400 less when compared to November 2016 (+54,400, +4.4 percent). Jobs in this sector has trended upward over the past seven years. This image can be found online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Professional-and-Business-Services-Employment.png

Education and Health Services

Florida did not experience a decline in education and health services employment during the recent recession. However, the rate of job growth did slow down during the recession.

In November 2017, employment was 1,276,900. The over-the-year change in November 2017 (+15,200 jobs, +1.2 percent) was 28,500 less when compared to November 2016 (+43,700, +3.6 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has been trending upward for over two decades.

Figure 2.29 Florida Education and Health Service Employment, Seasonally Adjusted is a line graph showing in November 2017, employment in the education and health services industries was 1,276,900. The over the year change in November 2017 (+15,200 jobs, +1.2 percent) was 28,500 less when compared to November 2016 (+43,700, +3.6 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has trended upward for over two decades. This image can be found online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Education-and-Health-Services-Employment.png

Leisure and Hospitality

Leisure and hospitality employment in Florida experienced a large decrease during the Great Recession, reaching 913,800 employed in December 2009. Currently, industry employment is above its previous peak.

In November 2017, the employment was 1,197,700. The over-the-year change in November 2017 (+5,200 jobs, +0.4 percent) was 31,200 less when compared to November 2016 (+36,400, +3.1 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has been trending upward over the past seven years.

Figure 2.30 Florida Leisure and Hospitality Employment, Seasonally Adjusted is a line graph showing leisure and hospitality employment in Florida decreased until 913,800 employed in December 2009. In November 2017, employment in leisure and hospitality employment was 1,197,700. The over the year change in November 2017 (+5,200 jobs, +0.4 percent) was 31,200 less when compared to November 2016 (+36,400, +3.1 percent). Jobs in this sector trended upward over the past seven years. This image can be found online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Leisure-and-Hospitality-Employment.png

Other Services

The Other Services sector comprises establishments engaged in providing services not specifically provided for elsewhere in the industry classification system. Examples range from automotive repair and maintenance to environment, conservation and wildlife organizations. Other services employment in Florida experienced large declines from 2007 to around 2009. Industry employment is currently above its previous peak.

In November 2017, employment was 369,400. The over-the-year change in November 2017 (+13,500 jobs, +3.8 percent) was 2,100 less when compared to November 2016 (+15,600, +4.6 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has been trending upward over the past seven years.

Figure 2.31 Florida Other Services Employment, Seasonally Adjusted is a line graph showing other services employment in Florida declined from 2007 to 2009. In November 2017, employment was 369,400. The over the year change in November 2017 (+13,500 jobs, +3.8 percent) was 2,100 less when compared to November 2016 (+15,600, +4.6 percent). Jobs in this sector trended upward over the past seven years. This image can be found online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Other-Services-Employment.png

Government

Florida experienced declines in government employment from 2008 to 2012. Currently, government employment is back to 2010 levels.

In November 2017, employment was 1,110,700. The over-the-year change in November 2017 (+12,200 jobs, +1.1 percent) was 1,700 less when compared to November 2016 (+13,900, +1.3 percent). The number of jobs in this sector has increased over the past three years.

Figure 2.32 Florida Government Employment, Seasonally Adjusted is a line graph showing government employment in Florida declined from 2008 to 2012. Government employment is back to 2010 levels. In November 2017, employment was 1,110,700. The over the year change in November 2017 (+12,200 jobs, +1.1 percent) was 1,700 less when compared to November 2016 (+13,900, +1.3 percent). Jobs in this sector increased over the past three years. This image can be found online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida-Government-Employment.png

(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

In 2016, the most common educational attainment level of Florida workforce participants from 25 to 64 years old was bachelor's degree or higher at 32.0 percent, followed by some college or associate degree at 32.0 percent and then high school diploma (including equivalency) at 26.8 percent. Only 9.2 percent of workforce participants had attained less than a high school diploma and this is down from 2013.

Figure 2.33

Florida Educational Attainment for the Civilian Labor Force, Age 25-64 (2016)

Less Than High School Graduate	High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)	Some College or Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
734,094	2,152,788	2,564,794	2,567,291
9.2%	26.8%	32.0%	32.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey.

Prepared by: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, December 2017.

Analysis of Educational Attainment of Floridians and Ability to Speak English

Adult education programs offer Adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) instruction for adults to improve their English speaking and writing skills and also to improve their academic skills so that they can earn a high school credential and enter postsecondary education to improve their career options. Adults enrolling in ESOL programs fall in the age ranges of 16 to 60+. During 2014-2015, some 205,355 adults were enrolled in Adult Basic Education, ESOL and Adult Secondary Education (adult high school and GED®) courses. Of the total enrollment, 86,000 adults were enrolled in ESOL courses. The chart below provides an analysis of age ranges and ability to speak English. This is a significant number of limited English-speaking adults who could benefit from ESOL courses as well as building their basic skills. Many of these individuals also are seeking employment in jobs that may not require an ability to speak English well or at all.

One-stop career center partners will collaborate to provide services, resources and referrals to limited English speaking job seekers.

Figure 2.34

Analysis of Age Range and Ability to Speak English

English Ability	Age range	Number
Speaks English - not well	16-19	14,739
Speaks English - not well	20-29	66,157
Speaks English - not well	30-39	135,111
Speaks English - not well	40-49	162,007
Speaks English - not well	50-59	147,397
Speaks English - not well	60-69	119,513
Speaks English - not well	**Total**	**644,924**
Does not speak English	16-19	7,619
Does not speak English	20-29	40,368
Does not speak English	30-39	73,069
Does not speak English	40-49	80,170
Does not speak English	50-59	89,059
Does not speak English	60-69	85,386
Does not speak English	**Total**	**375,671**
Total for both	**1,020,595**	

Source: IPUMS-USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org., 2016 1-year survey.

Prepared by: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, December 2017.

Figure 2.35

Educational Attainment and Ability to Speak English

English Ability	Less Than High School Credential	Number

English Ability	Less Than High School Credential	Number
Speaks English - not well	Grade 8 or less	199,875
Speaks English - not well	Grades 9 to 12 no degree	119,444
Does not speak English	Grade 8 or less	190,888
Does not speak English	Grades 9 to 12 no degree	81,984
Total	Total	592,191

Source: IPUMS-USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, 2016 1-year survey.

Prepared by: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, December 2017.

For Florida's population age 25 and over with disabilities (1,638,000), the U.S. Census Bureau provides the following educational attainment estimates:

- Less than high school graduate - 16.8%
- High school graduate (includes equivalency) - 39.3%
- Some college or associate's degree - 26.4%
- Bachelor's degree or higher - 17.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2016.

(iv) Skills Gaps

Skills Gap and Job Vacancy Survey

The existence of skills gaps has been a matter of much discussion among employer groups, industry associations, labor economists, and others throughout the workforce system. To research skills gaps, CareerSource Florida, in coordination with CareerSource Broward, funded a pilot project survey conducted in 2016 by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), Bureau of Labor Market Statistics (LMS). The success of the Broward pilot project showed that skills gap data could be collected and enabled CareerSource Florida and DEO to proceed with a full survey of all 24 Local Workforce Development Areas in Florida in 2017. The Florida Skills Gap and Job Vacancy Survey was designed to provide a statistically valid analysis of the skills gaps statewide and in Florida's local labor markets. Building on deep knowledge and experience in conducting local job vacancy surveys, LMS designed a survey instrument that collected skills gaps and job vacancies, along with the attributes of vacancies.

The survey questionnaire was provided by DEO to the survey vender and loaded into a computer assisted telephone inquiry (CATI) software system. Florida's LMS was a pioneer in the use of CATI technology for job vacancy/hiring needs surveys and CATI has been shown to provide fast response times, excellent sample control and monitoring, and monitoring with minimal employer burden.

The survey sample was drawn from a file of employers covered by Florida's Reemployment Assistance law using U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) methods and software. The sample was stratified by size and industry sector. Within the size/industry strata, establishments were selected at random except for large employers (250+), of which all were selected. Only private-sector establishments were included in the sampling frame. The final sample had almost 54,000 establishments. Based on random probability sampling, these employers represented all employers in the industry sampling frame. Data collection extended from April 2017 until mid-November 2017. The survey had a final response rate of 72.9 percent. All industry super sectors exceeded the required 70 percent response rate. The survey files were submitted to LMS as they were completed and the entire survey data collection was finished in December 2017. The raw survey data were then converted to estimates representing all employment in the sampling frame using BLS methodology. Publishable and valid results were produced for all of Florida's 24 Local Workforce Development Areas and will be distributed through a publicly available online data tool.

The final survey results measured 247,399 job vacancies with the largest number of vacancies being in the *Food Preparation and ServingOccupational Group* (39,302). *Sales and Related Occupations* ranked second in the number of vacancies (35,394). Results by industry indicated that *Education and Health Services* had an estimated 60,843 vacancies followed by *Leisure and Hospitality* with 51,772 vacancies.

Skills gaps were estimated for job vacancies using the weights assigned to the establishment in the random sample selection process, along with adjustments for survey nonresponse. Skills gaps measures are presented as either total gaps reported or gaps per vacancy. Individual occupations could have several gaps for both soft and hard skills. The highest number of skills gaps were reported in the soft skills of Communication. The next highest soft skills gaps were reported in Reliability/Time Management. The number of hard skills gaps reported were much lower than those for soft skills. Information Technology/Research skills ranked first among hard skills gaps followed by Workplace skills, such as Tool Use and Selection and Safety skills.

The *Mining and Construction* industry had the largest number of soft and hard skills gaps per vacancy of all of the industry groups statewide. The *Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance* major occupation group reported the most soft skills gaps per vacancy. The *Farming, Fishing, and Forestry* major occupation group reported the most hard skills gaps per vacancy. Employers without gaps were asked how they avoided skills gaps in hiring, recruitment, training, and retention. Around one-third of the skills gap mitigation responses indicated that applicants are screened carefully before hiring. The next most used gap mitigation technique was to retain high skilled/productive staff. Less than 3 percent of respondents outsourced hiring. The *Education and Healthcare* industry reported the highest use of gap mitigation followed by *Leisure and Hospitality*.

Out of a total of 247,399 estimated vacancies reported by Florida private-sector employers, 62,941 were reported to have skills gaps. This represented about one-third of the total employers that experienced skills gaps with jobseekers, and current and former employees. According to these employers, skills gaps are found across all occupations and education levels in Florida's labor market. As such, the survey results provide one of the clearest signals from private-sector employers to the workforce, education, and economic development partnerships about employers' skills needs. Skills are a key to growing an economy and a viable labor market for employees, students, and jobseekers.

Upgraded skills will help Florida's workers be more competitive in the production of the goods and services demanded by state, national, and international economies. The results of enhanced skills to

Florida's workers will include better wages, increased wage gains, higher rates of job retention, broader opportunities for career advancement, and more stable and rewarding career pathways. For the workforce and education partnerships, enhancements made to wraparound services, training, and curriculum developed from gap results could make the workforce and education systems much more effective in meeting the skills needs of private-sector employers. The skills gap survey results contain enough actionable data to inform both individual workers and the industries (and employers) who need higher skilled workers. They can be used to develop tools and strategies based on gap mitigation findings to promote gap mitigation and retention among employers struggling with retention issues. It also can be used to help better align workforce and educational training program outcomes and design to better fit employer-reported needs.

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 *Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce* above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in *Employers' Employment Needs* 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.*

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* 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.

An analysis of Florida's workforce development activities demonstrates a broad range of services offered to Florida residents. The state's WIOA core partners of **CareerSource Florida; the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO); and the Florida Department of Education's Divisions of Blind Services (FDBS), Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Career and Adult Education (DCAE)** provide services that assist the state in delivering workforce, education and training activities in a cohesive manner.

Career Centers

Within the CareerSource Florida network, Florida's career centers are designed to deliver and provide access to services for employers seeking qualified workers as well as training for new and existing employees and all job seekers.

Florida's comprehensive career centers provide expanded services and access to core and required partner programs either through colocation of partners or linkages to partner services. Florida's career centers provide access to all, including veterans, TANF recipients, SNAP recipients and persons with disabilities.

Services are available to Florida's citizens and businesses through satellite and/or affiliate sites in areas strategically located within other community partners' facilities such as local chambers, libraries and community-based organizations. All of Florida's career centers are easily identified using the CareerSource Florida network brand and the "A proud partner of the American Job Center network."

In addition to services offered through comprehensive career centers and affiliate sites, several local workforce development boards deploy mobile centers to provide services to Florida's businesses and workers to support special events and in areas where access to services may be challenging. Major emphasis is placed on providing services directly at employer sites and direct service delivery in rural communities. Mobile centers are a cost-effective and customer-friendly service solution. Mobile centers play an integral role in providing services and assistance after hurricanes and other disaster events.

WIOA emphasizes the importance of serving the business customer. The CareerSource Florida network is a key resource for businesses seeking qualified workers and grants for customized training for new or existing employees. All 24 LWDBs have established dedicated business services teams who partner closely with Florida's VR business relations teams. In several cases, designated career centers are in business districts to help local employers recruit, train and retain workers.

Communications Tools

Digital communication and social media are replacing traditional outreach tools and media as effective and efficient methods of educating and informing current and potential customers and partners. While still employing tactics such as print and radio communications and outreach, CareerSource Florida's strategic use of digital outreach to raise awareness and use of business and career services among targeted audiences has grown significantly, in alignment with increasing use of digital resources among all customer populations.

The CareerSource Florida website serves as an important communications tool for accessing information about statewide initiatives, the latest workforce development and economic news, policy updates and board actions, state board meetings and workforce system accomplishments.

CareerSource Florida also employs integrated communications tactics including social, paid and earned media to inform Florida's job seekers, workers and businesses as well as board members, state and local partners and various stakeholders. CareerSource Florida also leverages social media, digital placements and traditional placements to support partners' outreach, including to specific populations such as military veterans and people with disabilities served by partner organizations. CareerSource Florida's social media presence on platforms including Facebook and Twitter to elevate awareness and use of available services has been recognized by local area offices of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Employment & Training Administration as a best practice.

Additional CareerSource Florida communications tools include timely and relevant updates on workforce system issues and news, frequent electronic messages from the President and CEO of

CareerSource Florida to the CareerSource Florida Board, DEO and LWDBs; regularly scheduled and special legislative updates; and news releases and special alerts as necessary.

In Fiscal Year 2015-2016, CareerSource Florida launched its statewide Cooperative Outreach Program, an investment in brand compliant, strategic outreach tools and tactics that could be leveraged by local workforce development boards to augment existing local outreach strategies. The initiative supports local boards' efforts to reach job-seeking customers, reconnect with previously served customers and connect with new business.

CareerSource Florida's statewide Cooperative Outreach Program has had strong results since its inception. All 24 local workforce development boards participated in in the second year of the program. In Fiscal Year 2016-17, nearly 33 million overall advertising impressions (the total number of people reached, multiplied by how frequently they may see the ad placement) were reported based on local campaigns launched within the statewide program, including more than 20 million digital impressions. Of note is the number of new leads generated by the additional outreach efforts - more than 2,300 new employers and job seeking customers were engaged through these campaigns.

The 2017-2018 statewide communications and outreach plan aligns with CareerSource Florida's three corporate goals: communicate the CareerSource Florida network vision to enhance thought leadership, strategies and policies that strengthen excellence to Florida businesses, job seekers and workers; leverage strategic partnerships to cultivate local, regional and state capacity building that increases economic opportunity; and emphasize data-driven decisions to keep Florida's workforce system accountable by encouraging performance achievement and boosting talent pipeline alignment.

CareerSource Florida's strategic, integrated outreach, including the Cooperative Outreach Program with local workforce development boards, has contributed to significant increases in employer awareness of the state workforce system. According to market surveys conducted in the spring of 2017, more than half of those surveyed report being aware and knowledgeable of their local workforce development board or career center, nearly double the 26 percent who reported awareness and knowledge in 2013.

Employ Florida: Online Workforce Services and Virtual Career Center

Today's job seekers and businesses expect and need access to workforce services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Employ Florida website at www.employflorida.com is Florida's virtual job-matching tool, providing access at *no charge* to employment opportunities, resume-building resources and other services. Employ Florida helps connect businesses, job seekers and Floridians looking to grow in their careers.

Employ Florida is the state's most comprehensive source for current Florida job openings. Employ Florida launched in 2005 and since its inception, 254,563 employers have registered on the site and nearly three million resumes have been posted. Employ Florida provides businesses access to thousands of current resumes, recruiting and hiring resources, valuable information on training options and links to labor market information at both the state and local levels. Florida's job seekers can search for employment opportunities from numerous job and corporate websites as well as those placed directly on Employ Florida by businesses or through LWDBs and/or career centers. Employers and job seekers can locate Florida's workforce services and resources anywhere in the state via Employ Florida or by calling the toll-free Employ Florida Helpdesk, staffed by DEO.

Employ Florida is consistently upgraded to maintain relevancy and incorporate improved technology. The use of micro-portals, powered by Employ Florida, provide specialized and targeted job matching to add value for both employers and job seekers with specific interests and needs. CareerSource Florida and DEO, in collaboration with LWDBs and other partners, maintain dedicated entry points with customized job search information and resources. These resources are for Florida veterans, job seekers age 50 and older, those interested in green jobs, people with disabilities, recent college graduates and people and businesses impacted by specific events such as hurricanes.

The Florida Abilities Work portal at www.abilitieswork.employflorida.com is a tool for employers and job seekers with disabilities. The micro-portal is housed on the Employ Florida website with a logo button for ease of access. The portal was specifically designed to provide resources to people with disabilities and to assist employers who are interested in hiring. The 2014 Florida Legislature appropriated funding for a help desk that is staffed by Vocational Rehabilitation. The portal was developed in response to the Governor's Commission on Jobs for Floridians with Disabilities collaboratively with input from several partners including the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, VR and Division of Blind Services (FDBS) and the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council. Focus groups convened around the state, allowing input from stakeholders including employers, field staff, customers and family members. A communications group of representatives from partner agencies met during development to ensure a consistent message.

Florida's partners who serve specific populations engage in activities critical to Florida's workforce development network.

Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Workforce Development Activities

Activities for youth and students are designed to assist in developing a concept of work, navigating the community and obtaining work experience during high school. Pre-Employment Transition Services for students with disabilities or potentially eligible students include career exploration counseling, work readiness and self-advocacy training and experiential activities such as community-based work experience and on-the-job training. Support services available to eligible students with disabilities or youth with disabilities include assistive technology and services, transportation and uniforms. Intensive services are designed for those who need additional support with appropriate work behavior, require repetition to acquire skills, build endurance to work and identify the right fit or environment for work. These services include Discovery, Youth Peer Mentoring, Project SEARCH, services provided under Third-party Cooperative Arrangements with school districts and tuition, books and supplies for postsecondary education programs.

VR offers services for adults (and youth, if needed to achieve job goals) that include vocational and other assessments to help job seekers best define their job goals. If needed to meet their goal, medical and psychological services are obtained. VR helps job seekers obtain educational or job readiness training to prepare for their career. Job search, placement, coaching, supported employment and self-employment services are available, as well as interpretive, assistive and rehabilitation technology services. VR maintains a vast network of contracted employment service providers throughout the state and has initiatives in place to increase the variety and quantity of services offered.

VR has formalized a Business Relations Program, with the vision to build and sustain partnerships with business and industry through effective services that are driven by the needs of employers. These partnerships will lead to competitive integrated employmentandcareer opportunities for VR

customers. Efforts are underway in the Business Relations Program to define and customize services to employers, create strategic partnerships to support workforce needs and establish an employment-focused culture within the rehabilitation process.

Florida Division of Blind Services (FDBS) Workforce Development Activities

From 2016-2017, FDBS served 10,374 clients, 1,664 of whom were assisted in obtaining competitive integrated employment. FDBS identified activities anticipated to expand, integrate and improve services to individuals with visual disabilities within the workforce system while increasing collaboration among core partners. The activities include:

- Expanding opportunities for students to receive FDBS services and securing opportunities for students and youth with disabilities to practice and improve workplace skills. Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) were included in the 2017-2018 VR contracts. By adding these services, the FDBS provides students and youth with disabilities opportunities to participate in work-based learning experiences, apprenticeships and internships to improve workplace skills.
- Ensuring that clients who participate in training and education programs benefit from engagement. FDBS collaborates with CareerSource Florida and the Division of Public Schools to provide opportunities for training, education and workplace activities. FDBS has memoranda of understanding with CareerSource Florida, Exceptional Student Education and VR.
- Expanding utilization of online job systems such as DEO's web portal, the state/federal Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) and the Florida Jobs Connection to expose employers to job-ready FDBS consumers. Staff is trained on how to use TAP throughout the state. FDBS uses biweekly reports to capture staff's use of this resource.
- Encouraging and tracking industry certifications, apprenticeships and postsecondary outcomes. The Bureau of Business Enterprise (BBE) tracks Continuing Education Units (CEUs), food manager certifications and vendor licensures. Employment placement specialists are continually notified of information regarding industry certifications, apprenticeships and postsecondary opportunities via emails and during monthly conference calls.
- Developing and implementing an employment skills training program at the FDBS Residential Rehabilitation Center to better prepare blind and visually impaired youth and adults for success in future employment. A pre-employment program at the Residential Rehabilitation Center began in 2016. Classes are conducted quarterly to increase the employment rate for visually impaired youth and adults.
- Increasing the provision of accessibility tools, awareness and regular follow-up with consumers to ensure equality in educational experiences and vocational opportunities. FDBS strengthened its relationship with the community rehabilitation programs to ensure appropriate and client-specific assistive technology is consistent with needs of all clients and is reflected in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). FDBS monitors the contract and receives client feedback via satisfaction survey.
- Implementing a comprehensive communications and outreach plan. FDBS will develop targeted marketing strategies to reach under-served and unserved populations based on data collected via the needs assessment. Outreach activities are tracked by the district offices monthly and reported quarterly.

- Working with each client to ensure that IPE goals are consistent with and/or are amenable to transportation resources. FDBS created a list of transportation vendors based on feedback from each district office. This list serves as a resource to all districts and is updated as needed.
- Developing and strengthening employer relationships by providing employer training, support, education and resources related to employing individuals with visual impairments in accordance with Section 503 regulations. FDBS provides employment placement specialists with marketing tools/toolkits to use when meeting with potential employers and CareerSource Florida staff. Employers receive education regarding FDBS programs/services with the goal of increasing opportunities for clients seeking employment.
- Strengthening statewide collaborative partnerships with core partners. FDBS increased communication with core partners and participates in regularly scheduled conference calls and meetings.
- Increasing opportunities for data sharing and improving data validity and integrity. Although data sharing is a challenge, (i.e., getting a signed release of information for each client for all agencies), a draft of the data sharing agreement is under review for approval by both DOE and DEO.
- Promoting integrated employment in the community as the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities under the Employment First Florida initiative. FDBS provides training and education on integrated employment to staff and community providers.
- Maintaining and strengthening contracts with private non-profit organizations to provide four core components: vocational rehabilitation, transition, supported employment and rehabilitation engineering. Vocational rehabilitation, transition and pre-ETS are combined in the 2017-2018 contracts. Contracted providers are monitored via desk audits or onsite based on an established timeframe or at any time if an issue arises. By working with providers, FDBS will increase work-based experiences and provide career exploration in a variety of fields. FDBS coordinates with multiple partners to maximize supported employment services
- Increasing the number of individuals with significant and most significant disabilities receiving services. In January 2016, FDBS implemented an online application to increase accessibility to individuals who may qualify for services. FDBS created multiple initiatives throughout the state to increase referrals, such as the See Different initiative and FDBS 75 Years Celebrations. Several PSAs were delivered through internet and digital cable provider Comcast.
- Supporting FDBS clients in becoming self-supporting. FDBS provides services to train visually impaired individuals on orientation and mobility, cooking and other support (e.g., job placement, supported employment, purchase of adaptive equipment, etc.) to foster independent living goals of clients.
- Identifying an approach to expedite eligibility and service delivery to individuals who are at risk of losing employment. The revised version of Policy 2.16 Timeliness of Services, effective October 18, 2017, includes language to prioritize services to individuals at risk of becoming unemployed.
- Increasing staff development and continuing education. A list of employees who have a CRC is maintained by the state office. The FDBS encourages CRC credentialed staff to participate in trainings, such as the Florida Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (FAER), Florida Rehabilitation Association (FRA) and WIOA,

that provide CEUs to ensure they maintain their credentials. FDBS encourages employees who do not have a CRC to obtain certification by providing a financial incentive

- Aligning FDBS policies and procedures to address new WIOA requirements. All policies in the Bureau of Client Services were reviewed and revised as appropriate to include WIOA requirements. A number of these policies have been implemented and other revisions are pending final review.
- Providing ongoing Employment Outcomes Professional II (EOP II) Training to vocational rehabilitation staff and community providers. FDBS tested the Vermont Model in a limited number of districts. EOP II Training is applied in all districts to increase communication with employers and assess needs.
- Providing training and education sponsorship to eligible vocational rehabilitation clients and staff. FDBS supports clients in their obtainment of college degrees by assisting with tuition, meals and room and board as appropriate.
- Supporting community rehabilitation provider trainings designed for individuals who are blind and visually impaired. MOUs are in place with VR, Exceptional Student Education and CareerSource Florida to ensure individuals who are blind and visually impaired fully participate in the workforce.

Education and Training Activities for Adult Education

Florida's adult education system provides academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to read, write and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent. Adult education programs served 205,355 adults in 2014-15; 173,901 in 2015-16; and 169, 308 in 2016-17. The state of Florida has aligned content standards for adult education with state-adopted academic standards.

Training activities are provided statewide through face-to-face workshops, webinars, podcasts and conferences. Needs assessments are conducted to assist in determining state professional development priorities. Current initiatives determine training topics such as college and career readiness standards, integrated education and training models, essential components of reading instruction, career pathways, mathematics instruction and GED® preparation.

Florida's Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (FICAPS) is Florida's adult education approach to career pathways. Students will simultaneously enroll in an adult education course (GED® Integrated and English Literacy for Career and Technical Education) and a career and technical certificate program.

Adult education programs will collaborate with their LWDB to determine local high-wage high-demand careers when developing career pathways. The Division of Career and Adult Education (DCAE) promotes implementation of non-credit bridge programs that promote the teaching of literacy skills in a career context.

One-stop career center partners and adult education programs work collaboratively within their local areas and assessment and instructional services are often provided onsite. Local CareerSource Florida network staff can participate in Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) trainings conducted by DCAE throughout the year. Many career centers provide representatives directly to the adult education facility to provide counseling, advising and other services related to awareness of workforce resources. The sharing of cross-

referral outcomes is a priority of DCAE to support the goals of WIOA and increase student access and achievement.

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) above.

As is outlined in section 2(A) above, Florida's workforce network partners are successful in reaching and serving customers to put Floridians to work. These partnerships are leveraged at the state and local levels to enhance any areas where improvements are needed. The strength of Florida's workforce network is demonstrated through its existing relationships and the ongoing effort to identify additional opportunities for coordinated service delivery as required under WIOA. Currently, Florida's WIOA partners have ample statewide coverage for all programs, with skilled and experienced professional team members. The state workforce investment board, LWDBs, VR and FDBS all have established business relationship teams working together to serve employers.

Additional improvements are taking place in Florida's workforce network, including a Residential Center training program within the FDBS. The Pre-Employment Program began in 2016 with the goal to increase the employment rates for youth and adults. Classes are conducted at the Rehabilitation Center each quarter. The Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) provided various trainings on the Career Plus Index and WIOA requirements.

Continuous improvement of how Florida's workforce network serves customers will require continued collaboration, coordination and re-assessment. The identification of both strengths and weaknesses is an ongoing process for the core programs working to implement WIOA. Working groups discussed in section III(b)(7) are addressing data integration issues as a potential challenge for WIOA implementation. Reviewing WIOA program services, programs and policies to identify duplicative efforts and potential solutions to better align agency resources and efforts is ongoing.

It is notable the FDBS reviewed and revised all policies for the Bureau of Client Services. Six policies were implemented on October 18, 2017, and the others are under review. Each district works with the CareerSource Florida local board to conduct outreach and connect clients with community resources that can assist with creating accessible computer systems. The VR counselors and EPS staff meet with FDBS clients at the centers to tour the facilities. Clients are shown how to use computers and are introduced to other services provided by CareerSource Florida centers.

Florida will work to address accessibility of job network computer systems, outreach and community visibility for programs that serve job seekers with disabilities and transportation for job seekers with disabilities.

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

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

Florida is well-positioned to continue delivering exceptional workforce development services with the knowledge and experience of Florida's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act core program partners. Continued communication and enhanced collaboration among the WIOA State Leadership Team and working groups remain a primary focus as the partners collectively build the capacity of the state's workforce system.

Capacity also depends on the continued success of Florida's 24 local workforce development boards. Local boards and their WIOA partners constantly strive to develop innovative methods for delivery of services to job seekers and employers in their local areas. A heightened focus on customer service and business engagement is helping increase Florida's workforce network capacity.

Florida's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) currently has 96 unit offices throughout Florida; approximately 20 percent of those are private contracted offices, opened to increase its service capacity and ensure continuity of services. Factors such as staff turnover and Order of Selection (OOS) waitlists affect customer service capacity and VR's leadership uses data projection models to monitor trends and guide decision making regarding fiscal, caseload and waitlist performance.

VR partners with employment service providers and maintains memorandums of agreement with multiple agencies and entities around the state to ensure comprehensive and coordinated services are provided for job seekers with disabilities. VR implements pilot programs and Innovation and Expansion projects to further increase its service capacity. VR places emphasis on increasing provider capacity for specialized services such as Discovery and Customized Employment.

VR's services are provided statewide with the exception of pilot programs, Innovation and Expansion project activities and transition services delivered under a Third-Party Cooperative Arrangement (TPCA). VR currently holds TPCAs with 25 school districts and as required, has a waiver of statewideness in place for these arrangements. More details on TPCA and other factors that affect VR's service capacity can be found in the VR services portion of this plan.

FDBS has aligned and dedicated vocational rehabilitation staff to coordinate, implement and track workforce development activities across multiple programs. FDBS has long-established relationships with statewide Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) who provide direct vocational rehabilitation, transition, supported employment and rehabilitation engineering services to clients statewide. Through existing staff and community rehabilitation program partners, FDBS is implementing the identified workforce development activities

FDBS conducts ongoing training needs assessment to ensure compliance of federal and state mandates and examines individual personnel training requirements related to current job performance, future job requirements and promotional or career advancement needs.

Adult education programs in Florida are provided by school districts, colleges and community-based organizations. While some counties may not offer adult education programs, colleges in those service areas were awarded federal grants to provide adult education programs in those areas. There are 202 locations offering adult education services. This includes main sites and satellite programs located throughout the community. Transportation is a barrier for many adults so local programs plan locations that are accessible for potential adult students.

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.

Through the implementation of WIOA, Florida has a business-led, market-responsive, results-oriented and integrated workforce development system. The enhanced system fosters customer service excellence, seeks continuous improvement and demonstrates value by enhancing employment opportunities for all individuals. Focused and deliberate collaboration between education, workforce and economic development networks maximizes the competitiveness of businesses and the productivity of the state's workforce. This increases opportunities and economic prosperity.

2. GOALS

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the above analysis 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 of employment* and other populations.**
B. Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

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* 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.

** Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

Florida's strategic vision for WIOA implementation will be realized by accomplishing these three goals:

- Enhance alignment and market responsiveness of workforce, education and economic development systems through improved service integration that provides businesses with skilled, productive and competitive talent and Floridians with employment, education, training and support services that reduce welfare dependence and increase opportunities for self-sufficiency, high-skill and high-wage careers and lifelong learning.
- Promote accountable, transparent and data-driven workforce investment through performance measures, monitoring and evaluation that inform strategies, drive operational excellence, lead to the identification and replication of best practices and empower an effective and efficient workforce delivery system.

- Improve career exploration, educational attainment and skills training for in-demand industries and occupations for Florida youth that lead to enhanced employment, career development, credentialing and postsecondary education opportunities.

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

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

Core WIOA program partners continue efforts to refine a process for collecting data and reporting performance. Core programs will assist state and local workforce development boards to negotiate levels of performance based on the statistical adjustment model. This model takes into consideration state and local economic factors including unemployment rates, industry sectors and characteristics of participants entering the program (e.g., work history, work experience, educational / occupational skills attainment, literacy levels, disability status, etc.). The core measures include:

4. Percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during second quarter after exit
5. Percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during fourth quarter after exit
6. Median earnings of participants during second quarter after exit
7. Percentage of participants who obtain a postsecondary credential or secondary school diploma within one year after exit
8. Achievement of measurable skill gains toward credential or employment
9. Effectiveness in serving employers

Negotiated levels of performance are reviewed and approved by the core program senior leadership, the state workforce investment board and ultimately the governor. Data are housed in the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) system for quarterly and annual reporting by WIOA core program partners. Tables with updated performance and negotiated performance goals are in section III of this plan.

4. ASSESSMENT

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

To accurately assess effectiveness of the workforce system, all core partners provide quarterly performance data to the state workforce investment board. Performance is assessed in relation to state and local targets. Gaps in performance are addressed at the local levels. State-level teams provide technical assistance to local boards on complex performance issues. Core program partners share performance reports and special analyses of performance are conducted and shared across programs. For example, DEO completed a

comprehensive study on skills gaps stratified to the local levels which will be distributed and used by all core partners at the state and local levels.

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).

Redefining Customer Service Standards for Business Talent Support

Continuous improvement is a key value of the CareerSource Florida network. CareerSource Florida evaluates and defines standards and measures (and removes any deemed unnecessary) in customer service. This enables Florida business, especially those in key sectors aligned to state and regional economic development priorities, to fully benefit from CareerSource Florida's training grant programs, and helps facilitate seamless access to tools and services across partner/organization programs. CareerSource Florida continues building on its Salesforce-based Customer Relationship Management platform to improve business services.

Creating a Total Talent Delivery System

The umbrella of business support and training services available throughout the CareerSource Florida network better positions Florida to respond to short and long-term talent needs of existing companies and those that are new to Florida. The goal is to facilitate a seamless, externally focused talent solution strategy for Florida business.

Using the market segmentation framework and planning tools in the CareerSource Florida Professional Business Development Tool Kit, developed in part through the USDOL Expanding Business Engagement grant received in 2012, helps ensure businesses of all sizes in all sectors are identified for proactive talent support strategies. CareerSource Florida's Business and Workforce Development Unit leads network-wide webinars highlighting innovative tools and best practice methods for business services representatives/account managers who interface with business on talent needs.

Since 2015, CareerSource Florida has generated a monthly dashboard to better track business services. Elements include number of businesses served, number of high-value services provided to businesses and the number of projected trainees through state-level training grants. Under-utilized talents and skills of job seekers with barriers to employment are consistently marketed to Florida businesses.

Implementing Sector Strategies

WIOA requires sector partnerships as a strategy under federal statute. The law defines both state and local level responsibilities. Chapter 445.004(10), Florida Statutes, requires state workforce development strategy to include efforts that enlist business, education and community support for students to achieve long-term career goals. CareerSource Florida and its network ensure young people have the academic and occupational skills required to succeed in the workplace. The state workforce development strategy assists employers in upgrading or updating the skills of their employees and helps workers acquire the education or training needed to secure a better job with better wages. This strategy assists the state's efforts to attract and expand job-creating businesses offering high-paying, high-demand occupations. Development of sector strategies and career pathways is a component of Florida's WIOA Unified Plan and state workforce development strategy.

Sector strategies are regional, industry-focused approaches to building a skilled workforce and are an effective way to align public and private resources to address the talent needs of employers. Evidence from states employing this approach shows that sector strategies can simultaneously improve employment opportunities for job seekers and enhance the competitiveness of industries. Effective sector strategies rely on strong sector partnerships, sometimes referred to as industry partnerships, workforce collaboratives or regional skills alliances.

These partnerships are led by businesses within a critical industry cluster working collaboratively with workforce development, education and training, economic development, labor and community-based organizations. Effective sector strategies are based on the following strategic framework:

- Built Around Great Data
- Founded on a Shared, Regional Vision
- Guided by Industry
- Lead to Strategic Alignment
- Transform How Services (job seekers/worker and employer) are Delivered
- Measured, Improved and Sustained

Advanced Manufacturing Business Intelligence Research and Sector Strategy Approach Services

This initiative began in 2014 and resulted in the promotion of business growth through better connectivity of Florida's advanced manufacturers to existing public and private resources essential for increased competitiveness and profitability, leveraging the workforce and talent development assets within the state. The Center for Advanced Manufacturing Excellence (CAME), under the direction of FloridaMakes, Florida's Manufacturing Extension partnership, served as the Advanced Manufacturing Workforce Leadership Council and coordinated efforts through Florida's 13 Regional Manufacturing Associations (RMAs). The Leadership Council, composed of RMAs and Florida manufacturers, served as the primary point of contact for the project.

Throughout the year, the Leadership Council engaged in a variety of activities focused around the use of industry-specific labor market intelligence to inform the development of workforce policy and a sector strategy for manufacturing. Both the council and the RMAs, comprising Florida industry, set out to drive business-led improvements in talent delivery.

Successful completion of the project resulted in the establishment of a business feedback loop that ensures Florida's workforce network has a deeper understanding of and is responsive to the talent needs of the state in this sector.

Successes included:

- Created and developed a new Leadership Council composed of industry representation and RMA leadership;
- Conducted four action-oriented meetings that included the full engagement of the Leadership Council;
- Developed and executed a communication strategy to ensure awareness of and promote engagement in the Leadership Council and its projects;
- Conducted a survey of workforce development needs;
- Created customized Regional Economic Analysis reports that included shift-share analysis;
- Conducted regional focus groups to review survey findings and results from Regional Economic Analysis reports and develop regional solutions;
- Reviewed the policies, programs and practices being used in three states and leveraged this intelligence to develop policy recommendations for Florida's manufacturing sector; and,
- Identified top sub-sectors that will lead Florida's ongoing economic growth.

The project concluded in early 2017 with the following key accomplishments:

- Leadership Council Vision, Mission and Plan of Action;
- Workforce Survey Administration Plan;
- Customized Workforce Survey;
- Focus Groups Administration Plan;
- Nine Regional Economic Reports;
- Focus Group Presentations and Reports;
- Regional reports with recommended actions to increase the economic competitiveness of small and medium manufacturers;
- Executive summary of combined regional reports that presents an integrated statewide perspective and analysis, provided by Polk State Corporate College - College Alliance for Advanced Manufacturing
- State briefs and workforce policy recommendations; and,
- a Sustainability Strategy directed by FloridaMakes and Florida's Regional Manufacturing Associations.

Healthcare Business Intelligence Research and Sector Strategy Approach Services

Florida's Healthcare Workforce Initiative resulted in the formation of a statewide Florida Healthcare Workforce Leadership Council (FHWL) in 2014-2015. The Council served as the primary point of contact for statewide healthcare industry-specific labor market intelligence and is used by the state's workforce network to facilitate policy and strategy development. The FHWL resulted in a new sector strategy approach for healthcare to develop and continue an essential business feedback loop to ensure Florida's workforce network has a deep understanding of and is responsive to the talent needs of the state.

Common issues and needs of employers were identified and coordinated solutions developed for the healthcare talent delivery system. Professional and State Advisory Resource Groups were established as a source for information and data, which is essential to enable healthcare workforce policy and strategy development. Regional councils were formed to consider issues that exist at the local level.

During the initiative:

- Gaps in healthcare workforce supply and demand data were identified and a collection system was designed to effectively analyze data at the state and regional level;
- Strategies for recruitment and retention of healthcare workers were developed, including critical need areas across all health professions; and,
- Emerging workforce roles, such as in healthcare informatics, were identified and a method to educate the current workforce regarding value-based care was developed.

As the project culminated, a significant outcome was the establishment of the Healthcare Workforce Research Initiative (HWRI). The following are the HWRI Contributions to Healthcare Workforce Strategies:

- Identifying supply, demand and education distribution and trends in healthcare to support the appropriate planning for future workforce needs;
- Directing and informing policies to alleviate shortages in key areas;
- Ascertaining the cost-effectiveness of staffing with professionals;
- Analyzing the effect of workforce supply on population health outcomes;
- Estimating changes in supply needed to meet the demands of new forms of healthcare delivery;
- Providing a statewide and regional forecast and perspective on healthcare workforce issues;
- Identifying new models of healthcare delivery; and,
- Identifying emerging and evolving roles and occupations in healthcare.

Additional information on Florida's Healthcare Workforce Initiative may be found at: www.FLHealthcareWorkforce.org.

Sector Partnership National Emergency (NEG) Grant

In June 2015, CareerSource Florida and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity were awarded a nearly $7 million, two-year Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant to build on Florida's sector strategies for healthcare and advanced manufacturing - two sectors critical for Florida's future economic growth. Ten local workforce development boards convened industry-specific councils of business, education and other leaders to identify current and future workforce needs for both the healthcare and advanced manufacturing sectors. The goal of the initiative is to build regional talent pipelines, address skills gaps and create meaningful career pathways by providing intensive services and training to program participants so they may obtain industry-recognized credentials and ultimately employment.

The grant enabled CareerSource Florida to engage the services of Maher & Maher, a nationally recognized firm with expertise in sector strategy implementation. Self-assessments by each of Florida's 24 local workforce development boards were conducted to help them better understand their current position in identifying sectors of focus through the lens of six key world-class implementation factors: built on great data, founded on a shared regional vision, guided by industry, transformed service delivery, strategically aligned partners and supportive partnerships.

Following the self-assessments, CareerSource Florida led four sub-state territory workshops, with agendas customized to the needs of the six local boards within each territory. At each workshop, an industry panel focused on talent needs in advanced manufacturing or healthcare was showcased. Each workshop provided a high-level sub state supply/demand analysis of key sectors. The following workshops were held:

- December 2016 - Northwest Florida (Panama City)
- February 2017 - South Florida (Palm Beach)
- March 2017 - Central Florida (Tampa)
- April 2017 - Northeast Florida (Ocala)

More than 400 representatives from business/industry, education, economic development, community development and workforce development attended the workshops.

To further promote sector strategy implementation, a monthly newsletter was sent out to interested parties about the approach, spotlighting industry focuses and providing the status of the grant's progress towards the training goal. At the end of December 2017, 1,106 people were enrolled in career services and/or training, above the grant goal of 1,050. The grant has been extended through June 2018.

After the workshops and given the emphasis on sector strategy implementation in the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act, the executive committee of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors recommended using state-level funds to help LWDBs move forward in implementation of this transformative approach. The grant funds enabled the creation of state-level and sub-state sector strategy videos highlighting businesses benefitting from this approach to assist with awareness among, outreach to and engagement with industry and education partners.

At the May 2017 CareerSource Florida board meeting, consultants Maher & Maher provided a summary of the initiative's progress over the year and offered recommendations to move the state's workforce system forward.These recommendations will be acted upon in the upcoming year:

- Ensure workforce system has a baseline understanding of sector strategies, including state expectations
- Build capacity of state and local workforce system to move from sector-based work to sector strategies
- Support operationalization of sector strategies into design/delivery of job seeker and business services
- Empower local system to use Sector Partnerships to move beyond development of training programs to development of career pathways.

Expanding Apprenticeship Opportunities

In the fall of 2016, CareerSource Florida integrated Registered Apprenticeships into its statewide sector strategy initiative by leveraging its selection as a USDOL ApprenticeshipUSA expansion grantee. With a keen focus on building the state's talent pipeline, local workforce development boards are empowered to move from training programs to establishing career pathways that offer apprenticeships as a viable talent development solution. The strategic alignment has forged new partnerships with employers and closer collaboration between the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, the Florida Department of Education's Office of Apprenticeship and CareerSource Florida. As a unified partnership, the team identifies challenges and opportunities for building a modern talent delivery system that meets the needs of employers in high-demand industries like advanced manufacturing, information technology, healthcare and construction.Key achievements designed to shift workforce development from a supply-driven to demand-driven system include:

- Convening more than 100 influential businesses leaders and community stakeholders as part of the ApprenticeshipUSA grant kick-off activities to solidify partnerships for system changes that are transformative and sustainable beyond the life of the grant.
- Hosting weekly strategy sessions with core partners from the Florida Department of Education's Office of Apprenticeship and the Department of Economic Opportunity to align policies, people and processes as part of statewide system integration and ApprenticeshipUSA grant compliance.
- One of only nine states selected by the USDOL as an Apprenticeship Promising Practice case study within the Aligning State Systems & Partnerships category, providing a national platform for sharing Florida's successes broadly to the apprenticeship and workforce community.
- Hosting an Apprenticeship 101 cross-training webinar for Business Services Representatives from all 24 local workforce development boards and Apprenticeship Training Representatives from Florida's six Registered Apprenticeship service regions to support alignment with WIOA and apprenticeship expansion strategies.
- Engaging core partners from the Florida Department of Education, Florida Office of Economic Opportunity, Florida Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and influential businesses and community leaders as members on the Governance/Policy, Business Outreach, Population Outreach and Data Sharing Apprenticeship Catalyst Workgroups.
- Developing customizable workforce solutions for employers and job seekers based upon recommendations from the Apprenticeship Catalyst Workgroup participants.
- Commissioning market research, including surveys of businesses and current apprentices, of perceptions about Registered Apprenticeship to implement effective outreach and communication strategies to raise awareness of and interest in this career pathway opportunity.
- CareerSource South Florida and Miami-Dade County Public Schools have formed a specialized, collaborative partnership to deliver 12 Miami Dade Youth Pre-Apprenticeship Career and Technical Training Programs in four Miami-Dade County

Public Schools: Coral Gables Senior High School, Miami Carol City Senior High, Miami Edison Senior High School and Homestead Senior High School.

- During a 23-month period, pre-apprentices will be exposed to trades with employment gaps such as bricklayer, carpentry, heating and air conditioning as well as elevator constructor and electricians, followed by unique career pathways to employment after completion.
- CareerSource Suncoast is partnering with the national nonprofit organization Jobs for the Future to become an intermediary Registered Apprenticeship sponsor within the advanced manufacturing industry.
- CareerSource Tampa Bay offers prevocational training programs in the construction and welding trades for both youth and adults. Successful participants are referred to local construction employers and apprenticeship programs for direct hire, apprenticeship program hires, paid work experience or on-the-job training opportunities.
- CareerSource Florida and its grant partners are hosting an Apprenticeship/Career Pathways Summit in June 2018 to showcase best practices for integrating registered apprenticeships and career pathways as part of a seamless talent pipeline.

Apprenticeship is one type of career pathway. With sector strategies being the primary approach of Florida's workforce system for meeting *employer* needs, it is essential for career pathways to be defined and built for *workers* simultaneously. Career pathways enable individuals to secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector and advance over time to successively higher levels of education or employment in that sector.

In support of career pathways development, CareerSource Florida is directing development of career pathways-focused resources and tools. The objectives are to:

- Describe the process to create career pathways and showcase examples of successful demand-driven models;
- Illustrate how pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship can/should be incorporated into career pathways efforts; and
- Through discussion, identify existing and emerging career pathways efforts and explore opportunities to align and integrate regional pathways plans, activities and resource investments.

Partners in the development of these resources tools will include regional thought leaders and champions representing workforce development (including all WIOA partners), K-16+ education, economic development, community-based providers and others.

Based on enhanced capacity at the state level to support local and regional implementation of sector strategies, a strategic policy was developed in 2017 by CareerSource Florida and approved by the state board in February 2018. The policy lays out the state of Florida's strategic vision for effective sector strategies based on a strategic framework and applies it to CareerSource Florida and all 24 local workforce development boards. It requires local workforce development boards to include their approach to establishing, implementing and sustaining effective sector strategies in their local workforce development plans. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity will follow with administrative guidance.

Enhancing Performance Measurement

Through a collaborative statewide process, CareerSource Florida and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity designed and developed a data-driven, outcome-based Performance Funding Model (PFM) for the CareerSource Florida network. The PFM helps drive performance by measuring CareerSource Florida local workforce development boards on customized, agreed-upon goals, reflecting Florida-emphasized workforce development priorities. The PFM is designed to help the CareerSource Florida network identify, measure and replicate success to better anticipate and address the employment and training needs of businesses and job seekers statewide.

The PFM and its website, which launched in May 2017 at pfm.careersourceflorida.com, deliver meaningful performance results to inform data-driven decisions at the state and local levels and drive systemic change for continuous improvement statewide.

Participation in the PFM is voluntary and local boards that do not opt in to the PFM remain eligible for other state funding. Participating local boards are awarded funding for superior performance on metrics within the PFM each fiscal year, which starts July 1 and ends June 30 of the following year.

The development of the PFM is funded by a $3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation Fund. It is a five-year grant that started on Sept. 30, 2014, and ends on Oct. 1, 2019. The grant includes three years - specifically, CareerSource Florida fiscal years 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 - of performance measurement and one year for program evaluation. The PFM's metrics and methodology were reviewed and updated, as needed, for continuous improvement each performance measurement year.

To help local boards develop strategies that lead to strong performance on the PFM as well as enhanced service to their customers, CareerSource Florida and DEO offer ongoing technical assistance through webinars, one-on-one telephone consultations and in-person presentations, including trainings at the Florida Workforce Professional Development Summit.

Providing Quality Services to People with Disabilities

Recognizing the unique barriers Floridians with disabilities may face in finding a job, the CareerSource Florida network continues leading, investing and participating in initiatives to connect people with disabilities to employers. In Program Year 2014, DEO launched the Abilities Work web portal at www.abilitieswork.employflorida.com to help link employers and job seekers with disabilities. The Abilities Work help desk is administered by VR and is a resource to support the linkage between employers and qualified job seekers with disabilities. More discussion on this portal can be found in section II(2)(A) of this plan.

Other key employment initiatives to assist Floridians with disabilities include:

Employment First Florida

Seven of Florida's state agencies and nonprofit organizations, including CareerSource Florida, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), the Department of Economic Opportunity, the Department of Education (BEESS, VR and FDBS) the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, RESPECT of Florida and the Department of Children and Families - Mental Health and Substance Abuse came together through an interagency

cooperative agreement. This collaboration improves coordination of services that help people with disabilities obtain employment and achieve self-sufficiency.

The Employment First collaborative developed a comprehensive and coordinated statewide communications plan to improve outreach, describing services available to support employment and training for people with disabilities. This initiative responds directly to a key recommendation of the Governor's Commission on Jobs for Floridians with Disabilities.

The Florida Unique Abilities Partner Program

The Florida Unique Abilities Partner Program recognizes businesses that are committed to providing career and financial opportunities to individuals with unique abilities and to assisting organizations that support them. Participating businesses demonstrate their dedication to strengthening communities and the economy by helping these Floridians with untapped talents become more independent and by partnering with other businesses, organizations and state resources in this endeavor.

Family Café

The Family Café is an expo-style annual event held over several days each summer in Orlando that connects Floridians with disabilities and their families with information, training and networking opportunities. For several years, VR, FDBS and other WIOA partners have been involved in planning the Family Café and presenting useful information. CareerSource Florida is a primary sponsor of the Family Café and helps connect job seekers with disabilities and their families with employment resources and employers at the event each year. These efforts provide a valuable opportunity to raise awareness of employment and training resources available through the CareerSource Florida network and core partners. The June 2017 Family Café drew more than 10,000 attendees. CareerSource Florida, DEO and several local workforce development boards provided onsite employment assistance and guidance.

Ticket to Work

Eighteen Florida LWDBs are designated as Employment Networks by the Social Security Administration, enabling their participation in the federally funded Ticket to Work program. Through Ticket to Work, recipients of Social Security Disability Insurance and/or Supplemental Security Income receive priority assistance such as job search, career planning and skill building through participating CareerSource Florida network career centers. These services enhance efforts of job-seekers to find and retain a job and to work toward self-sufficiency. Participating LWDBs receive funding from the Social Security Administration for workforce services provided to "ticketholders."

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).

Florida Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act Task Force

Florida's implementation of WIOA began with the formation of a legislatively created task force composed of leaders in each agency and stakeholders with an impact on Florida's workforce development system.

As required by the enacting legislation, task force members included:

- Agency for Persons with Disabilities;
- CareerSource Florida;
- Enterprise Florida;
- Florida Association of Postsecondary Schools and Colleges Inc.;
- Florida College System;
- Florida Department Children and Families;
- Florida Department of Corrections;
- Florida Department of Economic Opportunity;
- Florida Department of Education;
- Florida Department of Education, Division of Blind Services;
- Florida Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Education;
- Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
- Florida Department of Elder Affairs;
- Florida Department of Juvenile Justice;
- Florida Small Business Development Center Network;
- Florida Workforce Development Association, Inc.;
- Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida, Inc.;
- State University System

The task force was charged with developing WIOA implementation recommendations for approval by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors. Recommendations included: a review of current workforce service delivery and recommendations for the inclusion of programs; regional planning design; one-stop career center service delivery design; the integration of economic development, workforce development and Florida's education system; and development of sector strategies and career pathways. These recommendations were discussed with the LWDBs during their formulation.

After the task force meetings, implementation recommendations were approved by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors. Agendas and information collected throughout the meetings are available on the CareerSource Florida website at www.careersourceflorida.com/wioa.

Additional strategies to align core programs are addressed in section IV.

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).

State Board

CareerSource Florida Inc. is the statewide board of business and government leaders charged with guiding workforce development for the state of Florida. A public-private partnership, CareerSource Florida is a non-profit organization that works with partners across the state to connect employers with qualified, skilled talent and Floridians with employment and career development opportunities to achieve economic prosperity. CareerSource Florida provides oversight and policy direction for talent development programs administered by DEO, the executive agency responsible for workforce policy implementation and administrative and fiscal affairs DEO partners with CareerSource Florida and the state's 24 local workforce development boards to strengthen Florida's business climate by supporting employers and helping Floridians gain employment, remain employed and advance in their careers.

The CareerSource Florida Board of Directors includes the governor and 25 members appointed by the governor and legislative leaders. The board includes leaders in business and industry, government, labor, economic development, education and youth and community- based organizations whose contributions influence the development of strategies and policies, ensuring Florida has a robust, globally competitive workforce. The work of this board and the entire state workforce system is vital to achieving the governor's priorities for helping Floridians obtain employment and establishing Florida as a top job-creating state. The state board plays a critical role in strengthening Florida's business climate through its policy setting and oversight role.

The CareerSource Florida network assisted 369,100 job seekers who were reported last year to have gained employment. The network is committed to expanding business engagement at both the state and local levels. With funding assistance from a $7 million federal grant, workforce, education and industry partners across Florida are employing regional sector strategies, as noted previously in this report, to build the state's talent pipeline and support growth in targeted industries. Network-wide, more than 81,700 businesses were served last year through assistance with recruiting, screening and hiring.

Governance Structure

The governance structure, through which the state board conducts its work, consists of the board of directors, two councils - the Strategic Policy and Performance Council and the Finance Council - and an Executive Committee composed of council chairmen and board leaders appointed by the state board chairman

Strategic Policy and Performance Council

Florida law gives CareerSource Florida the authority to create state employment, education and training policies that ensure programs are preparing workers in response to present and future business and industry needs and complements the initiatives of Enterprise Florida, Inc., the state's economic development organization (Section 445.004(6)(a), Florida Statutes). Consistent with CareerSource Florida's strategic goals, priority is given to addressing workforce needs for businesses in the state's target and infrastructure industries.

The CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy and Performance Council includes people appointed by the chairman of the board from the membership of the board and individuals from outside CareerSource Florida who possess relevant experience or expertise in the subject area of the council.

The Strategic Policy and Performance Council reviews existing policies and develops new strategies and policies designed to foster a performance-driven talent delivery system with the ability to serve individuals at all levels, businesses of all sizes and entrepreneurs to meet the demands of Florida's growing and diversifying economy. The Strategic Policy and Performance Council analyzes, discusses and finalizes strategic policies and performance incentives for the CareerSource Florida network as directed by the chairman of the board.

Recommendations of the Strategic Policy and Performance Council are considered for approval by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors. Thirteen board members currently serve on this council.

Finance Council

CareerSource Florida's Finance Council is composed of people appointed by the chairman of the board from the membership of the board and individuals from outside CareerSource Florida who possess relevant experience or expertise in the subject area of the Council. The Finance Council's primary goal is to ensure that the workforce system is in good financial health, that its assets are protected, and the state's resources are used appropriately and accounted for sufficiently. Through this effort, the Council assists the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors in ensuring that the resources available to the state for workforce training programs and support services are used effectively and efficiently with utmost accountability to maintain public confidence and support.

The Finance Council is responsible for directing the statewide allocation of workforce system funding and safeguarding the workforce system's resources and assets.

The Finance Council meets quarterly - whether in person, by telecommunications, or webinar - in conjunction with the regular quarterly meetings of the Board of Directors if there is business that needs to go before the Council. Additional meetings, whether held in person or by telephone, may be conducted at the request of the board chairman or the

council chairman. Recommendations of the Finance Council are considered for approval by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors. Ten board members serve on this council.

Executive Committee

Chapter 445, Florida Statutes states that the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors may establish an Executive Committee consisting of the Chairman of the Board and at least six additional board members selected by the chairman, one of whom must be a representative of organized labor. The members of the Executive Committee determine strategic priorities, provide board-level guidance and advice and monitor progress and continued relevancy of strategic priorities. The Executive Committee:

- Performs duties as delegated by the chairman and/or directed by the board;
- Addresses time-critical matters in cases where the entire board cannot be convened in a timely manner;
- Reviews recommendations of the Finance Council prior to board consideration;
- Reviews policy and performance recommendations prior to board consideration.

The Executive Committee meets monthly whether in person, by telephone or webinar, with no meeting during the month in which the regular quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors is held. Additional meetings, whether held in person or by telephone, may be conducted at the request of the Chairman. 13 board members currently serve on this committee.

Figure 3.01 CareerSource Florida Board Governance can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/CSF_Board_Governance.png. The illustration shows the flow of information from the CareerSource Florida Executive Committee, to the Finance Council and/or the Strategic Policy and Performance Council and to the Board of Directors. The CareerSource Florida Professional Team is in the center, depicting the facilitation of this flow of information.

The state board is committed to leveraging its resources, those of its primary workforce system partners and its strategic partners in business, economic development and education to address talent needs at every skill level and foster a globally competitive workforce. To ensure the workforce strategies and policies developed by the state board are consistent with approved state and local plans, the board collaborates with DEO, LWDBs and other partners vital to workforce services delivery. LWDB partners hold meetings in conjunction with the state board's quarterly meetings. This provides opportunities to showcase best practices and to identify and address challenges to enhanced collaboration and improved performance outcomes. Regular meetings between the CareerSource Florida professional team and the leadership of LWDBs provide a forum to discuss strategic issues and to identify policy objectives and best practices for service delivery.

Federal and state program guidance is communicated to local workforce partners through participation in state-level policy development activities. Operational guidance is formally documented in administrative policy papers and transmitted throughout the workforce system by DEO.

Strategic and administrative policy documents are often vetted by state and local partners before being issued. This policy and administrative information is online at http://www.floridajobs.org/workforce-board-resources.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

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

The CareerSource Florida Board includes representation of WIOA's core programs within the Florida Department of Education Divisions of **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Blind Services (FDBS)** and **Adult Education (DCAE)**. WIOA core program teams are focused on strategic policy development and implementation and performance accountability reporting as discussed in section II(c)(2). WIOA core program partners continue their focus on areas for improvement and strategy execution. Core program partners report on WIOA primary indicators of performance and other performance information used to ensure continuous improvement.

All core programs work to:

- VR is working collaboratively with partners to identify barriers across all partner agencies by implementing an Employment First Toolkit and Resource guide. This will identify barriers and provides a common core of requisite skills and terminology to serve as the basis for a shared process to support and serve individuals with disabilities.
- Continue implementation of an interagency supported program and fiscal planning process that defines and projects the number of people who require intensive and extended services for each fiscal year. VR has added policy and procedures to fund extended services to youth 24 and under who do not have access to an alternative funding source.
- Pilot innovative service models such as Individual Placement and Support (IPS) through peer specialists to provide more service options to individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. VR has entered into an Intensive Technical Assistance agreement with the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) to expand the VR self-advocacy service of Youth Peer Mentoring statewide. This collaboration will leverage agency resources to deliver training that would typically cost in excess of $40,000 if delivered using traditional methods. VR now offers Discovery and Customized Employment statewide and is increasing provider capacity to deliver these services. VR develops agreements with and partners with other agencies and organizations to provide customers more access to community resources.

- Fully implement a coordinated business relations program across core programs that includes leveraging community partnerships that engage and support Florida's employers and increases access to employment and educational services.
- Design and implement enhancements to the Vendor Profile document to assist customers in making informed choices about employment providers.
- Establish casework quality assurance review practices to validate data entry; continue data validation practices to detect errors prior to reporting.
- Share cross-referral outcomes.
- Educate potential employees who do not have a high school diploma (or equivalent) and whose English-speaking skills need improvement. By obtaining required education and skills for today's workplace, welfare dependence will decrease, and opportunities will increase for high-skill and high-wage careers.
- Continue efforts to ensure partners recognize and support VR's role as the primary employment agency for all individuals with disabilities, including those with most significant disabilities. VR works closely as a member of the Statewide Employment First Interagency Committee, including the Department of Economic Opportunity, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Division of Blind Services, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Service, Department of Children and Families - Mental Health, Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, Florida Developmental Disability Council and CareerSource Florida. This promotes the coordination and collaboration of services on a statewide basis.
- Maximize the quality of supported employment service delivery, ensuring a comprehensive, continuous, efficient and effective referral process, individual program planning, coordination of intensive vocational services with extended services, information collection and dissemination, confidentiality and technical assistance.
- Provide Career Counseling Information and Referral Service for individuals participating in subminimum wage employment. The curriculum provides opportunities to learn about employment and the variety of supports available to assist in the obtainment of successful employment. Youth 24 and under are now required to apply for VR services prior to seeking subminimum wage employment. VR counselors provide an array of counseling and information services designed to support individuals seeking competitive integrated employment. Policy has been updated to reflect these additional requirements found under WIOA.
- VR continues to expand TPCA and/or similar work-based experiences to all Florida school districts. Additional initiatives continue to increase provider and partner capacity to offer more opportunities for youth to explore careers and acquire work skills, including work readiness training delivered by CareerSource Florida centers, revision of Certified Business Technical Assistance Consultant (CBTAC) recertification procedures and increase CBTAC providers. VR also collaborates with Volunteer Florida, Centers for Independent Living, The Arc of Florida and High School High Tech to increase community-based work experiences needed to develop employability and soft skills youth need to be competitive in a 21st century workforce.
- Develop a network of qualified benefits planners to augment the SSA contracts for WIPA services which will enable more VR customers who are ticketholders, youth

and SSI/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries not yet working or ready to work, to be served.

- Review pilot and innovative employment practices and assess the feasibility of replicating successful programs. Participate in developing a consortium of supported employment providers that identify, share and promote innovative employment practices.

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.

Enhancing Partner Collaboration

The Florida WIOA Task Force recommended state board membership be offered to the Florida Department of Corrections, the Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Florida Small Business Development Center Network and Enterprise Florida, the state's primary economic development organization.

A unified plan approach was selected for the first plan submitted under WIOA. This plan includes required core partners: CareerSource Florida, the Department of Economic Opportunity, the Department of Education, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Blind Services and Career and Adult Education. Florida has built on the collaboration established through the WIOA Task Force, the WIOA Core Leader Team and smaller workgroups by involving other programs and organizations as needed in workforce system updates and by identifying opportunities for partnerships.

This allowed Florida to be deliberate and thorough in its strategic planning efforts across programs while creating the foundation for a combined plan approach.

Stakeholders Workgroup and Combined Planning Elements

Enhanced relationships and collaboration are underway with non-core partners including the Florida Department of Education - Office of Apprenticeships, the Florida Department of Corrections, the Florida Department of Children and Families, the Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, Enterprise Florida and the Community Services Block Grant Program. It is recommended by the CareerSource Florida and Department of Economic Opportunity Policy and Performance Team that a workgroup be convened to discuss benefits and implementation of a combined plan. The workgroup may consist of core partners, leadership and staff of the Community Services Block Grant Program, Community Action Agencies, local workforce development board members, local area executive directors and other stakeholders as necessary. The scope of this workgroup will be centered on making suggestions and obtaining feedback on resources, logistics, strategic policy, operational policy and other foundational aspects associated with including the Community Services Block Grant Program (or other combined plan partners) in a combined plan.

Stakeholders and the Policy and Performance Team will make recommendations to executive leadership including a timeline for incorporating other agencies into a four-year combined plan anticipated for 2020.

Improving Employment Outcomes for Juvenile Offenders

In 2015, DJJ and DEO entered into a statewide Memorandum of Agreement to establish general conditions and joint processes that authorize each agency to collaborate as partners to ensure juvenile offenders under the supervision of DJJ have information about and access to services provided by the state's workforce system. The agreement outlines mutual responsibilities that allow state and local-level planning, promote the development of linkages between DJJ and the LWDBs, encourage collaboration and establish guidelines for data sharing protocol.

The agreement allowed DJJ, DEO and CareerSource Northeast Florida to pilot a project with funding from DJJ and CareerSource Florida. The project was designed to improve employment outcomes for youth offenders under the jurisdiction of DJJ within CareerSource Northeast Florida's local workforce area. The pilot concluded in June 2016 and served a total of 52 youth.

Figure 3.02

Youth Offenders Placed in Paid Work Experience

Status	Number of Participants
In-school, High School or less	36
In-school, Alternative School	4
In-school, post High School	1
Attained secondary school (high school) diploma	2
Entered Employment	4

VR has developed a Technical Assistance Plan for collaboration in the delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services to youth with disabilities in DJJ residential facilities. VR is also supporting a grant proposal focused on improving employment outcomes for juvenile offenders.

Partnering with State Colleges

Another example of coordination with non-core partners is found in the USDOL Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCT) Grant. On behalf of the Florida College Consortium, St. Petersburg College received a $15 million USDOL TAACCT Grant in 2012. The Florida Transforming Resources for Accelerated Degrees and Employment program (TRADE) was created with the vision of transforming Florida's existing advanced manufacturing training and education system. The Florida team

collaborated to identify and align existing resources such as curricula and equipment from 12 institutions to build capacity and serve as a sustainable way to offer training for a range of skill levels in advanced manufacturing. The project provides widespread access for students to attend online courses and combine training with practical hands-on work experience through internships

The program targets displaced workers who lost jobs due to foreign trade; unemployed workers; incumbent workers seeking to upgrade current skills or learn new skills; students; and veterans transitioning into the civilian workforce.

The Florida TRADE program delivers accelerated training achievable in three to six months, depending on the program, that leads to internships and jobs in manufacturing. Participants who complete components of the program obtain skills and opportunities recognized nationally as well as industry certifications that transfer into free college credits that can be applied to an Associate of Science degree.

Partnering with Florida Universities and Others

VR supports participants attending Inclusive Postsecondary Education (IPSE) for individuals with unique abilities. VR has dedicated IPSE Liaisons located throughout the state to participate in IPSE student selection committees and program development.

VR has Memoranda of Understanding with the presidents of Florida's public universities and the Florida College System. These memoranda outline the purposes, roles and responsibilities of VR and the educational institutions and financial and programmatic responsibilities. The memoranda provide information about financial assistance, sharing of assessment findings, accommodations, rehabilitation technology services, academic advisement, counseling, confidentiality and other topics.

A common theme throughout Florida's WIOA implementation strategy is the continued alignment with potential combined planning partners and optional one-stop career center partners. Through the WIOA established interagency teams, increased coordination with these organizations and agencies is sought.

FDBS maintains cooperative agreements with Community Rehabilitation Providers and other entities not carrying out activities under the Workforce Investment System. FDBS has a long-standing contractual relationship with its statewide CRPs and values the services they provide to clients. For FDBS, CRPs are private, non-profit programs that provide specialized rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Specialized services include education, independent life skills, job training and job placement services to clients and their families who are participating in the vocational rehabilitation program.

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.

Between 2016-2017, WIOA Strategy Implementation and Data Integration workgroups met to improve and align services provided by the unified state plan programs. Statewide policies and practices were reviewed by this team to ensure needs were considered and potential impacts understood. Continuous improvement of service to individuals is paramount to the success of Florida's workforce system. Core partners work to ensure career centers are available to serve all job seekers regardless of obstacles to employment, level of need, or degree of career development.

Florida emphasizes integrated service delivery in improving services to individuals. Core program partners are dedicated to developing strong strategic alliances linking employers and job seekers to quality services including employment, training, education, human resource assistance to employers and career and business development which improve the economic growth of Florida counties. VR has active representation on 23 of the 24 LWDBs and is represented by FDBS on the remaining board. VR is physically collocated in 15 geographic locations and seeks to expand colocations.

FDBS is committed to providing high quality services to people with bilateral visual disabilities. FDBS supports individuals in making employment choices consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities and interests. FDBS creates an accountable and exemplary division workforce that ensures high quality services. Employees receive annual training on division policies/procedures, new federal/state regulations and the responsibilities of their positions. All employees attend New Employee Orientation where they are introduced to Client Services and the VR Program. On September 20, 2017, FDBS renewed its Intensive Technical Assistance Agreement with WINTAC. WINTAC provides training on specific topics, such as Pre-Employment Transition, VR, Supported Employment, Career Pathways, etc. The FDBS seeks to employ and develop Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRCs) for services delivery. The division currently has 15 CRCs on staff.

FDBS's vocational rehabilitation counselors will assist individuals in pursuing their goals as detailed in their individualized plan for employment (IPE) by using supported employment resources selected to produce the best results for the individual. Job seekers are referred to online tools such as the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP), Employ Florida and Ability Works to assist in finding and applying for jobs. The Abilities Work Help desk connects employers to a qualified workforce by sending notifications to FDBS, VR, CareerSource Florida, etc., when companies have job openings and are looking to fill positions with a qualified person with a disability. FDBS supervisors, counselors and Employment Placement Specialist staff complete the EOP II training. This training provides staff with marketing and sales skills directly relating to real job development. EPS and counselors meet weekly to discuss labor market information, work experience opportunities, internships and the hiring needs of employers.

FDBS vocational rehabilitation counselors will actively involve clients and families as appropriate in assessment, planning and decision making throughout the service delivery process. FDBS continuously evaluates the effectiveness of its job placement services and makes needed improvements. An Employment Outcomes Report is completed and reviewed monthly to track individuals who are ready to work.

The report measures how many individuals have found gainful employment and how long it takes to assist individuals in obtaining employment. FDBS is considering the Work Certified Program. Through this program, staff, employers, CRPs and others can receive training to assist individuals seeking employment determine if they are ready for work. FDBS also recognizes the importance of clients developing and utilizing appropriate soft skills. The agency will examine the feasibility of incorporating this training as often as possible for blind and low vision clients.

FDBS will provide ongoing training for its staff and will review and revise policies and processes to ensure efficient services. FDBS has developed a quality assurance team who will assess the need to expand their operations. Currently, FDBS provides onsite reviews statewide with an emphasis on adherence to state policies, compliance of federal regulations, case documentation, IPE signatures, timeliness of certificate of eligibility, activities tied to the IPE and authorization approvals. This team is responsible for being aware of all current federal and state regulations affecting the vocational rehabilitation program and attends the Annual Quality Assurance Summit for ongoing professional staff development. The Division is very interested in utilizing strategies to streamline internal processes to provide quality efficient services to its clients. This may be accomplished via pilot programs and through the use of less paper intensive processes.

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 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.

Led by the Business and Workforce Development team at CareerSource Florida and its LWDB partners, the *Expanding Business Engagement* initiative encourages Florida employers to utilize the state's employee recruitment, retention and training services. Building upon its successes, CareerSource Florida identifies and addresses challenges employers note in accessing workforce services. CareerSource Florida works to enhance employer satisfaction and measure effectiveness of employer outreach programs.

CareerSource Florida collaborates with business-focused managers in each LWDB, typically called business liaisons, who work closely with local employers to meet their hiring and training needs. Florida leverages the Salesforce software platform as a customer relationship management tool, allowing best-in-class management of interactions with stakeholders. This common system enables Florida's LWDBs to work together to enhance customer and business services. Core program partners participate in conversations about using Salesforce in their business outreach activities. To provide updates on employer engagement and share best practices, quarterly webinars are conducted with CareerSource Florida, the business liaisons and the business services managers from the core program partners.

Vocational Rehabilitation formalized a Business Relations Program focused on building and sustaining partnerships with business and industry through effective services driven by

employer needs. These partnerships will lead to competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for VR customers.

The Florida Division of Blind Services is expanding business relationships with employers at the local level to identify and maximize competitive integrated employment opportunities and career exploration opportunities for adults and students. Each district holds membership with one or more Chambers of Commerce. Employment Placement Specialists work with employers on their hiring needs and setting up work experiences. This gives job seekers opportunities for work-based learning experiences, training and obtaining employability skills.

The Florida Division of Blind Services will provide training to employment staff, increase utilization of the Talent Acquisition Portal by job seekers and employers, increase use of the Abilities Work Web Portal at abilitieswork.employflorida.com and its help desk, develop new vocational training programs at the residential rehabilitation center; continue sponsorship of self-employment opportunities; sponsor technology training; sponsor academic and vocational training; encourage careers in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics to qualified individuals; and provide consultation and technical assistance to community partners and employers to promote the employment of people with disabilities.

The Florida Division of Blind Services works in partnership with chambers of commerce across the state to support the ongoing development of disability-owned business. The Employment Placement Specialists participate in EOP II training to improve marketing skills when communicating with employers. The Employment Placement Specialists build long-term relationships with businesses via outreach and rapid engagement with employers to meet their needs.

Florida seeks to increase collaboration between employer services to leverage expertise and prevent and eliminate duplication. Florida will work to coordinate employers' services across all WIOA program partners.

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).

The Florida Higher Education Coordinating Council was established to identify needs and to facilitate solutions for creating new degree programs and establishing new educational institutes, campuses, or centers. The council makes recommendations to the Florida Legislature, the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors, State University System of Florida.

The Higher Education Coordinating Council includes the state university system, Florida college system, representatives of the business community, a member of the Florida Board of Governors, a member of the Florida State Board of Education, the Florida Association of Postsecondary Schools and Colleges, the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida, Enterprise Florida and CareerSource Florida.

As the council develops recommendations it seeks to adhere to the following guiding principles:

- To achieve within existing resources a seamless academic educational system that fosters an integrated continuum of kindergarten through graduate school education for Florida's students;
- To promote consistent education policy across all educational delivery systems, focusing on students;
- To promote substantially improved articulation across all educational delivery systems;
- To promote a system that maximizes educational access and allows the opportunity for a high-quality education for all Floridians;
- To promote a system of coordinated and consistent transfer of credit and data collection for improved accountability purposes between education delivery systems.

The council's work is consistent with WIOA's intent of bolstering strategic coordination among core programs for skills development to ensure local communities, the state and nation continue to build and maintain a competitive workforce.

For example, through the council's leadership, in November 2016, Florida joined a growing number of states that adopted a postsecondary attainment goal. Florida's goal: By 2025, 55 percent of Floridians ages 25 to 64 will attain a postsecondary certificate or degree.

Florida currently ranks 21st among the 50 states for education attainment beyond high school with 47 percent of work-age residents holding a postsecondary credential. However, by 2025, labor market estimates indicate more than 60 percent of jobs in Florida will require a postsecondary degree or certificate.

To address the attainment gap, the council has developed the Rise to 55 public campaign to help raise awareness, generate buy-in from stakeholders and the public and guide actions and investments to achieve the state goal. Along with the council, the Lumina Foundation and the Helios Education Foundation, the CareerSource Florida network is a partner in leading this initiative. The CareerSource Florida network is well positioned to help identify the training needs of key sectors that will require certificate-level and higher education and training. And, because of their effective convening role and access to relevant labor market data, workforce boards can help connect education systems with the businesses and business intelligence needed to make key decisions and investments that improve attainment and respond to marketplace needs, today and in the future.

Included in the collective work to support the Rise to 55 campaign and achievement of the state goal are plans underway for a series of regional convenings across the state to raise awareness and identify champions to help lead communities to develop and implement regional attainment goals and workplans in support of the overarching state goal. Workforce boards are participating in the convenings to ensure alignment with priorities such as sector partnerships to achieve common goals. Workforce boards work closely with their business customers and partners to ensure business leaders are part of the team helping to strategize and realize progress toward achieving regional and state attainment goals.

Blending Academics with Career and Technical Education

The VR Transition Youth program coordinates with state and local education agencies and officials to collaboratively offer youth with disabilities opportunities to gain work experiences that help them prepare for careers in the 21st century. Collaborations such as High School High Tech, Project SEARCH, Third Party Cooperative Arrangements and Postsecondary Education programs engage youth in both classroom and practical instruction that blends acquisition of certificates and work skills that align with occupations available through Career and Technical Education. Hands-on career exploration and preparation activities where learned skills, attitudes and behaviors can be applied in practical or real-world situations help youth to become and stay engaged.

Collaborating with Florida's Universities and Colleges

FDBS consulted with the university system to coordinate and provide technical assistance to each other and to students and their families/guardians/surrogates. This enables the student's transition from high school to postsecondary education activities and assimilation into the adult community. The intent of the university system agreement is to establish a process for ensuring accessibility, support, education and training of staff related to Americans with Disabilities Act regulations.

During the annual VR training conducted October 9-13, 2017, Chris Mullen, Executive Vice Chancellor for Colleges and Universities, provided information regarding the "Find My College Major" initiative. This initiative offers a website as a single point of reference for individuals seeking information on Florida's colleges and courses/degrees. Chancellor for Career and Adult Education Rod Duckworth provided training on career pathways to FDBS staff.

Facilitating Postsecondary Education

VR has an interagency agreement coordinating transition services with state education officials (FDBS, BEESS). This state-level agreement includes agencies responsible for providing transition services to students leaving high school and going into postsecondary education/training, support services and/or employment. These agencies meet regularly to share information, ideas and initiatives; to collaborate on training and special projects; to cooperate in planning and budgeting; and support mutually beneficial areas of work.

The VR Transition Youth program administrator serves as a representative on the State Secondary Transition Interagency Committee. The program administrator works closely with the regional representatives of Project 10: The Transition Education Network, which is funded through a grant from the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services within the Florida Department of Education to the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg. Project 10 helps Florida school districts and stakeholders increase their ability to provide secondary transition services to students with disabilities and improve student academic success and postsecondary outcomes. Project 10 helps educators, parents, students, agency representatives and other stakeholders by providing capacity building to implement secondary transition services, interagency collaboration, transition legislation and policy and student development and outcomes. VR counselors serving transition students participate in each area's local interagency councils. Interagency councils are a collaborative effort between VR and Department of Education partners, public high schools, adult service agencies, workforce programs, parents, students, advocates and employers cooperating to meet the transition needs of students with disabilities.

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.

Partnerships with School Districts

VR holds Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCA) with some local school districts. Services are not currently available in all areas of the state. TPCA and other VR Transition Youth services align with the Pre-Employment Transition Services required under WIOA. These arrangements provide community-based work experiences to eligible students who have Supported Employment (SE) service needs identified in their Individual Educational Plan and Individualized Plan for Employment. This model reimburses school districts for services provided to VR-eligible students with disabilities and supports a seamless transition into postsecondary employment. Available statewide, On-the-Job Training through VR providers deliver needed community-based work experiences to VR-eligible students who do not require the intense supports provided through the TPCA. Community-based work experiences are also available through Project SEARCH, a partnership between the school district, VR, a provider and a host business, to deliver multiple internships to students who have SE service needs.

Leveraging Partnerships for Exceptional Education and Student Services

FDBS and VR entered into an MOU with the Florida Department of Education's Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS). This is state-level interagency agreement requires partners to provide transition services to students progressing from high school to postsecondary education/training, support services and/or employment. Parties under this agreement meet regularly to share information, ideas and current initiatives; collaborate on training and special projects; cooperate in planning and budgeting; and support mutually beneficial areas of work.

Florida's Eligible Training Provider List

CareerSource Florida uses DEO statewide data and LWDB data to produce and transmit critical labor market intelligence to the CareerSource Florida network, educators and training providers and to economic development partners. This information can be used in partnership with eligible training providers to ensure the training needs of Florida employers are met.

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).

The governor's vision for increasing access to training and opportunities for individuals is anchored in state statute which requires 50 percent of the formula funds for adults and dislocated workers to be allocated to Individual Training Accounts (ITA). This requirement affirms the governor's vision that most funds are allocated for direct training related costs. Costs that qualify under the 50 percent rule include all customer service costs associated

with the ITA program such as tuition, fees and books and other training services. Florida allows LWDBs to establish ITA limits and durations.

If necessary, local boards may obtain a waiver from the State ITA reserve requirement by submitting an application to CareerSource Florida, Inc. For the state board to consider a waiver from the State ITA reserve requirement and to guide the state board in its review, the requesting local area must submit a waiver application identifying the requested reduction from the statutorily required State ITA reserve, specifying the percentage (between 0 and 50 percent) of Title I funds for Adults and Dislocated Workers that the local area proposes to reserve for the required training services. This request must include supporting data describing how the reserved training funds will be spent for State ITAs and each of the other authorized training services; and how the diverted training funds will be spent for other services.

Documentation must substantiate the lack of demand for each authorized training service; the substantially greater demand for career services and business services, relative to training services; the qualitative and quantitative financial impact that the statutorily required State ITA reserve requirement has on the provision of services for clients seeking or receiving training services; or the exceptional circumstances that warrant granting a waiver.

Factors the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors may consider in deciding to grant an ITA waiver application may include whether the local area is contractually obligated or is seeking participation in a training program funded by a partner, for which the local workforce development board will provide career services; whether the local area is contractually obligated or is seeking participation in a major economic development initiative of regional impact that will result in significant job creation, to the extent the initiative does not interfere with the priority of services to other clients as required by federal law; or whether the local area is entirely contained within a statutorily designated Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC).

Local boards requesting a waiver from the state ITA requirement must submit a budget (or proposed budget) showing program components and major breakouts for each program including one-stop services, training providers, supportive services, administrative costs, etc.; a description of how the current and long-term unemployment rate for the local area will be impacted by a waiver, should it be approved; documents identifying the local area's efforts to increase demand from individuals to meet market needs (to address the talent gap); documentation that the local workforce development board and the chief elected official approved the waiver request; and an agreement that, if the conditions warranting the waiver change, the local area commits to comply with the State ITA reserve requirement and will notify CareerSource Florida of such compliance.

LWDBs are responsible for their respective Targeted Occupations List (TOL) or using the state TOL. Private postsecondary institutions must be licensed with the Commission for Independent Education. All training institutions must report student data to the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) maintained by the Florida Department of Education.

VR currently has five Innovation and Expansion pilot projects throughout the state to provide business consultation, pre-employment training, volunteering positions and intensive discovery services to job seekers with unique abilities.

FDBS will allocate 15 percent of its federal allotment to pre-employment transition services for all students with disabilities in need of such services who are eligible or potentially eligible for services through the Division. FDBS has a draft Pre-ETS policy currently under review by WINTAC. The policy states that services will be available the year the individual reaches age 14. The provision of such services matches categories defined in WIOA Section 113. All services and purchases (such as orientation and mobility services, pay for work experience, stipends, On-the Job Training, assistive technology services and devices, etc.,) required to enable an individual to engage in activities defined in the Act are made available as part of the 15 percent state set-aside in the federal funding formula.

Individuals meeting the definition for Pre-Employment Transition Services at the time services are initiated will continue to qualify for such services through age 21, providing the person is eligible for, and receiving, special education or related services under part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and/or when the individual has a disability, for purposes of Section 504 of the Act.

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.

Florida Career and Professional Education Act

CareerSource Florida collaborates with the Department of Economic Opportunity, DOE's Division of Career and Adult Education and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to provide certification opportunities to secondary students. Created by the Florida Legislature in 2007, the Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Act provides students with cutting-edge training and earned industry certifications required for high-skill, high-wage jobs in Florida's target and infrastructure industries. Through collaborative partnerships between education, industry, workforce and economic development entities, CAPE offers new and meaningful opportunities for students. CAPE supports local and regional economic development and helps attract and retain high-value industries to develop a diverse, knowledge-based economy.

Data reveals that students earning industry certifications have more positive student performance with higher average GPAs, lower rates of chronic absenteeism and disciplinary actions and a lower dropout rate. Students who earned a certification were more likely to take Advanced Placement or dual enrollment courses than students who did not earn a certification. The earning of industry certifications correlates with higher student performance among high school students. Academy students who graduate with an industry certification outperform the academy students who graduate without an industry certification, with a higher placement rate in employment or postsecondary education. Public school districts are awarded additional funding for students earning industry certifications.

In academic year 2016-17, the ninth year of implementation of the CAPE Act, school districts registered 1,743 high school and 201 middle school career and professional academies, representing 58 of Florida's school districts as well as the Florida State University School. School districts registered 1,173 unique career-themed courses, representing all 67 of Florida's school districts, the Florida Virtual School and the Florida State University School.

VR staff received training on CAPE certifications and seeks to increase integration of CAPE providers as VR providers while encouraging existing VR providers of career and technical education to pursue CAPE certification.

The list of industry certifications is updated annually, and final funding determinations are made by the Florida Department of Education.

Vocational Rehabilitation Transition Youth Program

The VR Transition Youth program collaborates with education officials and partners to offer youth with disabilities opportunities to gain work experiences that help them prepare for successful employment. Collaborations such as High School High Tech, Project SEARCH and Postsecondary Education programs engage youth in experiences that blend academics with career and technical education and provide hands-on career exploration and preparation activities where learned skills, attitudes and behaviors can be applied. These evidence-based applications of learning, which includes internships and other work experiences, often lead to successful employment. For some students, these programs include earning postsecondary credentials which allow them to explore professional jobs that may lead to higher-wage careers. VR involvement in these collaborations provides funding for participants to receive needed services and other supports. This shared support helps partner programs to serve more youth. VR partnerships deliver career development and employment options through direct services to youth who would not otherwise have access to these opportunities. In addition, VR has delivered Pre-ETS under WIOA through the Summer Youth Program. This is especially beneficial as youth are able to maintain skills gained during the school year during the summer months when such skills will typically decline.

Adult Education Integrated Education and Training Program

Adult education programs promote activities that increase an individual's ability to transition to postsecondary education and obtain employment. FICAPS requires programs to partner with postsecondary career and technical programs to develop and deliver an integrated education and training program. As the integrated education and training activities are developed, collaboration occurs with local workforce development boards to determine the workforce demands for the area and ensure the career and technical programs selected support that need. One component of FICAPS is the provision of wrap-around support services including transportation, child care and other support. This requires collaboration with social services agencies.

Core programs work through Florida's Employment First initiative and the Higher Education Coordinating Council to expand and develop innovative ways to ensure seamless articulation and accessibility to programs leading to credentials and apprenticeship opportunities.

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.

Florida's WIOA partners worked with economic development stakeholders to develop a common strategic vision for Florida's workforce and economic development systems. Talent Supply and Education is one of the Six Pillars of Florida's future economy, as defined by the Florida Chamber Foundation following years of collaboration and research with business and education stakeholders including: The Century Commission for a Sustainable Future; Florida Council of 100; Enterprise Florida, the state's principle economic development organization; the Florida State University System; and CareerSource Florida's predecessor, Workforce Florida. Workforce development activities carried out by WIOA core programs directly support achievement of strategies under this pillar. Leaders from CareerSource Florida, Enterprise Florida and DEO work closely to maintain a unified approach to job creation and retention. Leveraging resources of Florida's workforce and economic development systems and fostering collaboration improves overall alignment with industry and education.

CareerSource Florida and many of its local workforce partners are actively engaged in the work of the Florida Economic Development Council, the professional association of economic, workforce and community developers. The council's membership has cited the training programs and other business and talent recruitment services of the CareerSource Florida network as leading contributors to their efforts to retain and expand jobs in their communities.

State and local labor market information informs strategic policy development and decisions made by WIOA core programs and local workforce boards. Through the work of the Florida WIOA Task Force and resulting recommendations, the vice chairman of Enterprise Florida has become a member of the CareerSource Florida Board. The chairman of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors has historically served on the Enterprise Florida Board. Locally, all LWDBs coordinate with economic development partners, playing a role in retention, recruitment and organic growth.

One of the newest initiatives underway to reinforce opportunities to increasingly align Florida's Talent Supply and Education Ecosystem is the Florida 2030 Initiative. By 2030, six million more residents will call Florida home and two million net new jobs will need to be created. To prepare for this continued growth and ensure Florida remains successful, the Florida Chamber Foundation is leading the research and writing of a report for Florida's future to promote dialogue and action on collaborative efforts to develop high-wage jobs, diversify the economy, ensure global competitiveness and create vibrant and sustainable communities. This report will represent the result of research to stimulate strategic thinking about Florida's future and engage business and community leaders in each of Florida's 67 counties in identifying key trends and the factors that can drive their regional economy.

CareerSource Florida's President/CEO serves as a member of the Foundation Board of Trustees and as a member of the Florida 2030 Executive Steering Committee. The CareerSource Florida network will be an instrumental partner in supporting implementation of the Talent Supply and Education Pillar recommendations statewide and

regionally through strategies such as strengthening sector partnerships and increasing apprenticeships. The Florida 2030 report will be completed in 2018.

CareerSource Florida is a leader in another Florida Chamber Foundation priority. In Fall 2017, the Chamber Foundation launched a two-year Prosperity Initiative that is elevating dialogue, planning and action among Florida's business community and leading entities in education, workforce development and philanthropy as well as economic and community development to combat poverty in Florida through better aligned goals. Currently, Florida has more than 3.1 million people living in poverty. The significant number of Floridians living in poverty in the state not only affects families and communities but businesses, the state's economy and competitiveness.

A good job provides Floridians living in poverty with an opportunity to apply their talents and skills to create a better life for themselves and their families and to become economically self-sufficient on a path to increased prosperity. By investing directly in opportunities for Floridians in need of employment to not just enter, but remain and advance in the workforce, the CareerSource Florida network continues its mission-focused work to support this increased statewide focus on helping low-income Floridians participate in Florida's growing economy through meaningful employment that can lead to greater prosperity.

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

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

1. THE STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF–

A. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT SUPPORT COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGIES (E.G., LABOR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEMS, DATA SYSTEMS, COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS, CASE-MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS, JOB BANKS, ETC.).

Florida's workforce system data infrastructure comprises a strong federated model (interconnected) for data collection, management and reporting systems. The first system is responsible for collection, management and reporting of unemployment compensation data; the second system is the central hub for data collection management and reporting for Wagner-Peyser (WP) Act, Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), WIOA and state workforce/ employment initiatives. The third system collects data on SNAP and TANF individuals required to participate in employment and training. While all three systems operate under different business rules, according to their programs, all systems communicate with each other on both transactional and data-warehouse technology levels.

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

Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP)

One of Florida's most successful innovations in evaluation and performance tracking is the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program established in FDOE. This program helps evaluate the effectiveness of postsecondary education and training programs, particularly vocational education and similar career preparation programs. The scope of groups to be tracked rapidly expanded to cover most job training and placement programs including WIOA, Wagner-Peyser (WP), Adult Education, Job Corps, Veterans, Welfare Transition (WT)/ TANF, SNAP, Apprenticeship, Reemployment Assistance (RA) claimants and ex-offenders. Nearly 600 groups or sub-cohorts are being tracked.

FETPIP follow-up data are electronically derived from Reemployment Assistance quarterly wage records, federal military and civilian personnel records, public assistance, incarceration/parole records and continued education rosters. This data informs Core Partner programs in completing quarterly and annual reports at the federal and state levels. Reports include extensive detail and longitudinal capabilities. Each group is tracked for at least two years. Many groups including high school graduates and drop outs, certificate programs and all levels of higher education are tracked over much longer periods. Quarterly reports detailing employment and public assistance status and outcomes are run and analyzed. For detailed information on FETPIP, including examples of annual outcome reports, please visit: http://fldoe.org/accountability/fl-edu-training-placement-info-program/.

FETPIP data are provided to LWDBs, enabling them to evaluate the strength of training programs offered throughout the state.

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

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.

CareerSource Florida's Board of Directors made a distinction between strategic and administrative policies. Strategic policies are high-level principles or directional statements that inform or clarify legislative policy or workforce system strategies. These strategic policies direct decision-making at the program level and may result in the development of administrative policies.

Administrative policies are business rules, requirements, processes and/or responsibilities that expand, explain or further specify legislative or CareerSource Florida strategic policies. CareerSource Florida administrative policies are developed by the Department of Economic Opportunity and CareerSource Florida. Administrative policies are aligned with CareerSource Florida strategic policies and administered by the Department of Economic Opportunity.

CareerSource Florida policy requires the CareerSource Florida professional team to review all policies every two years. For each policy, recommendations are made to the state Board of Directors to rescind, modify or amend the policy, consolidate policies, continue the policy without change or pursue other action. In 2017, the CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy and Performance Unit worked with the Department of Economic Opportunity to complete

this review, ensuring existing policies focus on strategy rather than operational aspects of workforce system oversight; editing policies in simplified language and streamlining references to partners and programs as described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; and eliminating obsolete language and policies.

In 2017, the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors reviewed and approved revisions to existing policies in the company's strategic policy portfolio. The board approved the elimination of five obsolete policies and transferred two non-strategic operational policies to the Department of Economic Opportunity for administration. The board clarified and expanded its existing conflict of interest policies which reinforce the board's commitment to ethics and transparency.

FDBS has a policy team to continually examine policies and procedures. The team reviewed and updated all policies related to the delivery of client services between July and September. Policies on Informed Choice, Comparable Services and Benefits, Purchase of Access and Rehabilitation Technology, Transition Services, Competitive Integrated Employment and Timeliness of Services are effective as of October 18, 2017.

The state workforce board, CareerSource Florida is committed to the continued development of policies addressing co-enrollment, and universal intake processes, and will work with core partners to develop administrative guidelines for State-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to the one-stop delivery system.

Links to updated policy resources are below:

- CareerSource Florida Strategic Policies https://careersourceflorida.com/careersourceflorida-policies/
- Department of Economic Opportunity Administrative Policies http://www.floridajobs.org/workforce-board-resources/policy-and-guidance/guidance-papers
- Vocational Rehabilitation Policy Manual http://www.rehabworks.org/policy.shtml
- DBS Client Services Policies http://dbs.myflorida.com/Leadership/Policies/index.html
- Adult Education Assessment Technical Assistance Paper http://fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/adult-edu/technical-assistance-papers.stml
- Adult High School Technical Assistance Guide http://fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/adult-edu/technical-assistance-papers.stml

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.

Department of Economic Opportunity

The Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) is the governor's agency for workforce support and training, economic development and community development. DEO partners with CareerSource Florida and the state's 24 local workforce development boards (LWDBs) to strengthen Florida's business climate by supporting employers and helping Floridians gain employment, remain employed and advance in their careers. DEO oversees the administration of the state's workforce system and receives and accounts for federal funds for the system. DEO reports financial and performance information to USDOL and other federal organizations. The department distributes workforce guidance and policy initiatives and provides training, technical assistance and monitoring to LWDBs. DEO operates Florida's Reemployment Assistance program, Labor Market Statistics program and many other programs and initiatives.

Figure 3.03 Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Organizational Chart can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/DEO_Organizational_Chart.png. The Department of Economic Opportunity Organizational chart shows the Governor as leader of the agency, an Executive Director of the agency, and a chief of staff administering the agency. Divisions of the agency are listed below the chief of staff and are: Office of general counsel, office of inspector general, division of workforce services, division of strategic business development, division of community development, office of legislative and cabinet affairs, office of communications and external affairs, division of finance and administration, and division of information technology.

Administration of the state's workforce policy, programs and services is carried out by DEO and the business-led LWDBs. Services are delivered through approximately 100 career centers and service sites throughout Florida and through the state's online job matching system, Employ Florida, at www. employflorida.com. This includes 79 full service sites and 29 satellite offices. Programmatic and administrative requirements are set forth in a Grantee-Sub-Grantee Agreement executed by DEO and each LWDB, requiring their compliance with all federal and state laws, regulations and any special state requirements.

Figure 3.04: Florida's Workforce System can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/Florida_Workforce_System.jpg. Florida's workforce system is shown as a triangle with 24 local workforce development boards as the base, the Department of Economic Opportunity in the middle, and CareerSource Florida at the top.

Florida Department of Education

The mission of the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) is "to increase the proficiency of all students within one seamless, efficient system, by providing them with the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills through learning opportunities and research valued by students, parents and communities and to maintain an accountability system that measures student progress."

FDOE serves more than 2.8 million students, 4,300 public schools, 28 colleges, 171,000 teachers, 45,000 college professors and administrators and 325,000 full-time staff throughout the state; the department enhances the economic self-sufficiency of Floridians through programs and services geared toward college, workforce education, apprenticeships, job-specific skills and career development. The department manages programs that assist individuals who are blind, visually impaired, or have other disabilities succeed either in school settings or careers - encouraging independence and self-sufficiency.

FDOE provides oversight to 28 locally governed public state colleges and 49 school district technical centers.

FDOE is currently appropriated 2,327 total full-time positions, including 884 positions in the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, 289 positions in the Division of Blind Services and 80 positions in the Division of Career and Adult Education. The department's annual operating budget for all entities in state fiscal year 2016-17 was approximately $24.4 billion.

The FDOE organizational and governance structure includes the State Board of Education which consists of seven members appointed by the governor to staggered four-year terms, subject to confirmation by the Senate. Except for the State University System, the State Board of Education is the chief implementing and coordinating body of public education in Florida. The state board focuses on high-level policy decisions and has authority to adopt rules to implement provisions of federal and state law. General duties include, but are not limited to, adopting education objectives and long-range plans for public education in Florida, exercising general supervision over the department, submitting an annual coordinated PreK-20 education budget and adopting uniform standards of student performance.

FDOE policies and operations are led by the department's senior leadership team, consisting of the commissioner of education, chief of staff, division leaders and directors of support divisions (see organizational chart below). FDOE manages the core WIOA programs for adult and career education, vocational rehabilitation and blind services. The senior leadership team develops strategies, designs operational policies and manages the department's business processes. Senior leader meetings are held weekly. Strategy development meetings are conducted quarterly. Strategies are tracked and adjusted as needed. FDOE financial and operational performance is reported on a regularly scheduled basis to the federal Department of Education, the Executive Office of the Governor and the Florida Legislature.

Figure 3.05 Florida Department of Education Organizational Chart can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/DOE_Organizational_Chart.png. The Organizational chart shows the internal structure of the Florida Department of Education (FDOE), with WIOA core programs specified. WIOA Core Programs include the Divisions of Career and Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Blind Services. These programs report to the FDOE Chief of Staff, who in turn reports to the Commissioner of Education, who reports to the State Board of Education.

Adult Education

The Division of Career and Adult Education (DCAE) has oversight over the adult education system implemented in districts, colleges and community-based organizations. The division coordinates the distribution of federal adult education grants. DCAE works closely with local programs and provides guidance on state and federal guidelines, professional development, support in reporting data and technical assistance on program improvement plans.

Figure 3.06 Division of Career and Adult Education Organizational Chart can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/DCAE_Organizational_Chart.png. The organizational chart shows the internal structure of the Florida Department of Education,

Division of Career and Adult Education. This division is led by a Chancellor who oversees three bureaus- Budget, Accountability and Assessment; Standards, Benchmarks and Frameworks; and Grants Administration, Compliance.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

The Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is federally established under the Rehabilitation Act, as Amended (1998) and reauthorized as a core program of WIOA (2014). In Florida, VR is a division of the Department of Education. VR comprises a headquarters office, seven area offices and 96 unit offices located throughout Florida where customers receive direct services. The VR program is funded as a federal-state partnership, in which 21.3 percent of state general revenue matches a 78.7 percent federal grant. Most programmatic oversight and governance is established in the federal laws and code of federal regulations. Florida state laws for vocational rehabilitation are in Chapter 413, Florida Statutes. VR provides annual planning updates and annual/quarterly performance and financial reports to the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) which conducts regulatory and programmatic monitoring and oversight activities approximately every four years.

WIOA retains the presence of a state rehabilitation council, known as the Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC). Council members are volunteers appointed by the governor and represent a variety of perspectives from the disability community. The council is not a governance board but is required by federal law to review, analyze and advise VR. Key collaborative activities with the council include input and recommendations for the VR services portion of the state plan, key programmatic policies, assessing VR customer satisfaction and the progress and outcomes of administrative hearings for VR customers. VR's organizational structure is represented in Figure 3.07.

Figure 3.07 Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Organizational Chart can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/VR_Organizational_Chart.png. The organizational chart depicts the internal structure of the FDOE Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. This division is led by a Director who oversees the Office of the Director and four bureaus- the Bureau of Planning and Performance; the Bureau of Operations and Support; the Bureau of Vendor and Contracted Services; and the Bureau of Field Services.

Division of Blind Services

The Florida Division of Blind Services (FDBS) employment program is a federally established program under the Rehabilitation Act, as Amended (1998), and reauthorized as a core program of WIOA (2014). The FDBS vocational rehabilitation program is funded as a federal-state partnership. FDBS is part of the Florida Department of Education and serves blind and visually impaired Floridians. Coordination of Services is administered through 15 FDBS office locations, and the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. FDBS services are procured through a combination of state, federal and community funding. In partnership with community rehabilitation providers and other local partners, the division provides services to customers based on individual needs.

Figure 3.08 Division of Blind Services Organizational Chart can be viewed online at https://careersourceflorida.com/FDBS_Organizational_Chart.png. The organizational chart for the Florida Department of Education, Division of Blind Services shows the division led by a Division Director who oversees the Deputy Director, Executive Services, Human

Resources, MIS, and the Bureau of Operations and Compliance. The Deputy Director oversees the Bureau of Braille & Talking Library, Bureau of Business Enterprise, Rehabilitation Center for the Blind & Visually Impaired, and the Bureau of Client Services.

B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

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

(i) Membership Roster

The full roster of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors with their affiliations is available at https://careersourceflorida.com/boardroom/.

II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

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

CareerSource Florida's Board of Directors is statutorily required to meet either in person or by teleconference four times a year. CareerSource Florida councils meet separately, in person or by teleconference, as scheduled and/or at the request of the Council Chairman.

These meetings provide opportunities for the Board of Directors to address issues impacting the state network, guide and create strategic policy, obtain information about performance and oversee funding initiatives.

By law, CareerSource Florida is the statewide Workforce Investment Board charged with policy setting and oversight of the workforce system. Chapter 445.004, Florida Statutes, defines CareerSource Florida's purpose of designing and implementing strategies that help Floridians enter, remain in and advance in the workplace. Information about the role of each council and the executive committee is available, along with board and council meeting schedules and materials, on the CareerSource Florida website at https://careersourceflorida.com/boardroom/.

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.

Core programs are assessed each year based upon actual performance relative to federally required negotiated levels of performance at the state and local areas. Using the Statistical Adjustment Model, negotiations are conducted with each LWDB annually. Each quarter,

performance is evaluated and, if necessary, technical assistance provided in areas of concern. Periodic training sessions are provided as necessary to identify and replicate innovative practices and engage in continuous improvement.

B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PROGRAM 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.

Florida's WIOA core program partners work through a WIOA Interagency Measurement and Performance Reporting Workgroup to identify and compare federal WIOA measurement and reporting requirements with current federal performance measures and reporting requirements. The workgroup developed a high-level proposal regarding collection, management and reporting of performance data. CareerSource Florida and DEO participate in the workgroup, providing analyses of existing measures with comparisons of WIOA indicators of performance.

Information technology data collection and reporting systems within each core partner are examined to ensure an integrated systems approach for statewide data collection, reporting and validation. The measurement and performance reporting workgroup designed a reporting flow process identifying how data are collected, compiled, integrated, evaluated and reported to USDOL and USDOE. This process reflects statutory requirements of individual programs and business requirements governing the collection and submittal of performance data. The group continues collaborative efforts, currently reviewing requirements for the sharing of data across core programs for the purposes of federal reporting.

Performance assessments are conducted on a quarterly and annual basis through the core partners' submission of data to FETPIP for data validation and compliance with WIOA requirements and subsequent reporting to USDOL and USDOE. DEO conducts statewide workforce performance assessments and works closely with core partners to enhance data collection and reporting.

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.

Department of Economic Opportunity

DEO continuously conducts data analysis of workforce system performance within the state's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) primary indicators of performance. This analysis is used in annual presentations to each local workforce development board to show how each LWDB is performing against its locally negotiated goal for the measures.

Accountability and Continuous Improvement

Florida workforce law expressly requires increased accountability of the workforce system for the state, localities and training providers. Florida has several valuable methods for continually monitoring performance as both real-time management tools and tools for continuous improvement.

Levels of Service

Total participants served during Program Year 2016-17 decreased by 0.6 percent for Adults and 1.7 percent for Dislocated Workers. Youth participants increased by 9.0 percent. The chart below presents the total number of participants and exiters leaving the WIOA program during Program Year 2016-17.

Figure 3.09

2016-2017 WIOA Participants/Exiters

WIOA Program	Total Participants Served	Total Exiters
Adults	27,375	9,544
Dislocated Workers*	8,296	3,284
Youth	12,411	2,928

* DW numbers include DW grants, which served 1,773 participants and had 694 exiters.

Figure 3.10

2015-2016 WIA Participants/Exiters

WIA Program	Total Participants Served	Total Exiters
Adults	27,554	15,338
Dislocated Workers	8,437	4,874
Older Youth	4,500	2,285
Younger Youth	6,887	4,234

WIOA Performance Measures

Data on core measures and primary indicators of performance are collected from Florida's Management Information System (MIS), Reemployment Assistance (RA) Wage Records and from the Wage Record Information System (WRIS). The MIS system gathers exit information on participants and covers the real-time data elements referenced above.

Reemployment Assistance (RA) Wage records contain information such as wage used to determine retention information after exit. The WRIS system is a database consisting of wage and employment records from other states. WRIS records supplementing Florida's RA data provides a more comprehensive picture of participant outcomes.

The chart below illustrates Florida's negotiated rate for each of the required primary indicators of performance along with the actual statewide outcomes achieved. Pursuant to federal policy, states achieving at least 90 percent of the negotiated goal are considered to have met the goal. The 90 percent criterion is shown in parentheses.

Figure 3.11

State WIOA Statewide Primary Indicators of Performance Program Year 2016-2017

WIOA CORE MEASURE	NEGOTIATED GOAL (90% of Goal)	ACTUAL PERFORMANCE	DIFFERENCE COMPARED TO 90% of Goal
Adult Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	86.0% (77.4%)	84.0%	+ 6.6%
Adult Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	82.0% (73.8%)	81.3%	+ 7.5%
Adult Median Wage 2nd Qtr. After Exit	$7,550 ($6,795)	$7,999	+ 17.7%
DW Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	80.0% (72.0%)	78.8%	+ 6.8%
DW Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	76.0% (68.4%)	76.6%	+ 8.2%
DW Median Wage 2nd Qtr. After Exit	$6,550 ($5,895)	$7,635	+ 29.5%
Youth Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	73.0% (65.7%)	70.9%	+ 5.2%
Youth Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	66.0 % (59.4%)	72.1%	+ 12.7%

Local Performance

Expected levels of performance or goals were agreed upon for each LWDB. The chart below summarizes outcomes based on these goals and the previous federal 90 percent criterion.

Figure 3.12

Local Workforce Development Board WIOA Performance Program Year 2016-2017

WIOA COMMON MEASURE	STATE GOAL	NUMBER OF LWDBs ACHIEVING GOAL	PERCENT OF LWDBs ACHIEVING GOAL
Adult Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	86.00%	20 of 24	83.33%
Adult Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	82.00% $7	20 of 24	83.33%
Adult Median Wage 2nd Qtr. After Exit	$7,550.00	20 of 24	83.33%
Dislocated Worker Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	88.00%	19 of 24	79.17%
Dislocated Worker Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	76.00%	19 of 24	79.17%
Dislocated Worker Median Wage 2nd Qtr. After Exit	$6,550.00	23 of 24	95.8%
Youth Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	73.00%	19 of 24	79.17%
Youth Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	66.00%	22 of 24	91.67%

*Based on U.S. Department of Labor Training and Employment Guidance Letter 26-15, August 23, 2017, "Fails" is defined as the number of performance measures less than 90 percent of the negotiated goal. "Meets" is defined as the number of performance measures between 90 percent - 100 percent of the negotiated goal. "Exceeds" is defined as the number of performance measures above 100 percent of the negotiated goal.

Performance Indicators: Section 116 of WIOA identifies indicators of performance for the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs. These measures for PY 17-18 are below:

Figure 3.13

Florida Primary Indicators of Performance Goals Program Year 2017-2018

Adult Measures	PY 2017-2018 Goals
Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	89.0%
Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	85.0%
Median Wage 2nd Quarter After Exit	$7,850
Dislocated Worker Measures	
Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	83.0%
Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	79.0%

Adult Measures	PY 2017-2018 Goals
Median Wage 2nd Quarter After Exit	$6,850
Youth Common Measures	
Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	76.0%
Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	69.0%
Measurable Skills Gain	
Wagner-Peyser Measures	
Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	64.0%
Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	66.0%
Median Wage 2nd Quarter After Exit	$4,850

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Florida integrated customer satisfaction surveys as a component of its workforce management system, Employ Florida. Customer satisfaction survey results are invaluable to the state as it identifies and improves on strategies implemented to better serve workforce services customers.

Local Workforce Development Board Performance Reviews

Section 445.007(3), Florida Statutes, directs DEO, under CareerSource Florida's direction, to meet annually with each LWDB to review performance and certify compliance with state and federal laws.

During PY 2016-2017, DEO staff presented information on the local board's program and financial performance. Annual presentations provide a unique opportunity for dialogue with local board members, offering them a complete understanding of how state and federal performance requirements impact their local board's performance outcomes.

Florida's approach to performance provides for consequences in situations indicating a pattern of low performance. Typically, low-performing local workforce boards are required to develop and implement their own Corrective Action Plans. If low performance persists, state-level staff work with local workforce board staff to design a state-approved performance improvement plan policy with specific deliverables, often supported by state and peer Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) and supplemental funding for specific interventions. Chronic performance and operational problems can result in progressive levels of direct, sustained onsite oversight by state staff or state-designated local workforce board peer supervision, receivership, or replacement of local executive staff. As an ultimate sanction, a local board may be re-designated or consolidated due to performance problems. To date, no local board has been sanctioned in this manner.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

VR's rehabilitation rate remains below the federal target, but has increased over the past two years, as has the overall number of customer employment outcomes. This is expected as VR releases customers from the Category 3 wait list..VR collaborates with partners at the state and local levels to maximize employment services for people with disabilities. VR anticipates that the following projects will have a positive impact on program performance.

- Support employers and community partnerships through the Business Relations program.
- Expand the Youth Peer Mentoring pilot to all VR areas.
- Provide Career Counseling / Information and Referral (CCIR) services to individuals participating in subminimum wage employment. Due to the positive response to CCIR services, VR is developing an orientation and follow-up process for CCIR service recipients who expressed interest in VR services.
- Assist customers in making informed choices about employment providers through use of the Services Provider Choice Directory.
- Implement additional mental health training for counselors and develop transitional employment, Individual Placement and Support and peer specialist models to improve success for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness.
- Continue to increase provider capacity for Discovery, Customized Employment and CBTAC services.
- Implement additional Project SEARCH sites, with support from the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.
- Establish additional casework quality assurance review practices to validate data entry.
- Strengthen data validation practices to detect errors prior to reporting.
- Expand use of Benefits Planning services for Social Security recipients to promote self-support. Purchase these services when not available from SSA.

Figure 3.14

Florida Vocational Rehabilitation Federal Performance Indicators and Targets

Federal Performance Indicators and Targets	Actual Performance(FFY 17)	Previous(FFY 16)
Indicator 1.1**: Change in Employment Outcomes (RSA Target: Increase over prior year)**	+265	+419
Indicator 1.2**: Percent of Employment Outcomes (RSA Target: 55.8%)**	37.9%	40.8%
Indicator 1.3**: Competitive Employment Outcome (Primary) (RSA Target: 72.6%)**	96.94%	97.7%

Federal Performance Indicators and Targets	Actual Performance(FFY 17)	Previous(FFY 16)
Indicator 1.4**: Significance of Disability (Primary) (RSA Target: 62.4%)**	92.56%	99.5%
Indicator 1.5**: Earnings Ratio (Primary) (RSA Target: 52%)**	55%	53%
Indicator 1.6**: Self-Support (RSA Target: 53%)**	54.53%	60.2%
Indicator 2.1**: Ratio of Minority to Non-Minority Service Rate (RSA Target: 80%)**	94**%**	95%

Division of Blind Services

FDBS contracted with Mississippi State University to conduct a needs assessment. The assessment revealed the following areas of need related to the workforce system:

125. Develop and strengthen employer relationships.
126. Expand services to Hispanic/Latino, African American, American Indian and other populations who identify themselves as multiple races.
127. Improve assistive technology services such as standardizing curriculum, staying up-to-date on the most in-demand technology and job skills and reworking trainings to make them more frequent and/or in-depth.
128. Increase outreach and community visibility.
129. Assist clients in identifying transportation resources to become and/or remain employed.
130. Engage with CRPs to maximize outcomes for consumers.
131. Regular follow-up with consumers.

Based upon the results of the needs assessment, FDBS has developed strategies to address the identified needs that are incorporated and described throughout this plan.

See FDBS section X(j) for further details.

Adult Education

State targets are negotiated with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) and established for each of the educational functioning levels for ABE, Adult Secondary Education (ASE) and ESOL on an annual basis. The target percentage is based on prior program year performance and a comparison of the state with national averages.

The percentages represent the portion of students who must meet the goal for each educational functioning level. The same targets are required of programs receiving a federal grant and the target must be met (90 percent of each EFL) or show improvement. If these conditions aren't met, the program is required to submit a program improvement plan. Technical assistance and training is provided. The chart below shows the target and performance for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017.

Figure 3.15

Florida Adult Education State Targets

Adult Basic Education and Adult Secondary Education

Measure	2015-15 Target	2015-16 Performance	2016-17 Target	2016-17 Performance	2017-18 Target	2017-18 Performance
ABE Beginning Literacy	38%	28%	40%	22.24%	43%	Not Available
ABE Beginning	43%	32%	40%	27.34%	42%	Not Available
ABE Low Intermediate	47%	33%	39%	31.26%	41%	Not Available
ABE High Intermediate	51%	34%	40%	33.93%	42%	Not Available
ASE Low	56%	24%	42%	41.74%	44%	Not Available

Figure 3.16

Florida Adult Education State Targets

English for Speakers of Other Languages

Measure	2015-15 Target	2015-16 Performance	2016-17 Target	2016-17 Performance	2017-18 Target	2017-18 Performance
ESL Beginning Literacy	44%	40%	42%	41.48%	44%	Not Available
ESL Low Beginning	46%	40%	51%	35.45%	53%	Not Available
ESL High Beginning	46%	34%	42%	28.66%	44%	Not Available
ESL Low Intermediate	40%	30%	39%	28.64%	41%	Not Available
ESL High Intermediate	41%	28%	38%	28.89%	41%	Not Available
ESL Advanced	29%	23%	26%	22.32%	28%	Not Available

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.

Selected research and improvement projects are aligned to strategies in this unified plan and monitored by the core program planning workgroup. To select projects, core program partners use the working group flow discussed in Section IV to recommend areas for analysis or improvements. These projects are presented to and approved by the leadership of the core program partner agencies and coordinated as necessary with the Secretaries of the Departments of Labor and Education.

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

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),

Seventy percent of the total regional allocation is based on the required allocation factors of the relative number of unemployed individuals in an area of substantial unemployment, the relative number of unemployed individuals who exceed 6.5 percent of the civilian labor force in that workforce region and the relative number of economically disadvantaged in the workforce region. The state board approved the application of the maximum allowable factor of 30 percent to the adult and youth regional calculations based on the relative excess poverty levels within the 24 local areas. Excess poverty is defined as the number of economically disadvantaged (adult or youth) in excess of 1.25 percent of the civilian labor force within the workforce region.

II. ADULT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) OR (B)(3),

Please see response for section III (5)(A)(i).

III. DISLOCATED WORKER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) AND BASED ON DATA AND WEIGHTS ASSIGNED.

Florida uses the following four factors (with relative weight of each factor noted) in determining allocation percentages used to distribute Dislocated Worker funding to the 24 LWDBs:

Figure 3.17

Distribution of Dislocated Worker Funding Percentages

Factor	Weight
12-month average of reemployment assistance claimants	20%
12-month average of unemployed individuals	25%
Mass Layoff Statistics (number of initial claims)	25%
Long-Term Unemployed (12-month average unemployment compensation Final Payments)	30%

Note: All factors are based on the most recent calendar year data available.

For each of these four factors, relative percentages are calculated for each LWDB, weights are then applied, and the resulting amounts combined to determine the full 100 percent factor for each local workforce development board.

Funds not distributed using these formula factors are reserved at the state level for discretionary awards to address specific dislocation events and operate the state's rapid response unit.

B. FOR TITLE II:

I. MULTI-YEAR GRANTS OR CONTRACTS

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.

In accordance with Section 231 under Title II Adult Education and Literacy Act of WIOA, the DCAE provides funding to eligible local entities to provide adult education services through a continuation process for 2016-2017 and a competitive process for 2017-2018. This includes awarded grant projects funded under Section 225 - Corrections and Other Institutionalized.

A competitive bidding process was conducted in the spring of 2017. DCAE identified, assessed and awarded multi-year grants to eligible providers throughout the state. An eligible provider is an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities that may include a/an:

- local education agency;
- community-based or faith-based organization;
- volunteer literacy organization;
- institution of higher education;
- public or private nonprofit agency;
- library; a public housing authority;
- nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and literacy services;

- consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; and,
- partnerships between an employer and an entity described above.

In the grant and contract awarding process, the required 13 considerations identified in Section 231 were included in the evaluation and selection process. Other factors considered included: the ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy needs of the area, the ability to comply with WIOA expectations, the past performance of the entity in providing literacy instruction and meeting programmatic goals and the overall qualifications and expertise of the provider's personnel.

As part of the grant application awarding process, Florida incorporated integrated education and training services which provide adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation and training for a specific occupation and occupational cluster for educational and career advancement. In total, 66 eligible providers were awarded more than $2.8M in AEFLA funds.

II. ENSURE DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS

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.

DCAE ensures all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants and contracts. The Request for Proposal (RFP) announcement was distributed through various communication outlets including: Florida Department of Education (FDOE) communication system, regional and local newspapers, formal press release, announcement on the FDOE website, major statewide educational publications, and radio and television stations to ensure all prospective eligible providers had access to the same standardized information. An annual webinar was conducted to review the grant application process and facilitate any questions from prospective eligible providers. Grant application procedures were the same for all eligible providers.

C. TITLE IV VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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

In Florida, vocational rehabilitation services are delivered by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Division of Blind Services (FDBS), both of which are administratively housed in the Florida Department of Education. Based on a mutual letter of understanding, Florida's federal grant funding for vocational rehabilitation services is allocated as follows: 83 percent of grant funding is allocated to VR and 17 percent of grant funding is allocated to FDBS.

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.

In 2015, core partner agencies convened a data workgroup to obtain information about the data systems and applications used by each partner and to identify essential actions to comply with data collection and reporting requirements for WIOA. These meetings revealed most state systems use the same database platforms, or platforms between partner agencies are highly extensible and interoperable. Florida will use a federated model with key systems interacting in intervals of real-time daily, monthly and quarterly. This allows minimal interruption of the data collection, management and reporting practices of each of the core and sub-entities involved within the partner agencies. While systems providing required data remain unchanged, this federated model ensures effective, low-cost data collection with the ability to produce unified reports required by WIOA. The state possesses a statewide workforce analytics system accessible by state workforce practitioners and public stakeholders.

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.

Streamlined intake takes place at the LWDB level instead of the system level. When intake data are captured by any of the core partner agencies and are necessary for the reporting and performance of other partner programs, these agencies contribute to a central repository system either in real-time or by system interface.

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.

The state uses technology to assist with data collection across the mandatory one-stop career center partner programs. Most mandatory program data are captured and shared extensively between three systems using a strong federated architecture. Partners intend to continue this direction by extending it to one-stop career center partner programs. Technologies from real-time web services to real-time database interfaces are used. As it evolves, this will allow workforce assistance experts to see and assess the needs of job seekers including the unemployed, TANF, SNAP, VR and Adult Education program participants. New partners will have access to the same streamlined services under one roof

in addition to the new partners bringing their product lines to the partnership. All participants will have access to the labor exchange and labor market information systems.

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 current infrastructure and proposed infrastructure is positioned to meet WIOA reporting requirements. Through collaboration with the vendor of Florida's online job matching portal, necessary data files are configured on a quarterly basis for federal reporting and submitted through the Enterprise Data Reporting Validation System. Prior to submission, files are analyzed for data consistency and vetted using internal queries and tracking reports. All reports are reviewed and approved by both DEO and CareerSource Florida staff prior to certification. Florida core partners continue to work toward improving the process via modified data sharing mechanisms and reporting protocols.

Planning Note: States should be aware that Section 116(i)(1) requires the core programs, local boards, and chief elected officials to establish and operate a fiscal and management accountability information system based on guidelines established by the Secretaries of Labor and Education. States should begin laying the groundwork for these fiscal and management accountability requirements, recognizing that adjustments to meet the elements above may provide opportunity or have impact on such a fiscal and management accountability system.

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.

The Performance Funding Model (PFM) rewards annual achievement and drives systemic change to help Florida become a global leader for talent by encouraging the 24 local workforce development boards to enhance services for Florida businesses and job seekers. Participation in the PFM is voluntary. Local boards that do not opt in to the PFM remain eligible for other state funding.

Participating local boards are awarded funding for superior performance on metrics within the PFM each fiscal year. To encourage local board participation, CareerSource Florida allots a portion of the federal discretionary funds set aside for statewide activities to reward performance on PFM metrics. Local boards must perform on all metrics, by meeting minimum thresholds and a global performance target, to be considered for PFM performance funding. Local boards that meet these requirements are then evaluated for Target, Improve and Excel funds within the PFM.

Local boards receive additional credits for serving the following people with barriers to employment:

- Formerly incarcerated individuals
- Homeless individuals
- Individuals with disabilities
- Reemployment Assistance claimants

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program participants
- Veterans
- Welfare Transition Program participants

CareerSource Florida and DEO offer ongoing technical assistance through webinars, one-on-one telephone consultations and in-person presentations, including trainings at the Florida Workforce Professional Development Summit.

CareerSource Florida is currently conducting a comprehensive analysis of the PFM to determine the impact of the model on behavioral change across the local boards and to assess the specific performance relationships between the metrics in the PFM and WIOA core measures. The intent of this assessment is to provide additional technical assistance to local boards as needed and to inform the development of a long-term sustainable performance model that continues to support Florida's priorities and needs and more closely aligns with WIOA.

Additional information is collected through CareerSource Florida sector initiatives, local board pilot projects and statewide higher education data to support market-informed decision-making and enable statewide policy development.

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.)

Pursuant to section 1008.39, Florida Statutes, FETPIP is mandated to provide outcome reporting on workforce and education programs in Florida. The primary mechanism employed by FETPIP is UI and WRIS wage record data. All core partners report participant data to FETPIP under WIOA. Florida UI wage information will be made available, as the law allows, to the core partners for employment and wage-related outcome identification for federal performance standards. With the use of wage record data, performance accountability and program evaluations for all core programs can be conducted in a similar manner.

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.

Core partners agree to follow all applicable federal, state and local laws pertaining to confidential information. Each partner ensures the collection and use of information containing personally identifiable information is limited to purposes that support their programs and activities.

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.

USDOL implemented priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses, as required under the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA) and as specified by the Veterans' Benefits, Health Care and Information Technology Act of 2006. JVA calls for priority of service to be implemented by all "qualified job training programs," defined as "any workforce preparation, development or delivery program or service directly funded, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor." Since enactment of JVA in 2002, priority of service has been implemented under policy guidance issued by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA). The purpose of these regulations is to further articulate how priority of service is to be applied across all new and existing qualified job training programs.

Key Definitions

- *Covered person* - The regulations adopt and apply this statutory term, which includes *eligible spouses.*
- *Veteran* - The regulations specify that the definition for *veteran* specified at 38 U.S.C. 101(2) applies across all qualified job training programs for the purpose of priority of service.

The definition includes two key criteria:

- Service in the active military, naval, or air service
- Discharge under conditions other than dishonorable

Eligible veterans and covered persons identified at the point of entry shall be notified of programs and/or services available. Point of entry includes physical locations, such as CareerSource Florida centers, as well as websites and other virtual service delivery resources.

LWDBs will ensure their local plan provides clear strategies and policies for providing veterans and covered persons with the highest quality of service at every phase of services offered. Policies shall be implemented to ensure eligible veterans and eligible spouses are aware of:

- Their entitlement to priority of service
- The full array of programs and services available to them
- Any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services

Priority of Service means the right of eligible veterans and covered persons to take precedence over eligible non-covered persons for the receipt of employment, training and placement services provided under new or existing qualified job training programs. Eligible veterans or covered persons shall receive access to the service or resources before non-covered persons. If the service or resource is limited, the veteran or covered person receives access to the service or resource instead of or before the non-covered person.

Services can range from basic functions of the CareerSource Florida network, such as assistance with job search and identification of needed skills, to more customized initiatives such as creating career pathways, with corresponding competency assessments and training opportunities.

To accommodate Priority of Service at point of entry, the vendor, Geographic Solutions, implemented changes to Employ Florida to accommodate changes in the Priority of Service to veterans. A "pop-up" targets newly registering veterans and covered persons. This pop-up helps ensure newly registered veterans and covered persons are aware of their entitlement to priority of services and the types of services available under priority of service.

Monitoring Priority of Service

A veteran's self-registration automatically records service code 089, "Notification of Veterans Priority of Service." A manual service code 189 is used when the "Notification of Veteran Priority of Service" is given as a staff-assisted service. Veterans and covered persons who register in Employ Florida or who are being entered into Employ Florida by staff will be advised of their entitlement to priority of services and the code 189 is entered on the service plan screen in Employ Florida. The 089 and 189 service plan codes serve as a priority of service indicator in conjunction with periodic state and local level program reviews to ensure compliance with priority of service. Additional monitoring guidance from the ETA is forthcoming in accordance with 20 CFR Part 1010, Priority of Service for covered persons' final rule.Eligible veterans and covered persons receive priority in all USDOL programs funded in whole or in part operating in Florida's career centers.

Programs include but are not limited to:

- WIOA Adult
- WIOA Dislocated Worker
- National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG)
- Wagner-Peyser State Grants
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program

Additional programs include:

- WIOA Youth Program
- Community-Based Job Funding Grants
- Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Program (MSFW)
- Indian and Native American Program
- H-1B Technical Skills Training Grants
- Office of Disability Employment Programs
- Labor Market Information Formula Grants
- Pilots and Demonstration Grants
- Research and Development
- Other internet-based tools operated by USDOL grantees

Other examples of Priority of Services for veterans include the following:

- Referral of qualified veterans to new job openings, especially federal contractor job orders, prior to all non-veteran job referral activity
- Job fairs for veterans and all-inclusive job fairs giving priority to veterans

Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE)

Florida's Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) refocusing is a partnership between DEO and the U.S. Department of Labor/Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) established to meet the employment needs of veterans and eligible customers who contact local career centers throughout the state. Frontline/WP/WIOA staff focus on providing core services and initial assessment to veterans seeking employment assistance (majority of veterans will be served by frontline/WP/WIOA staff).

DVOP specialists only provide intensive services to veterans with identified SBE(s). DVOP specialists determine potential SBE population using ETA 9173, which is a quarterly report and the ETA 9169, which is an annual report.

Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff conduct employer outreach and job development in local communities on behalf of all veterans served through local career centers, including working directly with the DVOPs with case managed veterans with SBE(s).

Veterans entering career centers are identified and asked to complete the veterans' initial intake questionnaire. Customers are directed to the first available career center staff with their completed initial intake form.

Veterans are notified of Veterans Priority of Service (POS) and their intake questionnaire is reviewed. A complete initial assessment is conducted. Customers are only referred to a DVOP specialist if an SBE is identified during the initial assessment. The identified SBE(s) is documented in the case notes prior to referral.

The DVOP completes an objective assessment, then proceeds as appropriate for each individual veteran job seeker.

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.

The DEO was one of the original recipients of the Department of Labor's Disability Program Navigator (DPN) grant in 2002 and has expanded services to people with disabilities at CareerSource Florida centers throughout the state. The DPN grant focused on developing relationships across agency and entity lines to leverage resources and enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The grant was a catalyst to:

- Expand opportunities and increase staff awareness of the variety of assistive technologies and services available
- Provide technical assistance and training on assisting people with varying disabilities
- Assure career centers were readily accessible.

After the U.S. Department of Labor's DPN ended, CareerSource Florida awarded state-level funding to LWDBs to support accomplishments of the DPN grant and assist local areas with staffing, purchasing of assistive technology and services; and, modifications to workstations and offices to better accommodate people with disabilities. The CareerSource Florida center system expanded the range of local partners who provide supplemental services to maximize the success of people with disabilities in the workplace.

LWDBs continue expanding employment and training services for people with disabilities. Eighteen of Florida's 24 LWDBs have been approved as Employment Networks (EN) under the Ticket to Work program.

The state and several LWDBs have accessible mobile CareerSource Florida centers that provide onsite services to people with disabilities. This provides additional access to remote job fairs; to those impacted by mass layoffs; and other employment and training events for people with disabilities.

At the state level, the workforce system increased active participation on boards working to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities such as:

- Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (FAAST)
- Florida Developmental Disability Council-led Employment First Initiative and its Employment and Transportation Task Force
- Community Services Block Grant Advisory Council
- Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged

The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) has representation within the workforce system and several members of the Statewide Strengthening Youth Partnership are entities focusing on providing quality services to people with disabilities.

VR has been a partner in the CareerSource Florida network since the inception of WIA. Many other state and local entities provide resources that help to maximize employment opportunities for people with disabilities. These partners enhance services career centers offer customers and provide support the workforce system cannot. Non-core partners and the workforce system maximize comprehensive services for job seekers offering the opportunity for self-sufficiency through meaningful employment.

In 2014, VR launched the Abilities Work web portal within the state MIS, Employ Florida. The portal was created in response to recommendations made by the Governor's Commission on Jobs for Floridians with Disabilities. The Abilities Work web portal was developed by DEO in partnership with VR, FDBS, APD, the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council and stakeholders from around the state to provide single point of contact for employers who seek to hire individuals with a disability. The portal provides guidance and information. The portal's help desk is operated by VR staff with specialized knowledge in disability resources who can guide job seekers and employers navigating the

employment system. DEO and these partners continue monitoring the web portal and make improvements in response to suggestions from users and staff.

Resources described above provide a strong foundation for accessibility in the CareerSource Florida Network service delivery system. To support and strengthen existing resources, DEO's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) conducts regular onsite and desktop reviews of each LWDB's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended and 29 CFR Parts 32 and 37.

LWDBs are required to conduct self-audits and participant data analysis to annually monitor their own compliance with the ADA. The primary compliance criteria are contained in Florida's Methods of Administration, as required by federal equal opportunity regulations. To obtain meaningful information about the level of service to people with disabilities, OCR conducts the following reviews as necessary:

- Staff interviews
- Customer surveys and interviews
- Facility accessibility survey review and assessment
- Review of customer informational materials, including materials in alternative formats and languages other than English
- Review of community contact programs
- Observation of center activities
- Complaint file review
- Discussion of intake and assessment processes, including provisions to serve people with disabilities or who are non-English speaking
- Review of compliance monitoring reports prepared by or on behalf of the LWDB
- Review of program and equipment available

OCR provides ongoing technical assistance to LWDB/career center staff on such topics as reasonable accommodation requests from customers and employees. Based on these technical assistance requests and its reviews of LWDBs' compliance with ADA requirements, OCR provides formal training onsite or on critical topics by webinar.

In 2013, VR introduced a strategic initiative to ensure accessibility of all agency components including programs, facilities, personnel and hiring practices, online resources, internal and external communications,and technology systems. Strategies are now built into VR operational procedures. Following ADA Title II requirements, FDOE Leasing staff conducts ADA inspections of all new or renewed VR office leases. VR offices inspected and found out of compliance have a 504 Plan which describes accessibility improvements planned for the facility. VR customers are included in this process when possible. VR employees in every area are required to complete ADA Coordinator certification training and ADA informational training. Hearing loops and other adaptive equipment and/or software is available in VR facilities. Specific applications were developed using custom JAWS script and workflow documentation to meet the needs of users.

Additional VR internal strategies and activities to increase equal access to individuals requesting services are as follows.

- Use a comprehensive safety plan for monitoring VR facilities statewide. Specific components include a process for reporting defective/unsafe working conditions, safety and facilities management training for area staff, a move manual, a statewide safety manual, statewide first aid info, furniture inspection instructions and a facility security / building access policy at HQ.
- Continue to use interpreters, translators, VR's online resources, as well as websites of other partners and stakeholders, to reach underserved populations and increase communication with customers.
- Offer expanded access to services and provide materials and program information in English, Spanish and Haitian-Creole for various agencies, employers, churches, community leaders, health clinics and other settings.
- Continue assigning counselors and consultants to serve specialized populations, such as deaf and hard-of-hearing customers, transition students, mental health customers and brain and spinal cord injury customers.
- Collaborate with CareerSource Florida and other career center partners to implement universal design principles into the workforce development system's facilities and operations, with intent to include universal design as a separate component of the one-stop career center certification process.

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.

Florida's adult education programs offer Adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) instruction for adults to improve written and spoken English skills. This program assists customers in improving academic skills to provide a path to earning a high school credential, entering postsecondary education and improving individual career options. Florida's one-stop career center partners collaborate to provide quality services, resources and referrals to job seekers with limited English-speaking skills.

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.

Florida Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Implementation Team

Parallel to the work of the Florida WIOA Task Force described in section (II)(c)(2) above, a WIOA Interagency Implementation Team was created including professional team members from all core programs. This team met monthly to learn about each core program - its structure, purpose and customer base - and what contributions could improve the statewide system. This work set the stage for program alignment and identifying opportunities for interagency collaboration on implementation activities. Once understanding of each program deepened, the team's focus turned to identifying how major components of WIOA should be implemented. For example, interagency workgroups formed for measurement/ performance accountability and strategic planning/statewide plan development. Additional workgroups may be formed to address implementation of other WIOA components.

Workgroups take the same process-driven approach as the interagency team. Each workgroup developed a charter and mission, a process flowchart, a timeline for deliverables, requirements matrices and other management documents. Meetings are managed using detailed agendas with meeting minutes and action items, and workgroup documents are accessible to the interagency team. Forming workgroups specific to major WIOA components was beneficial in providing opportunities for agency subject matter experts to collaborate peripheral to interagency team meetings to discuss specific details and requirements. This allowed subject matter experts to plan and report back to the entire team with a progress update or decision points. Decision points, recommendations and progress updates from the workgroups were vetted through the interagency team and core program leadership prior to their presentation to the CareerSource Florida Board. This encourages and ensures transparency, flow of information and open communication between all core programs.

Core partners used the WIOA Unified Plan Two-Year Modification as an opportunity to review and update coordination with state plan programs. WIOA core program leadership revised WIOA teams and streamlined the approach for implementation and tracking of progress. Proposed changes are summarized below:

195. Dismissed the WIOA Interagency Implementation Team. This team concluded its work in bringing the partner programs together to learn about respective systems and provide recommendations to the Governor's Task Force and the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors.
196. Shifted the responsibility for receiving workgroup updates to the State Plan Implementation Team. This team will use tracking and communication tools to ensure that workgroups have a venue to report progress, identify resource needs and make recommendations for additional workgroups to implement key components of the unified state plan.

197. Adjusted membership for the WIOA Core Leader Team and the State Plan Implementation Team to include at least two members from each core partner (adding members from new partners as needed) to ensure appropriate representation. Membership structures are designed to ensure a "thread" of participants throughout the system so that key issues are identified at each level and brought for discussion at the WIOA Core Program Leadership meetings.
198. Specialized personnel with experience such as legal or information technology programming may be requested as subject matter experts for specific meetings.

These adjustments provide many advantages. Redundancy between planning and implementation teams is eliminated, the decision-making process is streamlined, the number of participants (and associated time commitments) is reduced and administrative support requirements are reduced. Florida now has a more streamlined and efficient approach for coordinating across WIOA programs made up of three key business relationships. Each group and associated coordination activities are listed below:

1) The State Workforce Investment Board (CareerSource Florida Board of Directors)

Membership: Appointed workforce and policy investment board of business and government leaders.

- Approve state workforce system policies pertaining to the implementation and management of WIOA
- Review overall state and local performance from all WIOA core partners
- Arrange for resource supports as needed and available
- Provide support and assistance in delivering key policy messages and recommendations to the governor, legislators, federal entities and other key stakeholder groups as needed.

2) WIOA Core Program Leadership Team

Membership: WIOA Partner Program Directors - CareerSource Florida; Department of Economic Opportunity Division of Workforce Services; Department of Education Divisions of Vocational Rehabilitation, Blind Services, Career and Adult Education; and Colleges and Universities

- Receive and consider recommendations for WIOA implementation and management from the WIOA State Plan Implementation Team
- Discuss potential "hot topic" issues of mutual concern and seek solutions
- Provide thorough vetting of complex issues prior to submitting key information and recommendations from the WIOA State Plan Implementation Team to the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors
- Commission implementation workgroups as needed
- Arrange for resource supports as needed
- Prepare and deliver key information and recommendations on implementation, strategy and performance to the governor, agency heads, legislators, the state workforce investment board and federal Departments of Labor and Education

3) WIOA State Plan Implementation Team

Membership: Planning Directors and Program Leadership for WIOA partner programs

- Review and interpret legal and regulatory requirements of WIOA
- Incorporate the requirements into the state planning and performance processes
- Identify and communicate resource and information supports across all WIOA partner programs
- Draft policies, guidelines and tools for developing and tracking the state plan
- Prepare and deliver state plan (and plan updates); coordinate the development and delivery of local plans
- Track approved state plan workgroups and activities to ensure that goals are achieved
- Consider and approve recommendations of workgroups
- Report plan progress to WIOA Core Program Leadership Team
- Make recommendations for additional teams or resources to maintain progress
- Communicate key messages and issues to agency heads

These activities allow the formation of workgroups to engage in coordinated projects designed to continue implementation and enhancement of the workforce system within the WIOA framework. These workgroups include planning directors, program leadership and subject matter experts for WIOA partner programs. Examples of these workgroups include the following:

- Conduct pilot for career center integration
- Design of comprehensive one-stop career center system with the inclusion of universal design principles as a certification requirement
- Enhance infrastructure and data sharing processes
- Coordination of membership in state and local workforce boards
- Coordinated development of a network of qualified benefits planners to augment Social Security Administration contracts for Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) services.
- Complete a stakeholder engagement analysis to determine where to target outreach efforts, including business engagement.
- Review services, programs and partnerships of core WIOA programs to reduce duplication of efforts as well as gaps between programs.
- Work collaboratively to ensure that disability coordinators are cross trained with core partner processes
- Identify opportunities to expand services/programs to meet ongoing needs of people with barriers to employment, including people with disabilities.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that—

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 administrating the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, 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

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. ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A. IDENTIFY THE REGIONS AND THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS DESIGNATED IN THE STATE.

Regions and the Local Workforce Development Areas Designated in the State

Florida's 24 local workforce development boards (LWDBs) and the local workforce development areas (LWDAs) they serve are shown in the map below and are listed at www.careersourceflorida.com.

Figure 6.01 CareerSource Florida Network Map can be viewed online at : https://careersourceflorida.com/CareerSource_Florida_Network_Map.png. This image depicts the CareerSource Florida Network and the location of its twenty-four local workforce development boards. The numbered local areas are as follows: CareerSource Escarosa includes Escambia, Santa Rosa CareerSource Okaloosa Walton includes Okaloosa, Walton CareerSource Chipola includes Calhoun, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, Washington CareerSource Gulf Coast includes Bay, Franklin, Gulf CareerSource Capital Region includes Gadsden, Leon, Wakulla CareerSource North Florida includes Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Madison, Suwannee, Taylor CareerSource Florida Crown includes Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Union CareerSource Northeast Florida includes Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns CareerSource North Central Florida includes Alachua, Bradford CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion includes Citrus, Levy, Marion CareerSource Flagler Volusia includes Flagler, Volusia CareerSource Central Florida includes Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter CareerSource Brevard includes Brevard CareerSource Pinellas includes Pinellas CareerSource Tampa Bay includes Hillsborough CareerSource Pasco Hernando includes Pasco, Hernando CareerSource Polk includes Polk CareerSource Suncoast includes Manatee, Sarasota CareerSource Heartland includes Desoto, Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee CareerSource Research Coast includes Indian River, Martin, St. Lucie CareerSource Palm Beach County includes Palm Beach CareerSource Broward includes Broward CareerSource South Florida includes Miami-Dade, Monroe CareerSource Southwest Florida includes Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee

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.

Local Areas

CareerSource Florida in coordination with the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) reviewed the performance and financial integrity of each of the state's 24 currently designated workforce local areas and existing LWDBs. A recommendation was presented to the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors to initially designate all 24 workforce local areas previously designated under the Workforce Investment Act and to continue the charter of existing local workforce boards for the period from July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2017. In a public meeting, the CareerSource Florida Board reviewed the action to provide the initial designation to the existing workforce local areas and to continue the charter to the existing LWDBs contingent upon receipt of an official completed request from each local Area that demonstrated local elected official consultation. Consistent with language established under WIOA which states that local workforce development areas that receive an initial designation shall be granted a subsequent designation if they met the requirements outlined in WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1), CareerSource Florida and DEO issued policy which describes the requirements and process by which subsequent area designation would be determined and granted. Each of the 24 local workforce areas submitted the required documents and were all granted subsequent area designation.

Planning Regions

Florida designated each local area a planning region. This designation was agreed upon based on consultation with the Florida WIOA Task Force, state stakeholder groups and the LWDBs. Florida identified six factors for the development of regions including:

228. Single Labor Market
229. Common Economic Development Area
230. Federal and Non-Federal Resources to Carry Out WIOA Activities
231. Population Centers
232. Commuting Patterns
233. Industrial Composition and Sector Alignment

Using these six factors, various regional alignments may be considered and proposed by workforce system stakeholders including state policymakers, state and local CareerSource Florida Board members, state and local workforce staff, partner program staff, business and industry partners and workforce and education associations. For the state to consider and designate local areas, a formal proposal must be presented to the CareerSource Florida Board including a rationale for the local area designation using the six factors and a description of why the regional alignment proposed is in the best interests of the state, business and industry and workers and job seekers. Each local workforce development board plan incorporates their respective strategies to continue evaluating potential regional planning areas.

C. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS REFERRED TO IN SECTION 106(B)(5) OF WIOA RELATING TO DESIGNATION OF LOCAL AREAS.

Florida established an appeal process specific to objections on local area designations. This process is published in Guidance Paper 005 found online at: http://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/2017-guidance-papers/localareadesignatn-ap94.pdf?sfvrsn=2

The Appeal Process for Denial of WIOA Area Designation. The appeal process has never been invoked or used.

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

LWDBs use federal guidelines to work with required partners to determine and agree upon infrastructure funding. They are required to make every effort to resolve any disputes at the local level. A process for formal resolution exists with gradual escalation from the LWDB executive committees to senior leadership in the affected agencies (e.g., CareerSource Florida, DEO and DOE). The senior leadership would review concerns and, if necessary, remand the issue back to the board. If the LWDB cannot reach agreement with the partner, then the state funding mechanism would be instituted according to federal guidelines.

CareerSource Florida and the WIOA core partners have agreed to establish a workgroup to further enhance processes and develop policies for infrastructure funding and appeals as referred to in section 121(h)(2)(E) of WIOA.

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.

Federal and state program guidance is communicated to local workforce partners through participation in state-level policy development activities, formally promulgated and documented in a series of administrative guidance papers developed by DEO. These policy documents are evaluated by state and local partners before final issuance. This policy and administrative information can be found at: http://www.floridajobs.org/workforce-board-resources/policy-and-guidance/guidance-papers

Programmatic and administrative requirements are described in a Grantee-Sub-Grantee Agreement executed by DEO and each local workforce development board requiring their compliance with all federal and state laws, regulations and any special state requirements.

State Policy Guidance Information:

- Florida Statutes Section 445 (Workforce Innovation Act), Section 1008 FETPIP and other administrative requirements described in State Guidance, http://www.leg.state.fl.us/STATUTES/
- State Workforce Plan http://careersourceflorida.com/
- State Board Strategic Policies https://careersourceflorida.com/

- Local Planning Instructions: https://careersourceflorida.com/docking/WIOALocalPlanningInstructionsTwo-year-modification.docx
- Department of Economic Opportunity Regulations, Division of Workforce Services, Florida Administrative Code, Chapter 73B, www.flrules.org
- DEO Guidance Papers organized by workforce program, http://www.floridajobs.org/workforce-board-resources/policy-and-guidance/guidance-papers
- DEO Memoranda, organized by year of issuance, www.floridajobs.org/workforce-board-resources/professional-development-and-training/training-materials
- DEO Monitoring Tools, board-resources/program-monitoring and reports and program-monitoring- review: http://www.floridajobs.org/local-workforce-development-board-resources/program-monitoring-and-reports/Programmatic

DEO forwards federal directives and other resource materials via communiqués (issued when DEO comments on the federal document) or via e-mail notification and posting on the DEO website.

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO USE GOVERNOR'S SET ASIDE FUNDING. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE RAPID RESPONSE FUNDS TO RESPOND TO LAYOFFS AND PLANT CLOSINGS AND COORDINATE SERVICES TO QUICKLY AID COMPANIES AND THEIR AFFECTED WORKERS. STATES ALSO SHOULD DESCRIBE ANY LAYOFF AVERSION STRATEGIES THEY HAVE IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS AT RISK COMPANIES AND WORKERS

Governor's Set Aside Funding

From these state-level funds, the CareerSource Florida Board allocates certain funds for administrative and program costs of DEO and CareerSource Florida. In accordance with Section 445.003(3) (a)2, Florida Statutes, $2 million in WIOA set-aside funds must be allocated for the Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program, administered by the CareerSource Florida professional team. From the balance of state-level WIOA funds, this board determines any additional or specific allotments for purposes of state demonstration and pilot projects as well as other workforce development initiatives.

Rapid Response Funding to Respond to Layoffs

DEO Reemployment and Emergency Assistance Coordination Team (REACT) serves as Florida's state- level Dislocated Worker Unit. When employers submit layoff and business closing notices under the WARN (Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification) Act, DEO REACT staff make initial contact with the employer.

REACT staff request information such as the name and telephone number of the employer's local contact person at each location, the type of business issuing the WARN, the reason for the layoff or business closing and the possible applicability of the Trade Act. REACT staff enter the WARN notice into the REACT database and distribute the WARN and the background information to the affected local workforce development boards.

Each LWDB has a Business Services unit that includes a Rapid Response Coordinator. Local board staff respond and provide rapid response services to employers submitting WARN notices and Trade Act Petitions. Local board staff are responsible for making initial contact

with a company official to obtain information about the layoff. If workers are still attached to the employer, the Rapid Response Coordinator conducts Rapid Response Information Meetings to the workers providing information on various services offered in the CareerSource Florida One-Stop Career Center and through partner programs. Information provided includes Reemployment Assistance, Labor Market Information, training opportunities, seminars, workshops, job search assistance and other services.

When possible, onsite services are offered to employers requesting Rapid Response Assistance. Rapid response visits are usually made to employers laying off 50 or more workers. When a layoff is fewer than 50 workers, affected workers are directed to the nearest one-stop career center for re-employment services.

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 cases of natural disasters, the DEO Rapid Response Coordinator works closely with the DEO Emergency Coordination Officer, who collaborates with the Florida Division of Emergency Management, local county emergency management staff and FEMA to assess the situation and needs of the affected area. Once it is approved by the local emergency management officials, staff from DEO and the CareerSource Florida network deploy to affected areas to deliver rapid response services

DEO and the CareerSource Florida network has 22 Mobile Career Centers equipped with telecommunications equipment. These mobile units contain computers, workstations and supplies for providing rapid response assistance. After natural disasters, these units can go into affected areas and serve as a mobile career center when local offices are flooded or without power. Mobile centers serve as branch offices if local services are disrupted by natural disasters.

DEO has a memorandum of understanding with the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) allowing DEO to use mobile units owned by MDES if needed.

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.

DEO uses either a WARN, Trade Petition Filing, newspaper article or other reliable means of notification to initiate rapid response assistance to workers who have been notified of potential layoff or have been laid off because of trade. Each LWDB has a Business Services Unit that includes a Rapid Response Coordinator responsible for making initial contact with a company official to obtain information about the layoff. If workers are still attached to the

employer, the Rapid Response Coordinator conducts Rapid Response information meetings providing workers with information about the services offered in the CareerSource Florida One-Stop Career Center and through partner programs. If the trade petition is filed and not approved during the Rapid Response meeting, the customer is provided a brief description of program services. Workers are advised that once the petition is filed and approved, a scheduled TAA information meeting will be made available and an official notice will be mailed to the workers. It is the state's practice not to conduct an actual TAA information meeting unless the petition is certified. If the worker group has not received rapid response assistance, although workers may have officially separated from the company or firm, it is encouraged that a Rapid Response meeting be conducted. If the petition is approved and rapid response has not been conducted, the State Trade Coordinator ensures a combined Rapid Response/TAA information meeting is conducted for the group. Staff maintains a roster of customers who attended orientation meetings and records information in the state management information system (Employ Florida Marketplace).

When mass layoffs occur and state level rapid response funding is needed, local workforce development boards may request funds to assist workers in need of career counseling, resume preparation, interviewing skills and other workforce services. The state-level rapid response funding may be used for layoff aversion.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. On-the-job training, Incumbent Worker training, Transitional Jobs, and Customized Training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

Quick Response Training (QRT) and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) programs are flagship training programs of CareerSource Florida. These market relevant programs provide timely training driven by industry's needs and choice of training providers. QRT and IWT serve as powerful tools for workforce investment in leveraging public/private funds for targeted training for skills in demand to maximize use of limited public-sector funds. Most businesses receiving training grants are within the state's targeted industries, ensuring investment in wealth-generating jobs for Florida's economic growth.

Quick Response Trianing Program

Established in 1993, Florida's Quick Response Training program provides state-level funding for customized training to new or expanding businesses. During 2014-2015, Florida enhanced the application process for businesses to quickly respond to training objectives in demand-driven areas. In Fiscal Year 2016-2017, CareerSource Florida awarded Quick Response Training grants of nearly $10.6 million to support skills upgrade training for 4,851 new and existing employees.

The Florida Legislature provided funding to develop and launch a strategic marketing and business outreach plan for Florida's nationally recognized Quick Response Training program. The marketing plan was developed to identify a long-term vision and strategic

objectives for Quick Response Training. Recommendations for communications and outreach tools and tactics to enhance the program's competitive position and market outreach were considered, based on research that provided a greater understanding of business customers and potential customers; key influencers including but not limited to economic developers, site selection consultants, workforce development professionals, particularly those within the CareerSource Florida network who provide employment and training solutions for businesses of all sizes; education and training partners and stakeholders; and public policy leaders. The plan provided a clear, concise roadmap for CareerSource Florida's current and future investments in the marketing and promotion of Quick Response Training among businesses, including small businesses and key influencers.

This project enabled CareerSource Florida to implement marketing strategies for messaging of business services including Quick Response Training grants to internal and external audiences. CareerSource Florida developed an education and marketing toolkit for partners, marketing and brand-building materials such as brochures, digital outreach, including website enhancements and social media outreach and advertisements and media placements to support strategic marketing and business outreach objectives.

Incumbent Worker Training Program

Established in 1999, Incumbent Worker Training grants provide funding for customized training including skills upgrade training to existing for-profit businesses. This grant enables Florida to effectively retain businesses and help them stay competitive by supporting skills-upgrade training for existing full- time employees. In Fiscal Year 2016-2017, CareerSource Florida awarded Incumbent Worker Training grants totaling more than $1.9 million to help companies train and retain more than 4,005 full-time employees. Trainees' wages increased more than 11 percent on average within fifteen months of completing IWT-supported training. Florida's IWT program is funded $2 million annually, with additional funding at the discretion of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors. Funding priority is given to small businesses and those located in rural, enterprise zone, brownfield or inner-city areas and businesses in targeted industries.

Since its inception, more than $100 million in requests for IWT funding have been received and 58 percent of the requests have resulted in awards. Extensive outreach through digital advertising, presentations and workshops has been conducted to ensure that as many small businesses as possible are aware of the benefits of the IWT program. IWT is popular and meets a critical need for Florida's businesses. For every $1 of IWT funds invested in training, companies matched $7.39.

Transitional Jobs and On-the-Job Training

The state of Florida increased training opportunities to individuals through alternative training models such as Transitional Jobs and OJT. LWDBs are encouraged to leverage current partnerships and develop new ones with local businesses and industry to support economic development in their communities. The coordination of workforce training programs with economic development strategies as envisioned by Florida Law begins at the LWDB level and is coordinated at the state level by CareerSource Florida.

LWDBs may allocate up to 10 percent of local Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to transitional jobs for individuals with barriers to employment. LWDBs offering transitional jobs as an alternative training model must ensure transitional jobs are time-limited, wage-

paid, subsidized work experiences that help individuals who are chronically unemployed and/or have an inconsistent work history. Transitional jobs are used to assist these individuals establish a work history, develop skills to access unsubsidized employment and progress in the workplace. The LWDB's transitional jobs strategy/model is incorporated into its local plan and must include local definitions for chronically unemployed and inconsistent work history. The local plan must include the duration for transitional jobs and the strategy the board uses to promote or encourage the individual's transition into a permanent job when the subsidy ends.

OJT ensures high-quality training for both participants and employers as both have a vested interest in the program's success. Employers have the unique opportunity to train potential candidates the correct and most efficient way to perform tasks for their company, at a subsidized cost. Participants receive direct training and experience which increase their skillset. Participants gain new skills to meet the requirements of a new occupation or industry becoming better equipped to compete for available jobs. All OJT experiences are provided through contracts between local employers and the LWDB.

Customized Training

Customized training is designed to meet the specialized skill needs or requirements of one or more employers. Customized training is conducted through a commitment by the employer to retain the individual after successful completion of training. The employer is required to pay a significant share of the cost of the training. Customized training offers opportunities for employers to train individuals to their specific needs and gives the individual a chance to learn and gain desired skills specific to an employer or industry.

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).

CareerSource Florida works with the Florida Apprenticeship Advisory Council, convened through the Florida Department of Education to identify opportunities to promote registered apprenticeship and explore education opportunities for local boards to engage the state apprenticeship office and its local representatives. Florida received an ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant from the United States Department of Labor to integrate Registered Apprenticeships within the state's existing workforce and economic development system. As part of the grant implementation, CareerSource Florida has joined forces with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, the Florida Department of Education's Office of Apprenticeship, local workforce development boards, industry intermediaries and many other strategic partners to identify barriers, opportunities and pilot models of success. By positioning apprenticeships as a proven model that helps employers build a highly skilled workforce, education and workforce partners are breaking through systemic barriers to strengthen the state's sector strategy initiatives.

CareerSource Florida is working with the Department of Economic Opportunity and the Department of Education to develop strategic and administrative policies regarding Registered Apprenticeship service design and delivery.

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 policy governing training provider eligibility is online at: http://www.floridajobs.org/frequently-asked-questions-directory/eligible-training-provider-list-guidance-faq

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.

Implementation of the priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient is completed at the local level. Each LWDB is required to describe in its local plan its locally established policies and procedures to give priority to these customers. The results of these efforts are monitored and evaluated at the state level through the review and evaluation of physical documentation and participant files in the state's MIS.

On behalf of the state workforce board, CareerSource Florida is working with the Department of Economic Opportunity, local workforce development boards, and WIOA partners to develop policies to implement and monitor the priority for public assistance recipients, low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the requirements of WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E).

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

WIOA allows up to 100 percent of funds between programs with prior approval from the governor. DEO will ensure any transfer of funds between WIOA programs complies with federal law. LWDBs are required to record and document their use and application of local funds according to instructions described in the grantee- sub grantee agreement.

C. YOUTH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA,—

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS 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.*

* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

The state deferred development of criteria for awarding youth grants to the local boards. Each local was required to describe criteria established to award youth grant contracts in its local plan. Criteria shall be established in compliance with WIOA, Section 129 and will be included in each local plan. Youth service providers shall be procured with qualified service providers through a competitive process. In the past, local boards often contracted directly with agencies/organizations serving targeted populations and considered a provider's historically demonstrated success serving the most at-risk populations and those having barriers to employment including juvenile offenders, school drop-outs, disabled youth, those in or aging out of foster care, children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, youth for whom English is a second language and others meeting the WIOA eligibility criteria.

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.

By leveraging resources and expertise in core programs, Florida will inventory services provided to out-of-school youth and align them in its system integration strategy.

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.*

* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

Each LWDB develops a plan to accomplish youth program elements in accordance with WIOA, Section 129 (c)(2). Each local board shall ensure all youth program elements are available to youth as part of a menu of services based on their objective assessment and Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

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.

Each LWDB shall define the term "requires additional assistance to complete and educational program, or to secure and hold employment." The definition shall be included in the LWDB's local plan. Policies established at the local level must be reasonable, quantifiable and based on evidence that specific characteristics of the youth identified in the policy objectively require additional assistance. For example, "reading below grade level" is an example of an evidence-based, quantifiable characteristic; whereas, "low GPA" is an

example of a policy requiring specificity. Policies improve where the characteristic is specific and quantifiable, such as a youth with a GPA below a specific threshold.

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.

The state of Florida defines out-of-school as an individual who is not younger than 16 or older than age 24 at the time of enrollment into a WIOA funded youth program, who is not attending a regular or alternative school as an out of school youth. Youth within the specified age range who attend adult education or a General Education Development (GED) program are considered out-of-school youth. Out-of-school youth must meet the above and be one of the following:

- A school dropout;
- 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. School year calendar quarter is based on how a local school district defines its school year quarters;
- 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;
- An individual who is subject to the juvenile or adult justice system;
- A homeless individual (as defined in sec. 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e-2(6))), a homeless child or youth (as defined in sec. 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a(2))), a runaway, in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system, a child eligible for assistance under sec. 477 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677), or in an out-of-home placement;
- An individual who is pregnant or parenting;
- An individual with a disability;
- A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

Florida defines in-school youth as a low-income individual who is not younger than age 14 or older than age 21 at the time of enrollment into a WIOA-funded youth program, who is attending secondary or post- secondary school. This definition includes youth, within the specified age range, attending Florida Virtual Schools and youth in Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) youth facilities who do not have a high school diploma or GED. In school youth must meet the above and be one of the following:

- Basic skills deficient;
- An English language learner;
- An offender;
- A homeless individual (as defined in sec. 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e-2(6), a homeless child or youth (as defined in sec.

725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a(2), a runaway, in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system, a child eligible for assistance under sec. 477 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677), or in an out-of-home placement;

- An individual who is pregnant or parenting;
- An individual with a disability;
- An individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

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.

The state defers to each local board's definition of basic skills deficient in WIOA 3(5)(B) for individuals 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. The definition shall be included in the LWDB's local plan.

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 not applicable.

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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:

WWWWWWWWWW. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;
XXXXXXXXXX. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;
YYYYYYYYYY. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;
ZZZZZZZZZZ. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND
AAAAAAAAAAA. 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:

BBBBBBBBBBB. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;

CCCCCCCCCCC. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;

DDDDDDDDDDD. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;

EEEEEEEEEEE. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.

FFFFFFFFFFF. 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;

This section not applicable.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

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

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

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 PROFESSIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS.

Florida designed a comprehensive certificate exam to equip all Employment Service staff with appropriate knowledge to provide high-quality services to job seekers and employers. Within six months of hire, all front-line staff and employees who provide direct services to job seekers or employers, are required to complete a series of standardized training modules providing foundational information about the workforce system.

The Tier I Certificate is a thorough online training program that covers topics including workforce system history, workforce program overview and customer service and other job placement techniques. Upon completion of the online training modules, staff are required to complete a comprehensive exam to demonstrate comprehension of the material. Staff must successfully pass the exam to be Tier I certified and proficient to assist job seekers and employers.

Staff are required to seek new training opportunities annually that will enhance job knowledge and ensure they have satisfactory knowledge of new workforce tools and existing strategies. To assist staff in attaining continuing education units, Florida designed a Tier II Certificate program. Tier II content includes in-depth information of specific workforce programs and prepares staff in WIOA, Wagner-Peyser (WP), TAA, SNAP and

Welfare Transition (WT) programs. The Tier II Certificate program is a cost-effective method to cross train all staff in one convenient location that is immediately accessible.

Florida hosts periodic onsite and web-based training opportunities to share information and keep staff informed of trends. In collaboration with other agencies, Florida's workforce system enhances the knowledge base of staff by linking duties and responsibilities of career center staff with those of other partners and departments.

2. 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.

Florida provides available curriculum from the Tier I certificate program to all core partners. The curriculum covers topics including the history of Florida's workforce, system, workforce program overview and customer service and other job placement techniques. Florida designed a Tier II curriculum for Reemployment Assistance which provides staff with in-depth concepts and information of specific workforce programs including WIOA, WP, TAA, SNAP and Welfare Transition (WT). Florida may incorporate curriculum into the Tier II Certificate program that includes program specific training for Adult Education, VR and RA. This information will increase awareness on the identification of RA eligibility issues.

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.

Full-service career centers in Florida have resource rooms equipped with computers for customers to use. Individuals seeking to file reemployment assistance claims connect to the state's reemployment assistance claims and benefits system to complete the online application and subsequent work registration steps. Career center staff assist customers with general computer and unemployment application questions. Career centers are equipped with telephones customers may use to contact representatives for initial claims questions and assistance.

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS.

In Florida, most Reemployment Assistance claimants are registered as job seekers in Employ Florida within 24 hours of filing for unemployment benefits. This is accomplished through an automated interface between the unemployment compensation system and Employ Florida. Each night, new reemployment assistance claimant information is sent to Employ Florida where a basic registration is created. This includes the client's email address, if supplied, and a partial work history. The career services skills matching functionality of Employ Florida is used to generate an initial listing of current jobs posted in the system based on the employment information given by claimants when filing claims.

This generates an automatic email to the claimant that:

- Informs the claimant of his/her Employ Florida log in information;
- Provides a link to the initial list of jobs matched to the claimant's employment history; and
- Provides the link the claimant to complete a full résumé and begin active use of the system to search and apply for jobs

This information is immediately available to staff who use it to contact claimants to provide information about available career center services. The claimant's skills information automatically becomes available to employers seeking specific candidates to fill job openings.

Florida requires all claimants filing an initial online reemployment assistance claim to complete a full work registration in Employ Florida prior to receiving benefit payments. The full work registration requires the claimant to create an individual account. This account includes demographic information, an e-mail contact address attached to the Employ Florida account, a complete background wizard which collects education, employment and skills information and allows the claimant/job seekers to post a résumé. The full registration process provides LWDBs with integral information with which to target reemployment services to claimants and job seekers. Some claimants elect to complete an online skills assessment available to individuals seeking reemployment assistance and job services. The skills assessment measures an individual's skills, abilities and career aptitude. LWDBs utilize results obtained from the assessment to provide a customized and tiered level of service. Higher scores or results from the assessment may indicate the claimant is equipped with skills to seek jobs and obtain employment before their benefits expire. These individuals require less staff intervention. Lower scores typically indicate a claimant may require more intensive staff intervention before being job ready.

Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS)/Priority Reemployment Planning Program (PREP)

Florida's reemployment services are centered on the Priority Re-Employment Planning Program (PREP), the state's Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services effort which is operational statewide. A PREP pool consisting of reemployment assistance claimants is created on a weekly basis from initial reemployment claims filed during that week. Prior to the transfer into Employ Florida, the following factors are used in the profiling methodology to determine those individuals most likely to exhaust their benefits based on: tenure on their most recent employment, education level, total unemployment rate in the local labor market, last occupation being one of the occupations most in decline (O*NET) and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC). Excluded from the PREP pool are:

- Claimants whose program identification is other than intrastate claimant;
- Interstate claimant;
- Transitional claimant;
- Claimants on recall status within eight weeks of filing their claim; and
- Claimants with a first payment issued more than 42 days after the benefit year beginning date.

Claimants are placed in the PREP pool on the fourth week of their claims for early intervention purposes. A group assessment interview and the development of a service plan, if necessary, are coupled with the orientation service. Based on the service plan the following services are made available for claimants who are not job ready: job search workshops, testing, counseling, specific labor market information and referral to education and or training.

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Grant

In 2016, Florida shifted to the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program where the target population changed to all transition veterans receiving assistance and claimants *most* likely to exhaust RA benefits.

The RESEA program addresses reemployment needs of RA claimants most likely to exhaust benefits and transitioning veterans receiving unemployment for ex-service members (UCX). The program provides specific intensive services to these populations and helps detect and prevent erroneous Unemployment Insurance (UI) payments. The RESEA program uses a one-on-one intensive appointment process.

Each RESEA participant receives:

- An orientation about the career center's services
- An initial assessment to determine the claimant's strengths, weaknesses and barriers to employment
- Labor market information unique to the participant's past or future occupation and work experience. If the labor market information shows the participant's occupation to be in decline, they may be referred for training
- An Employability Development Plan developed jointly by career center staff and the claimant
- Referral to at least one work-search activity such as résumé writing or interviewing workshops
- Referral to training, if needed

Consistent with section 443.091, Florida Statutes, failure to appear as directed for reemployment services at the appointed career center, may affect a participant's eligibility for benefits and services. There is a feedback loop to the Reemployment Assistance Program for RESEA participants who miss their initial appointment. Reemployment assistance adjudicators review the reason for the participant's failure to report to the career center and there are no extenuating circumstances (such as moved out of state, returned to work, etc.) issue a determination of ineligibility. The determination of ineligibility includes a disqualification for the week in which the claimant failed to report for reemployment services. When an assessment is completed, an automatic notice is generated and sent to the Reemployment Assistance Program to conduct an Eligibility Review Questionnaire to determine the claimant's eligibility for continued reemployment assistance benefits.

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;

Claimants may be selected to attend the mandatory PREP program if they are profiled as most likely to exhaust benefits prior to returning to work. Selection to attend a PREP appointment provides claimants with an orientation of the career center to include services available and an initial assessment to determine additional needs. The RESEA program allows LWDBs to elect to participate in this program instead of the PREP program. For LWDBs who elect to participate in the RESEA program, claimants selected for reemployment services in these areas receive an intensive one-on-one session with career center staff. During the one-on-one session, claimants receive an orientation, initial assessment, specific labor market information, development of an employability plan and are scheduled for additional reemployment services. Claimants not profiled and scheduled to attend PREP or RESEA are offered the full array of WP career services depending on the claimant's request and other needs. Career services may be scheduled in the management information system requiring the claimant to fulfill their obligation to actively pursue employment. Failure to comply with scheduled services may be communicated to the RA program for referral to an adjudicator to conduct fact finding.

Claimants are one priority population supported by Florida's WP funds. Florida's automated processes allow RA claimants to receive reemployment services quickly and seamlessly. Upon filing an initial claim in the RA reporting system, various data points are collected from the claimant's application and transmitted into Employ Florida to create a basic WP application. The claimant is sent an introductory welcome message that provides helpful resources about services in the system they may use in their job search. Every week, characteristics collected from the RA claims application (including but not limited to the number of jobs the claimant had over a certain period; the claimant's job tenure and wages; the industry from which the claimant was laid off and the time of year the layoff occurred; the availability of comparable jobs in the area, etc.) is processed through a regression model to obtain a profiling coefficient.

The coefficient value determines the claimants' likelihood of exhausting RA benefits prior to returning to work. This is used to determine to which mandatory reemployment program the claimant is assigned to attend. Upon assignment of the coefficient, the claimant is transmitted into a pool used to assign them to the state's Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) program, or the RESEA program. This automated pool collection and event assignment typically occurs every Saturday.

On Monday, LWDB staff are responsible for viewing the number of claimants in their respective pools and creating events accommodating as many claimants as possible. LWDBs operate PREP or RESEA, but never operate both programs simultaneously. LWDBs operating the RESEA program set goals of the number of claimants to schedule and complete in each year. These goals are used to determine how many claimants will be scheduled each week from their respective pools. LWDBs operating the PREP program typically schedule their full pool, but have no predetermined numbers to complete. Every Monday night, based on the number of claimants each LWDB determines to schedule, the automated process uses those numbers to populate events. Once events are populated, Employ Florida automatically generates letters for the LWDB to send to the claimant. These

letters are printed by staff and mailed to the claimant at least two weeks in advance of their scheduled appointment.

2. REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW;

In 2013, Florida began requiring all claimants who filed an initial claim online to complete a full work registration in Employ Florida prior to receiving benefit payments. The full work registration requires the claimant to create an individual account with basic demographic information and an email address on the Employ Florida account. Claimants are required to complete a background wizard to provide education, employment and skills information and to post a résumé. The full registration process provides LWDBs with important information used to target reemployment services to claimants. This full work registration must be completed before claimants receive any benefit payments.

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

Section 443.091, Florida Statutes requires all reemployment assistance claimants to engage in systematic and sustained efforts to find work, including contacting at least five prospective employers for each week of unemployment. In small counties - defined as having a population of 75,000 residents or fewer - a claimant must contact at least three prospective employers for each week of unemployment claimed. Claimants file their work search activities online each week and the Reemployment Assistance Program office conducts random work search reviews. Alternatively, instead of claimants contacting three or five prospective employers, as appropriate, claimants may, for that same week, report in person to a LWDB to meet with a career center representative and access reemployment services.

Upon completion of the RESEA appointment, career center staff are required to electronically submit information related to whether the claimant reported for and received all required services to satisfy the program's minimum requirements. If a claimant has not reported to the required appointment, an automatic notification is transmitted to the Reemployment Assistance system notifying an adjudicator of potential eligibility issues. The Reemployment Assistance unit conducts a follow up to determine if the absence should result in a disqualification. An eligibility review program (ERP) questionnaire is conducted for all RESEA claimants to determine eligibility for continued benefits.

For the PREP program, claimant attendance is recorded in Employ Florida and reported to the RA system. Claimants failing to report for their appointment are contacted by adjudication for benefit eligibility determinations.

4. PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

Regardless of their point of entry, claimants are assessed to determine their employment and/ or training needs. The assessment may range from an informal interview to a

standardized set of tests. Upon completion of the assessment and interpretation of results, claimants may be referred to a partner program, such as WIOA, for additional training information and/or enrollment. When referred to a partner program, the claimant's eligibility for training is determined based on the program's eligibility criteria. Career centers throughout Florida have collaborated and are often collocated, with educational institutions where claimants may be referred for education assistance.

Wagner-Peyser funds help provide preliminary work readiness workshops including interviewing skills, résumé writing, job search strategies and can be used to provide referrals to internal and external training and education programs and resources.

E. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE--

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED

Provide an assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers in the area based on past and projected agricultural and farmworker activity in the State. Such needs may include but are not limited to: employment, training, and housing.

The Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) Assessment of Need and Assessment of Agricultural Activity in the State are all addressed in the next section.

A. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT ARE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE.

According to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the agricultural industry in Florida employs approximately two million people and contributes more than $120 billion to the state's economy. An estimated 47,100 commercial farms in Florida produce nearly 300 different commodities on 9.41 million acres. Florida is the nation's leading citrus producer, accounting for 53 percent of the total U.S. production in the 2015-2016 citrus season. During the season, Florida farmworkers produced 81.6 million boxes of oranges and 10.8 million boxes of grapefruit exceeding sales of $825 million. The state's citrus production dropped by 16 percent from the previous season; however total U.S. citrus production dropped by 16 percent. In 2016, Florida ranked first in the United Statesin value of production for fresh market snap beans, fresh market cucumbers, cucumbers for processing, grapefruit, oranges, sugarcane, fresh market tomatoes and watermelons. Florida growers harvested vegetables for fresh market, potatoes, sweet potatoes, strawberries and blueberries from 198,600 acres in 2016. Cash receipts for all agricultural products totaled $8.37 billion in 2015. Crop commodities, such as oranges, greenhouse/nursery, sugarcane and tomatoes, accounted for 72.9 percent of these total cash receipts.

According to USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Florida Field Office, 2016 Annual Statistical Bulletin, some pre-harvest activities such as planting, transplanting, tying, staking and pruning are performed by farmworkers, as well as post-harvest activities such as packing and juice processing. In 2016, Florida ranked second in the production of bell peppers, fresh market sweet corn, squash and strawberries; third in the production of fresh market cabbage and honey; and fourth in the production of peanuts.

The following breakdown illustrates Florida's top major labor-intensive crop activity during the 2015-2016 season, per data gathered internally from local career centers and from external partner agencies.

Figure 7.01Florida's Top Major Labor-Intensive Crop Activity

CROP	Usual Harvesting Begin	Usual Harvesting Most Active	PRIMARY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF ACTIVITY	LABOR POOL
Oranges	Mid-September	September - June	Polk, Highlands, DeSoto, Hendry, Hardee, Collier, Manatee, Lake, St. Lucie, Martin, Hillsborough, Pasco, Osceola, Indian River, Lee, Charlotte, Glades, Orange, Okeechobee	45,000
Grapefruit	September	September - June	Indian River, St. Lucie, Polk, Hendry, Highlands, Osceola, Charlotte, Collier, Lake, Okeechobee	5,000

CROP	Usual Harvesting Begin	Usual Harvesting Most Active	PRIMARY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF ACTIVITY	LABOR POOL
Specialty Citrus	June	June - April	Polk, Lake, Highlands, Hendry, Charlotte, Hardee, St. Lucie, Collier, De Soto, Indian River, Hillsborough, Lee	1,000
Tomatoes	Mid-October	November - June	Manatee, Collier, Hillsborough, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, Hendry, Gadsden, Hamilton, Jackson	9,500
Blueberries	March	March - May	Polk, Alachua, Hardee, Hamilton, Levy	7,000
Strawberries	Mid-December	February - March	Hillsborough, Manatee, Hardee, Miami-Dade	10,000
Snap Beans	Mid-October	November - April	Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, Suwannee, Hendry, Alachua, Jackson	5,000
Bell Peppers	Mid-October	November - May	Palm Beach, Collier, Hillsborough, Manatee	5,000
Sugarcane	November	November - February	Palm Beach, Hendry, Glades, Martin	3,500

CROP	Usual Harvesting Begin	Usual Harvesting Most Active	PRIMARY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF ACTIVITY	LABOR POOL
Watermelons	April	May - June	Hendry, Levy, Gilchrist, Highlands, Collier, Suwannee, DeSoto, Alachua, Manatee, Marion, Hardee, Jackson, Sumter, Lake, Gadsden, Washington	3,500
Sweet Corn	Mid-September	November - June	Palm Beach, Miami-Dade, Hendry, Suwannee, Hamilton	3,100
Potatoes	Mid-December	February - May	St. Johns, Putnam, Flagler, Okeechobee, Suwannee	2,800
Squash	September	November - May	Miami-Dade, Collier, Lee, Hillsborough, Gadsden, Jackson, Suwannee	2,500
Cabbage	Mid-October	January - April	Flagler, St. Johns, Palm Beach, Manatee, Putnam	1,500
Cucumbers	Mid-September	November - April	Manatee, Palm Beach, Hillsborough, Collier, Hardee, Hendry, Miami-Dade, Levy	1,500

CROP	Usual Harvesting Begin	Usual Harvesting Most Active	PRIMARY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF ACTIVITY	LABOR POOL
Tomatillos	April	April - July & September - November	Collier (November - March), Manatee, Gadsden, Jackson	500
Eggplants	April	April - July & September - November	Collier (November - March), Manatee, Gadsden, Jackson	500

Although Florida's citrus acreage has steadily declined (primarily due to the deadly citrus greening disease), 10,090 acres of new planting were reported in the past year. Results of the annual Commercial Citrus Inventory show total citrus acreage is 480,121 acres, down four percent from the last survey and the lowest in a series which began in 1966. The gross loss of 31,365 acres is the largest loss recorded in a single season since beginning one-year interval surveys in 2009. Florida's climate allows for an earlier blueberry season than the rest of the country, which means during this time the market is available almost exclusively to Florida growers.

The following breakdown illustrates Florida's top major labor-intensive crop activity during the 2015-2016 season, per data gathered internally from local career centers and from external partner agencies. According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, Florida has the second largest nursery industry in the country, after California.

An estimated 100,000 farmworkers are employed in plant nurseries and ferneries throughout the state. An estimated 2,000 or more farmworkers are employed in sod farming for commercial sale. According to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' 2015 Florida Agriculture by the Numbers, the state's expanded wholesale value of floriculture crops increased $107 million over 2014 totals, surpassing the $1 billion marks for the first time in ten years. Total greenhouse and nursery cash value sales of $1,039,411.

During the months of January through March 2016, heavy rains delayed harvest schedules in several parts of Florida. Northern Florida fields were too wet for soil preparation during the middle portion of February 2016. Heavy rains and cool weather impacted vegetable crops with yields and quality severely impacted resulting in little product market movement in South Florida. Wet weather conditions caused disease pressure on strawberries and small grains in the Florida panhandle. Wet conditions prevented corn harvesting in Jackson and Okaloosa counties and hay cutting in Jackson County during the month of August 2016. In September 2016, Hurricane Hermine brought rainfall to almost all areas. Many fields were water saturated and at risk for disease and rotting. In October 2016,

several counties along the Atlantic Coast, as well as in the southern and central portion of Florida reported flooding and damages to various fruit and vegetable crops. Due to Hurricane Matthew, leafy greens and cabbage plantings in north Florida were delayed.

In September 2017, Hurricane Irma made landfall in Florida as one of the strongest hurricanes to make direct landfall in the United States. According to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' initial report assessing the preliminary damages caused by Hurricane Irma, the hurricane's path coincided with some of Florida's most productive agricultural landscapes and consequently caused major losses to all segments of production agriculture. While long-term impacts are still being assessed, as of October 2017, total crop losses were estimated at just over $2 billion and total losses to production agriculture were estimated at just over $2.5 billion.

B. 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.

Based on local MSFW-related data and reports, there were an estimated 114,531 MSFWs in Florida during Program Year (PY) 2016. During the low season, this number may drop to fewer than 100,000.

Farmworkers need affordable housing that is not substandard, access to public transportation, health insurance coverage and safer working conditions.

As of December 2017, South Florida is still experiencing some impacts post-Hurricane Irma, though the area is slowly recovering. Recruitment for several new packing houses has started, which will provide MSFWs with employment opportunities. Hurricane Irma's impact on the citrus crop, caused many MSFWs to migrate to Polk County in search of employment opportunities.

2. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

Outreach Activities and Information About Farmworkers Not Being Reached by Normal Intake Activities are both addressed in the next section.

A. CONTACTING FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY THE NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES.

All career centers have an obligation to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached by normal intake activities conducted by career centers. Outreach is not limited to those offices designated as significant MSFW career centers or significant multilingual MSFW career centers. Significant MSFW career centers are those centers where MSFWs account for 10 percent or more of annual participants in employment service activities.

Significant multilingual MSFW career centers are centers where 10 percent or more of the MSFW participants are estimated to require service provision in a language(s) other than English. Florida has ten career centers designated as significant multilingual MSFW career centers (referred to as "significant offices") located in Winter Haven, Bradenton, Tampa, Sebring, Wauchula, Port Saint Lucie, Belle Glade, Homestead, Immokalee and Clewiston. Each significant office has at least one full-time, year-round outreach worker assigned to conduct outreach duties. State merit staff performing outreach are bilingual and whenever possible, have a MSFW background or are members of a minority group representative of the MSFW population.

Outreach to the MSFW community is accomplished through personal contacts, printed material, the media, community involvement and cooperative ventures with private and public agencies. Outreach workers make personal contacts with MSFWs daily to explain services available through one-stop career centers and other agencies, including the availability of referrals to employment, training and supportive services; information on specific employment opportunities currently available, such as H-2A jobs and other low-skilled jobs; a summary of farmworker rights; and information on the Employment Service and Employment-Related Law Complaint System, including the Florida Farmworker Helpline.

When an MSFW seeks services at a career center, or is contacted through outreach, the services available through the career center must be explained and provided in writing. To accomplish this, all MSFWs must be provided a copy of the Notice to Job Seekers (Form DEO-511N) in their native language (available in English, Spanish and Creole). The form contains information on DEO's toll-free Farmworker Helpline for farmworkers who may want to file a complaint, report an apparent violation or obtain employment service information. Additional materials provided during outreach include a brochure outlining basic farmworker rights and other materials from partner agencies describing available services. MSFWs are given the location of and encouraged to visit their local career center to obtain a complete range of employment and training services. The DEO-511N form includes the locations of all significant offices in Florida.

To contact the maximum number of MSFWs, outreach workers visit sites where farmworkers live, work and gather, including day-haul sites, mass recruitments and orientations at farms, migrant health clinics and sites where social services are provided. Posters and other printed materials are distributed at these locations to maximize outreach efforts into the farmworker community. Outreach workers conduct follow-up to MSFWs as necessary and appropriate to assist, ensure their needs are met and to determine if other services are necessary. DEO enhances existing relationships with local, state and federal organizations serving farmworkers, employers and employer organizations to solicit and exchange information on behalf of MSFWs.

These devices provide swifter access to the state's online labor exchange management information system, Employ Florida. Increased resources would improve access to technology and the performance of outreach workers.

There are currently nine LWDAs designated as significant MSFW locations in Florida. Within those local areas are 10 career centers designated as significant multilingual sites.

Florida operates its ten designated significant multilingual MSFW career centers during PY 2018 - PY 2020. Following is a list of these significant career centers, along with corresponding outreach goals per program year.

Figure 7.02

MSFW Significant/Multilingual Office Locations

Significant/Bilingual Office Location	LWDA	Number of Assigned FTE Positions	Number of MSFW Outreach Contacts	Number of Quality MSFW Outreach Contacts	Number of Staff Days
Tampa (Brandon)*	15	1	2,200	1,700	185
Winter Haven	17	1	1,800	800	185
Bradenton	18	1	2,000	1,650	185
Sebring	19	1	2,200	950	185
Wauchula	19	1	2,200	950	185
Port Saint Lucie	20	1	1,800	1,100	185
Belle Glade	21	1	1,950	1,050	185
Homestead	23	1	2,000	1,350	185
Immokalee	24	1	2,200	1,250	185
Clewiston	24	1	2,200	950	185
Total	N/A	**10**	**20,550**	**12,200**	**1850**

*Note: LWDA 15's Plant City career center is designated by USDOL as the significant multilingual career center in this area. However, this office was closed by the LWDB due to a reduction in customers accessing services at this location. MSFWs in this area continue to be served through outreach efforts and services provided in the Tampa (Brandon) career center.

Achieving the level of services attained at career centers is attributed to the unique Florida workforce delivery system and its intensified efforts to reach and serve all customers. Outreach workers are required to spend a total of 185 staff days, or 80 percent of staff time,

conducting outreach. For PY 2015, outreach workers conducted 52,504 outreach contacts with MSFWs. Of these contacts, 11,170 were staff-assisted services. For PY 2016, outreach workers conducted 46,992 outreach contacts with MSFWs. Of these contacts, 10,907 were staff-assisted services. Florida's focus on outreach allowed it to exceed its goal of 21,550 MSFW outreach contacts by more than 118 percent. Note: This goal has been reduced to 20,550 effective PY 2017 due to one career center no longer being designated as a significant office by USDOL. For PY 2016, 566,095 Wagner-Peyser applications were entered in Employ Florida. Of those applications, 18,723 were MSFWs. Processing job applications, conducting assessments and providing non-agricultural job referrals were also emphasized to assist in year-round employment. This allowed the state to increase the number of MSFWs that were placed in permanent positions (jobs over 150 days); a measure that was missed during PY 2015 but exceeded for PY 2016.

B. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUTREACH WORKERS. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MUST INCLUDE TRAININGS, CONFERENCES, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND INCREASED COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON TOPICS SUCH AS ONE-STOP CENTER SERVICES (I.E. AVAILABILITY OF REFERRALS TO TRAINING, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND CAREER SERVICES, AS WELL AS SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES), THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM, INFORMATION ON THE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS SERVING MSFWS IN THE AREA, AND A BASIC SUMMARY OF FARMWORKER RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.

Outreach workers are trained in all aspects of employment-related services to MSFWs. New outreach staff receive training on Wagner-Peyser services, benefits and protections afforded to MSFWs through the career centers and local procedures by the LWDB. The State Monitor Advocate provides onsite technical assistance to new staff on MSFW regulations including outreach requirements, full applications in Employ Florida, reporting requirements and agricultural job orders.

The State Monitor Advocate also provides training on the Employment Service and Employment-Related Law Complaint System and basic farmworker rights including training on protecting farmworkers against sexual harassment. Outreach workers are encouraged to observe the working and living conditions of MSFWs and, upon observation or upon receipt of information regarding a suspected violation of state or federal laws, to document and report the suspected violation to the appropriate enforcement agency for investigation.

The significant multilingual MSFW career centers were formally monitored onsite this program year by the current and former State Monitor Advocates. The State Monitor Advocates provided technical assistance to significant multilingual MSFW career center staff during the onsite monitoring reviews to address any immediate training needs.

Outreach workers are encouraged to refresh their knowledge of policies and procedures through online training, as well as through in-person trainings and webinars offered by DEO. Florida also has an established Complaint System supported by written procedures.

Refresher training and farm labor compliance training is provided to outreach workers during an annual MSFW professional development conference. Many annual conferences are held in partnership with the Florida Department of Education's Farmworker Career

Development Program (FCDP), Florida's National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee. When the conference is held jointly, training sessions are designed to foster increase collaboration and increase awareness between partners.

The annual conference customarily includes guest speakers from state and federal enforcement agencies such as the USDOL Wage and Hour Division, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Florida Department of Health. DEO staff customarily present workshops on Wagner-Peyser and WIOA requirements, the complaint system and services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) and MSFW customers, among other. The workshops provide career center staff with knowledge necessary to discuss farmworker rights with MSFWs onsite and during outreach.

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.

Career center staff, including outreach workers, have access to online training modules and resources through DEO's website for core programs including unemployment insurance (UI) benefits (referred to as reemployment assistance benefits in Florida). In-person trainings and webinars are offered each year. Outreach workers use this information to ensure MSFWs are aware of the different programs and services available through the workforce system as well as their potential eligibility for reemployment assistance benefits.

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.

The annual MSFW Staff Development Conference provides outreach workers with professional development activities to ensure they are proficient at providing high quality services to job seekers and employers. Outreach staff are encouraged to attend the annual Workforce Professional Development Summit.

E. COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH NFJP GRANTEES AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS.

To maintain targeted service levels, outreach services are supplemented through partner agencies. Informal cooperative agreements with other public and private social service agencies, such as local providers of the NFJP, are established to provide joint outreach efforts to the MSFW population. For PY 2016, approximately 531 additional contacts were made through nonfinancial agreements with cooperating agencies.

A memorandum of understanding was executed with the Florida Department of Education's FCDP, the state's NFJP grantee, outlining these outreach efforts. The memorandum outlines requirements for significant career center outreach staff and FCDP local provider staff to supply information on the other partner's programs and services during individual outreach efforts; to conduct outreach jointly when feasible; and, to report outreach activities and contacts to the other party. Career centers with agricultural activity that do not meet the ten percent criteria for the significant career center designation are required to have nonfinancial agreements with cooperating agencies.

The MSFW outreach workers maintain a continuing relationship with community groups, public agencies and advocacy groups involved in the welfare of farmworkers. Contact is

made with agricultural employers for possible job openings and outreach workers assist career center staff in recruiting MSFWs for specific job orders.

3. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM.

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. PROVIDING THE FULL RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY, BOTH FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS, THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. THIS INCLUDES:

CCLXXXI. HOW CAREER AND TRAINING SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER WIOA TITLE I WILL BE PROVIDED TO MSFWS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP CENTERS;

CCLXXXII. HOW THE STATE SERVES AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH SERVICES.

(i) Career and Training Services Provided to MSFWs

Career and training services are provided to MSFWs. Basic and individualized career staff assisted services are provided through outreach and in career centers to MSFWs. Florida's management information system, Employ Florida, allows for self-services at any location without the need of visiting a career center. Customers using self-services at the career center have access to staff assistance.

The MSFWs' knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) are assessed to determine appropriate jobs to which they may be referred. Job referrals are provided through mass recruitments, H-2A job referrals, other low-skilled job referrals and job developments. Effort is made to refer MSFW job seekers to H-2A job orders whenever possible. Jobs located in Georgia, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia and Pennsylvania H-2A jobs are posted in Employ Florida. Staff ensure terms and conditions of employment are discussed prior to referral and that the job seeker is aware of afforded assurances. H-2A job orders are suppressed in the Employ Florida system to ensure maximum protections to the applicant. Staff are required to follow up on referrals made to H-2A job orders.

Referrals are made to ESL classes to reduce language barriers improve resume and interviewing skills. Workshops enable MSFWs to become more competitive in the workforce. Staff provide career guidance and suggest training programs best suited to the needs of customers who are not job ready or those prepared for a change in occupation. Referrals are made to local FCDP training programs and LWDB training programs. Co-enrollments take place when possible. Other programs MSFWs are referred to include VR (for MSFWs with disabilities), older workers programs and housing assistance agencies. Staff are familiar with and refer MSFWs as appropriate to other community supportive services.

The State Monitor Advocate or Assistant Monitor Advocate conducts quality assurance visits to significant offices on an annual basis to ensure MSFWs have equal access to employment opportunities through Florida's career center delivery system. WP monitoring

staff ensure MSFWs have equal access to services during quality assurance desk reviews of non-significant LWDBs.

(ii) Services to Agricultural Employers

Florida ensures all career centers make assistance available to employers, including those in the agricultural industry. Outreach to public and private community agencies, MSFWs and employer organizations is conducted to facilitate the widest possible distribution of information about employment opportunities. Career center staff in significant multilingual MSFW centers and LWDB Business Service Representatives perform marketing outreach to growers, harvesters and processors. Career centers obtain employer contact information, maintain existing contacts and encourage employers to create job orders in Employ Florida through local career centers. Career centers assist MSFWs in the preparation of applications for employment services and assistance in obtaining referrals to current and future employment opportunities. DEO office staff promote labor exchange services to agricultural employers through participation at employer conferences and seminars and through DEO's website. The State Monitor Advocate partners with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division and agricultural employer organizations to conduct employer forums for agricultural employers and provide information on available services for employers including services pertaining to the agricultural industry such as local mass recruitments and the Agricultural Recruitment System.

Identifying the needs of employers is a high priority. CareerSource Florida's efforts continue to promote strategies that support the growth of targeted industries in the state. Sector strategies are regional, employer-driven partnerships of industry, education and workforce development leaders focused on identifying solutions to the workforce needs of the local labor market. Strategies used to promote labor exchange services to agricultural employers include recruiting agreements, job fairs and establishing new business relationships. These efforts include advising worker advocates and groups through job order notifications published in English and Spanish; and, providing notification to employers and advocates of changes to the Foreign Labor Certification Program requirements affecting workers.

Florida sees an increased number of agricultural employers using the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Program. The H-2A Temporary Agricultural Program allows U.S. employers that meet specific regulatory requirements to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary agricultural jobs. DEO's Foreign Labor Certification office enters H-2A job orders in the state's online labor exchange system, Employ Florida. During PY 2016, the Department processed 338 H-2A applications and job orders for Florida employers, an increase from the previous year. Applications are expected to steadily increase for PY 2017 - PY 2018, based on previous years' trends. During PY 2016, 662 MSFWs were referred for job placements under the H-2A program.

Career centers in significant agricultural areas are provided approved clearance (job) orders that provide staff, including outreach workers, with current information on job availability. Career centers are provided information on out-of-state clearance orders found in Employ Florida. Domestic farmworker crews, family groups and individuals are recruited and referred to agricultural employers who submit job orders in agricultural occupations. For PY 2016, 11,671 MSFWs were referred to agricultural employers as indicated in the Migrant Indicators of Compliance Statewide Report.

B. MARKETING THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM TO FARMWORKERS AND OTHER FARMWORKER ADVOCACY GROUPS.

Outreach workers take complaints while in the field. The employment service complaint system is marketed to farmworkers and to agencies. One mechanism used to promote the complaint system is the Florida Farmworker Helpline, a toll-free number farmworkers can call to file a complaint or report violations anonymously. Outreach materials such as the DEO 511N form, farmworker rights brochure and Farmworker Helpline business cards, include the helpline number. This number is featured prominently on complaint posters located in significant MSFW career centers. Helpline business cards are provided to agencies and businesses serving farmworkers. Farmworkers and agencies are informed complaints can be filed in person at any career center or with an outreach worker.

C. MARKETING THE AGRICULTURAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEM TO AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH PUBLICITY.

The Agricultural Recruitment System is an alternative to the H-2A program offered to employers who have temporary agricultural or food processing jobs and need workers. The State Monitor Advocate promotes the Agricultural Recruitment System during employer forums to agricultural employers and employer organizations as a more cost-effective alternative to H-2A. Outreach workers provide information on this program during employer visits. Agricultural Recruitment System brochures are shared with employers during forums and visits.

4. 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).

The memorandum of understanding previously described establishes a basis for collaboration between LWDBs and FCDP local projects statewide. Local FCDP providers foster memorandums of understanding with their local LWDB(s).

As part of a strategic initiative to increase collaboration and co-enrollments with FCDP local providers, the State Monitor Advocate and FCDP state staff facilitate onsite meetings with local WIOA program staff, case managers, office managers, outreach staff and local FCDP coordinators. These meetings usually occur during the State Monitor Advocate's onsite monitoring visits.

Partnerships between the significant multilingual MSFW career centers and the local FCDP grantees have strengthened over the past few years resulting in an increase in cross-referrals and co-enrollments of MSFWs for services. The Department of Education (DOE) contracted with DEO for a new database module in Employ Florida, which launched on October 3, 2016. Beginning October 3, 2016, local FCDP providers have staff accounts for their own program module in Employ Florida to document intake, enrollment, services and outcomes. FCDP providers can view Wagner-Peyser services provided to customers. This

maximizes a seamless service delivery to MSFW customers by career centers and FCDP. The partnership between DOE and DEO has greatly enhanced collaboration efforts, allowed for efficient data sharing and co-enrollments between the Wagner-Peyser and FCDP programs.

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.

Information was solicited from NFJP grantees and other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested organizations for at least 30 days for review and comments. Comments received are considered in the preparation of the final AOP.

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.

Florida is the second most MSFW significant state in the country, behind California. In PY 2015 the state had a total of 18,359 MSFW applicants in its labor exchange system and in PY 2016 there were a total of 18,723 MSFW applicants. These reductions in MSFW applications from PY 2013 and PY 2014, 19,930 and 20,436 respectively, are likely attributed to MSFWs not returning to Florida after migrating north for work and an increase in the use of foreign workers through the H-2A program.

Florida meets its goals providing services to MSFWs on a quantitatively proportionate level as those provided to non-MSFWs. MSFW Indicators of Compliance Reports for the past four program years show all five equity ratio indicators are met. These indicators are: referrals to jobs, referrals to supportive services, received staff assisted services, career guidance and job development contacts.

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.

Florida exceeded its outreach goals outlined in the PY 2016 Agricultural Outreach Plan meeting the goal of 21,550 outreach contacts at the rate of 213 percent, by conducting 45,992 outreach contacts during PY 2016. The goal of 13,000 outreach contacts where staff assisted services were provided was not met. Only 10,907 staff assisted outreach contacts were made during PY 2016, a rate of 84 percent. 1,624 staff days of the 2,035 goal for staff days of outreach was not met. An extended vacancy in one significant office and the conversion of another significant office to non-significant status impacted outreach activities. The goal of 185 staff days per outreach worker was still ambitious, even after being reduced from 210 and then 190, staff days in previous plans. The required number of staff days dedicated to outreach was decreased to 185 per outreach worker. The goal for 500 outreach contacts made by cooperating agencies was met; a maximum of 531 contacts was reported for PY 2016. DEO, in partnership with the LWDBs, strives to meet or exceed all equity and minimum service level indicators. During PY 2015, Florida met all five equity ratio indicators and six of seven minimum service level indicators. The level of services attained is attributed to intensive outreach efforts by MSFW outreach workers and career center staff properly serving customers. The State Monitor Advocate is involved in the LWDBs reporting system by providing training and technical assistance during monitoring visits to address statistical data related to MSFWs. The State Monitor Advocate maintains on-going contact with MSFW outreach workers, to ensure accurate data are collected and reports are submitted in a timely manner. The report accurately reflects data of LWDBs' efforts to assist MSFWs through out-of-office contact, referrals to supportive services and provisions of employment information and referrals.

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 can formulate the PY 2018 Agricultural Outreach Plan. All comments, suggestions and recommendations of the State Monitor Advocate are incorporated in the plan.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time. (sec 121(e)(3)); Yes

2. The State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 (State agency staffing requirements) if the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers; 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 services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and Yes

4. State agency merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with Department of Labor regulations. Yes

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 under title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

Describe how the eligible agency will, by July 1, 2016, align its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

Florida has a longstanding history of standards-based instruction from the original Sunshine State Standards to the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and most recently, in 2014, the adoption of the Florida Standards (English Language Arts and Mathematics) by the State Board of Education. The Florida Standards are the official state-adopted challenging academic content standards fulfilling statutory requirements, under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)). Anchored by empirical evidence informing what employers and educators demand of prospective employees and students, the Florida Standards share the dual purpose of preparing both K-12 and adult students to be college and career ready.

Florida sets clear expectations between K-12 and its content equivalent counterpart in adult education by ensuring standards-based instruction is aligned to state adopted content standards in K-12. This guarantees all students (K-12 or adult), regardless of their pathway to graduation, have access to rigorous standards that prepare them to be college and career ready. Florida aligned its adult education content standards for Adult Basic Education (ABE) to the Florida Standards. ABE standards are the grade level equivalent of K-8 of the Florida Standards. The adult education curriculum frameworks containing the aligned standards were approved by the State Board of Education in April 2015 and annual revisions to the frameworks are made.

At the secondary level, adult high school credit programs implement the same course descriptions and standards as those used in the K-12 educational system and adult students participate in the same statewide assessment program measuring student mastery of the Florida Standards. GED® preparation courses are a component of Florida's adult secondary level programming aligned to Florida's evidenced-based standards.

A high school equivalency diploma is issued to candidates who successfully demonstrate competency in language arts (reading and writing), mathematics, science and social studies. The assessment used for the diploma program is the 2014 GED® Test, which was selected through a competitive procurement to select a single assessment product for high school equivalency. The competitive process included a review of assessment content for alignment with Florida's Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, social studies and science content. The review process confirmed alignment of the assessment with challenging academic standards. The current contract period for using the assessment ran through December 2017 and may be extended through December 2020 on an annual basis. All high school equivalency diploma state curriculum is aligned to content standards

for this assessment. Future competitive procurements require the assessment be based upon Florida's academic content standards for high school graduates.

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.

In accordance with Section 231 under Title II Adult Education and Literacy Act of WIOA, the DCAE awards multi-year grants to eligible providers of adult education services through a continuation process for 2016-2017 and a competitive process for 2017-2018 in early spring of 2017. This includes awarded grant projects funded under Section 225 - Corrections and Other Institutionalized. Family literacy programs are optional. 13 considerations are incorporated into the state's RFPs to ensure the state complies with each element. Applicants are evaluated on their ability to meet literacy needs of the area, their ability to comply with WIOA expectations, past performance of the entity in providing literacy instruction and meeting programmatic goals. Decisions about course offerings are made depending on local need.

DCAE identifies, assesses and awards multi-year grants to eligible providers who are organizations that demonstrate effectiveness in providing adult education activities including a/an:

- Local education agency;
- Community-based or faith-based organization;
- Volunteer literacy organization;
- Institution of higher education;
- Public or private nonprofit agency;
- Library; a public housing authority;

- Nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and literacy services;
- Consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; and
- Partnerships between an employer and an entity described above.

Adult General Education Programs and Courses

Standards for each course are reviewed annually, updated and submitted to the State Board of Education for approval. If major modifications are required, these recommendations are outlined in the change document and posted on the FDOE website notifying stakeholders of changes to standards or courses.

Each course lists content standards used by local programs for a program's curriculum development process. Standards provide guidance for new instructors with limited training in teaching adults enrolled in adult basic classes. The standards inform what should be taught in the classroom. To assist with the implementation of these standards, professional development is provided through local face-to-face workshops and webinars. The curriculum frameworks are available at http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/adult-edu/2017-2018-adult-edu-curriculum-framewo.stml

Figure 8.01 - Adult General Education Programs and Courses

Adult Basic Education (language arts, mathematics and reading) Program

Courses in this program are designed for students to obtain a level of educational instruction intended to improve the employability of the state's workforce through instruction in mathematics, reading, language and workforce preparation skills at grade level equivalency of 0-8.9. These courses are based on the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education.

Adult High School Program

This program is designed for students to receive high school credit in one or more courses leading to a standard high school diploma. Students obtain credits upon completion of courses and passing state mandated assessments necessary to qualify for a high school diploma. Except as provided elsewhere in law (section 1003.4282, (7)(b)(1-3), Florida Statute), graduation requirements for adults are the same as those for secondary students.

GED® Preparation Program

This program prepares adults to successfully complete the four subject area tests leading to qualification for a State of Florida High School Diploma. Four courses included are: Reasoning through Language Arts, Mathematical Reasoning, Science and Social Studies. These courses are aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards. Florida approved the GED® as the only high school equivalency test.

GED® Integrated Course

This comprehensive course includes the four courses: Reasoning through Language Arts, Mathematical Reasoning, Science and Social Studies. This course was developed for

students with simultaneous enrollment in the GED® Preparation program and a career and technical certificate program.

ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL) PROGRAM

Adult ESOL Course

The adult ESOL course is designed to improve employability of adults seeking to enter the state's workforce by acquiring communication skills and cultural competencies that enhance their ability to read, write, speak and listen in English. College and career readiness standards are included in the ESOL advanced level 6.

English Literacy for Career and Technical Education (ELCATE) Course

This course is designed for ESOL students who have a goal of enrolling in a career and technical program. Students must test at or above the High- Intermediate level for enrollment into or placement in ELCATE. The course helps prepare students for a successful transition to and completion of career and technical education.

THESE ADULT EDUCATION COURSES ARE NOT SUPPORTED WITH FEDERAL FUNDS AND ARE NOT REPORTED FOR NATIONAL REPORTING SYSTEM (NRS) PURPOSES

Citizenship Course

This course is designed to prepare students to become naturalized citizens of the United States (U.S.). For adults preparing for the citizenship test, the content includes U.S. history, government, culture and symbols, with specific emphasis on legal rights and responsibilities under the Constitution of the United States of America.

Adult ESOL College and Career Readiness Course

The purpose of this course is to improve advanced ESOL students' abilities to communicate in English, allowing them to acquire secondary level English language skills. College and career readiness standards are integrated into this course with the intention of successful transition to and completion of postsecondary education.

Adult ESOL Literacy Skills Course

The purpose of this course is to provide English language and literacy instruction for English language learning adults whose first language is not English and who are non-literate or semi-literate in their home language, enhancing their ability to communicate in English.

Adult General Education for Adults with Disabilities Course

This course is designed to provide specialized adult general education for adults with learning disabilities. Adults requiring intensive, ongoing support in their pursuit of educational instruction, literacy, workplace and life skills can participate in literacy activities to accomplish desired personal goals for employment or further education.

Applied Academics for Adult Education Course

This course is designed for students who tested at the equivalent of 9th grade and above but lack the required level of basic skills for completion of the CTE program in which they are

enrolled. Students may or may not have earned a high school diploma. These courses are updated annually to align with the secondary (9-12) college and career readiness standards.

Workforce Preparation Activities

Standards for career planning and exploration and technology (digital literacy) are included in the adult education curriculum frameworks. In coordination with advisory groups for ABE, ESOL and ASE programs, additional standards in employability skills are integrated into the adult education courses. Standards are based on the United States Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education's Framework for Employability Skills and additional resources. Webinars provide information on strategies to integrate employability skills into the classroom. All updated courses are submitted annually to the State Board of Education for approval. ABE, ESOL (advanced level 6) and GED® preparation courses are aligned with college and career readiness standards (CCRS). The learning objectives of the CCRS represent an application of skills including critical thinking, problem solving and analytical skills that prepare students for success in career and postsecondary education.

Integrated Education and Training (IET)

The state pilots and refines the integrated education and training model for Florida's Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (FICAPS) which is based on the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) model from the state of Washington. The initial pilot year included eight programs with a cohort of students simultaneously enrolled in the GED® Preparation program (GED®-i course) and a career and technical certificate program. Students learned about career ladders and earning stackable credentials. This provides options for accelerated learning to adults motivated to move ahead quickly. The goal is to increase the number of students who earn their high school diploma or equivalent and earn entry level industry recognized certification/credentials. Statewide implementation of the FICAPS occurred in phases as additional programs began their planning and design activities. Support was provided during the planning and implementation grants as funds became available.

The Division of Career and Adult Education (DCAE) promotes the development of contextualized instruction with a specific career pathway focus, career development and transition services integrated into lower levels of ABE and ESOL. This content provides adults with knowledge and skills needed to enroll in and be successful in postsecondary education. After students achieve educational functioning levels in ABE and ESOL, those without a high school diploma may simultaneously enroll in the GED® Preparation program (GED-i course) and a career and technical certificate program. Training is provided to support the development and implementation of contextualized instruction with a career focus, career exploration and planning and transition services.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education

Civics standards are integrated in the ESOL curriculum frameworks. Workshops on integrating civics activities in the ESOL program are conducted annually. Webinars on civics activities and integration strategies are available and archived on the Institute for Professional Development for Adult Educators (IPDAE) website at http://www.floridaipdae.org. The adult ESOL courses are contextualized to support transition to ABE or GED® Preparation and to postsecondary education and employment.

Professional development is provided on developing and delivering contextualized curriculum.

Special Rule

A Request for Application (RFA) and Request for Proposal (RFP) specify that no funds are to be used for activities supporting individuals under 16 years of age who are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school except that the agency may use funds for programs, services, or activities related to family literacy activities. If family literacy activities are provided, the eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with other agencies that provide programs and services not included in Title II funds. This should occur prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

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.

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.

As specified in section 225 of WIOA, the DCAE spends no more than 10 percent of the 82.5 percent of the state grant allotted to local programs for correctional education activities, Funding allocations are determined as part of the planning process for implementation of WIOA. Individuals likely to leave a correctional institution within five years of participation in the program are eligible for enrollment in adult education programs. Adult education programs offered in correctional institutions include ABE, GED® Preparation and ESOL. Individuals participate in career exploration and planning activities to develop a career and education plan based on career goals.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

1. 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.

Civics standards are integrated in Florida's ESOL curriculum frameworks. The civics content includes career information, contextualized lesson plans and workforce preparation activities. ESOL level 6 includes college and career readiness standards for reading integrated into the ESOL/EL Civics program. By integrating English literacy and civics education programs, instruction is strengthened to prepare adult learners regardless of education attained in their native country, to acquire basic skills of language acquisition and to understand legal rights and responsibilities of citizenship, civic participation and services provided by systems in the U.S. such as health, government and education. Adult educators can participate in ESOL/EL Civics regional workshops and webinars sponsored in collaboration with the IPDAE, Adult and Community Educators (ACE) of Florida and the Florida Literacy Coalition. Webinars on civics integration are available and archived on the IPDAE website at www.floridaipdae.org.

Teachers providing EL/Civics instruction are provided the FDOE "EL/Civics Teacher Handbook" which is available at the FDOE adult education website: www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/adult-edu/ resources.stml.

Local educational agencies implementing EL/Civics education grants incorporate four components of English literacy and civics education throughout the course, as found at the EL/Civics online website: www. elcivicsonline.org/ and cover EL/Civics content.

2. 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.

EL/Civics funds for local and state leadership activities are distributed through multi-year competitive and continuation local grants. Only sites with established ESOL programs are eligible to apply for EL/Civics funds. Funds are used for the integration of civics content and to support civic activities. ESOL programs follow state curriculum frameworks integrating civics-related standards. To ensure workforce preparation activities are integrated into the classroom, standards were developed and included in the adult education courses. Training

through face-to-face workshops and webinars are conducted on integration of civics and other activities into the ESOL program. EL/Civics leadership funds are used for 2016-2017 competitive grants for ESOL programs to plan, design and/or implement integrated education and training programs through Florida's Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System. The competitive grant process was conducted in the spring of 2016 and five additional grants were awarded.

During the next two years, the ESOL programs will implement contextualized curriculum with a career focus in level 5 and 6 of adult ESOL or ELCATE courses. This is the first phase in moving toward ESOL integrated education and training programs through FICAPS. The second phase includes enrolling students simultaneously in an ESOL or ELCATE courses and a career and technical certificate program. Florida was selected to participate in the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) ESOL Pro Project, sponsored by the United States Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education to train teachers in delivering contextualized career-focused instruction. This project's overall purpose is to provide training, technical assistance and resources for preparing English language learners for work and career pathways. Additional training to support this effort is provided on developing contextualized instruction for ESOL/EL Civics programs.

Career advisement activities are provided to English language learners about in-demand occupations in their communities. Local programs collaborate with the LWDBs/one-stop career centers to determine local job demand when identifying career information to share with adult students. Career-focused contextualized curriculum is implemented in the ESOL/EL Civics program. Adults are informed of services available at the local one-stop career centers including career services and job placement.

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.

The State uses leadership funds, no more than 12.5 percent, of the total grant to execute the four mandatory leadership activities and other state leadership activities described in section 223 of WIOA.

The four mandatory leadership activities are:

1. ***Alignment of adult education and literacy activities with core partners and CareerSourceFlorida partners.*** Programs submitting grant applications during a competitive or continuation grant year must submit the grant application to the local CareerSource Florida network board to ensure the activities align with the CareerSource Florida network local plan. Leadership funds were used to conduct a competitive grant process in the spring of 2016 to award grants in the amount of $25,000 to develop an integrated education and training program. Eight programs were awarded a grant in the 2015 grant process, five additional programs in 2016. Each program works closely with the local board to determine job demand when they are selecting a career pathway program that is offered by their local regional technical center or college or state college.

CareerSource Florida network career centers and adult education programs work collaboratively within their local areas; assessment and instructional services are provided

onsite at the centers. CareerSource Florida network career center staff are provided the opportunity to participate in TABE and Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) trainings conducted by the DCAE throughout the year. Many CareerSource Florida centers provide representatives directly to the adult education facility offering counseling, advice and other services improving awareness of workforce resources. The sharing of cross-referral outcomes is a priority of FDOE in supporting WIOA goals and increasing student access and achievement.

2. ***The establishment or operation of high quality professional development programs (section223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA)*** **-** The DCAE supports professional development with leadership grants to the IPDAE, Adult and Community Educators (ACE) of Florida professional organization and the Florida Literacy Coalition. IPDAE is the main professional development hub for adult education at http://www.floridaipdae.org. IPDAE provides a web-based site which allows adult educators access to various resources. These resources include, but are not limited to, electronic documents, toolkits, lessons, videos, workshops, webinars, virtual trainings, online training modules, newsletters and consistent communication outreach through an email contact database. IPDAE provides the convergence of subject matter experts, interactivity engagements, planning/coordination and a technology platform to disseminate information required for implementing adult education programs. IPDAE provides methods to measure and assess involvement and effectiveness of adult education programs through data reports, evaluations and surveys.

Regional workshops and webinars are conducted on professional development priorities identified by the professional development advisory committee, results from statewide needs assessments and the DCAE staff. Priorities identified for implementing this state plan are research-based reading strategies, integrated education and training, contextualized instruction, math training for ABE and GED® preparation and implementation of college and career readiness standards in adult education and ESOL.

The training events calendar is available at the IPDAE website. Additional training opportunities are listed on the ACE of Florida website, http://www.aceofflorida.org and the Florida Literacy Coalition (FLC) website, http://www.floridaliteracy.org. ACE conducts an annual conference for adult educators and regional workshops on ESOL and EL Civics. FLC provides training for tutors, volunteers and leadership from community-based organizations. FLC conducts an annual conference targeting adult educators, tutors and volunteers and community-based organizations.

3. ***TechnicalAssistance*** - The DCAE provides technical assistance on programmatic and data collection and reporting issues to providers through webinars, telephone inquiries and site visits. Technical assistance papers on assessment and adult high school policies are annually updated and posted on the Florida Department of Education website.

These links are:

- Adult Education Assessment Technical Assistance Paper: http://fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/adult-edu/technical-assistance-papers.stml
- Adult High School Technical Assistance Guide: http://fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/adult-edu/technical-assistance-papers.stml

Current practices with one-stop career center and provider partnerships include referrals, locating teacher and classroom at the CareerSource Florida center, or providing space for the CareerSource Florida activities in the adult education center. As part of the RFA and RFP process, eligible recipients submit their applications for review to the LWDB to ensure alignment with their plans.

Technical assistance is provided to staff and providers on using technology and distance learning options. Technology standards are included in each adult education program curriculum framework. Conferences, webinars and meetings focus on innovative use of technology in adult education classrooms. Over 50 percent of districts' and colleges' adult education programs are members of the Florida Adult and Technical Distance Learning Consortium (FATDEC).

FATDEC offerings include English Discoveries Online (ESOL), Instruction Targeted for TABE Success, AZTEC GED® (GED® Preparation) and 26 courses available for high school credit. High school courses are acquired from Florida Virtual School (K-12 system) and customized for adults. Programs make local decisions to implement additional online vendor products for ESOL, ABE and ASE.

4. **MONITORING AND EVALUATION -** In accordance with Section 223, Florida uses AEFLA State Leadership funds to monitor and evaluate the quality of and the improvement in adult education and literacy activities utilizing various means of assessment in its annual and ongoing evaluation process, including site monitoring visits, desk monitoring, program improvement processes, and performance and financial audits. The results of these processes determine program improvement actions.

Monitoring

DCAE will implement a Quality Assurance System that will assure student performance improvement, financial accountability, program quality, and regulatory compliance of local providers in accordance with federal laws and regulations, state statutes and rules, and the provisions of an approved grant award. The monitoring component of the Quality Assurance System is risk-based. Risk assessment is a process used to evaluate variables associated with workforce education grants and assign a rating for the level of risk to the FDOE and DCAE associated with each provider. In order to complete a risk assessment, certain risk factors have been identified which may affect the level of risk for each agency. A risk matrix is completed for each provider. The annual risk assessment is conducted by the quality assurance team to determine the monitoring strategy appropriate for each provider. A range of monitoring strategies includes conference calls, improvement plans, desk top self-assessment, grant reviews, etc., with the more comprehensive strategy such as an onsite visit, designated for providers deemed to be at higher risk.

Actions taken to improve quality

If non-compliance finding(s) are identified, a corrective action plan will be implemented. The corrective action plan must identify the findings and specific strategies the provider will implement to ensure finding(s) have been resolved.

Program Improvement Plan

DCAE conducts annual performance evaluations. The evaluations process is a data-driven accountability system for adult education programs. In each competition year, all awarded agencies are expected to meet at least 90 percent of the State Performance Target or demonstrate improvement for each educational functioning level (EFL). In continuing years, an Adult Education Program Improvement Plan (AEPIP) will be required if the DCAE determines that an eligible recipient failed to meet at least 90 percent of the state performance target or demonstrate improvement for each functioning level from the agency's previous year completion rates. An AEPIP will be required for each EFL that fails to meet the required standards and will be implemented starting mid-way through the second year of funding and will be a condition for year 3 award funding.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE.

There are 13 permissible state leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA. The following activities (number for permissible activity listed in WIOA) are supported with leadership funds:

The support of state or regional networks of literacy resource centers (1)

The state provides a leadership grant to support the Florida Literacy Coalition. Professional development is customized for tutors and volunteers and is available online and in-person. Support is provided to the leadership of literacy centers operating throughout the state. An annual conference is conducted. A resource center and toll-free number are available for requesting information and materials.

Developing models for integrated education and training and career pathways (4)
FICAPS includes a pilot project for students simultaneously enrolling in GED®-i preparation courses and a career and technical program. Through a competitive process, eight adult education programs were awarded $25,000 each to plan, design, or implement the program with full implementation beginning in 2016; five additional programs were awarded the following year for IELCE purposes. This model is based on Washington state's Integrated-Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST).

Professional development activities support permissible activities numbered (2), (5), (6) and (7). Curriculum frameworks (9) are updated and approved annually by the State Board of Education. Frameworks include standards aligned to the state academic standards for English language arts and mathematics.

Changes to state statutes or rules are communicated to the field through webinars, newsletters, statewide memorandums and workshops. Adult education providers are informed if changes are state imposed or federally required.

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.

Participants are surveyed after all workshops, conference presentations and webinars to evaluate and provide feedback on the activity or event. In regional workshops, changes are

made to future workshops based on feedback from participants. Programs review student data to determine if training impacted student outcomes and to determine areas additional training may be needed. The annual training plan includes state priorities, input from surveys about training needs and advice from a statewide professional development advisory committee. Survey results are reviewed with the professional development advisory committee to determine how training is best delivered; face to face or online webinars. Workshops conducted on college and career readiness are formatted for online courses which include a post-test to determine if learning objectives were met. This resource was requested by teachers, many of whom are unable to attend face to face workshops.

Best practices are identified in advisory committees which may result in webinars delivered through IPDAE or presented at an annual conference conducted by state leadership professional development providers. Data from GED® test results are reviewed to determine areas in which students may need additional instruction. Math instruction for GED® preparation and Adult Basic Education courses is a priority for regional trainings and webinars. The IPDAE website provides methods to measure and assess involvement and effectiveness of online modules, webinars and regional workshops through data reports, evaluations and surveys. All workshop and webinar registrations are online.

Once an individual creates an account in the portal, a record is kept of all professional development activities they attend. This record is available by county so administrators can review and make local professional development decisions.

Monitoring

DCAE uses various methods of assessment in its annual and ongoing evaluation process. this includes site monitoring visits, desk monitoring, program improvement processes and performance and financial audits. The results of these processes determine program improvement actions.

DCAE implemented a Quality Assurance System that ensures student performance improvement, financial accountability, program quality and regulatory compliance of local providers in accordance with federal laws and regulations, state statutes and rules and the provisions of an approved grant award.

The monitoring component of the Quality Assurance System is risk-based. Risk assessment is used to evaluate variables associated with workforce education grants and to assign a rating for levels of risk to the FDOE and DCAE associated with each provider. In completing a risk assessment, certain factors are identified which may affect levels of risk for each agency. A risk matrix is completed for each provider.

To determine the monitoring strategy appropriate for each provider, an annual risk assessment is conducted by the quality assurance team. A range of monitoring strategies includes conference calls, improvement plans, desktop self-assessments and grant reviews. More comprehensive strategies such as onsite visits are designated for providers deemed to be at higher risk.

Actions taken to improve quality

If non-compliance findings are identified, a corrective action plan is implemented. Corrective action plans must identify findings and specific strategies the provider will implement to ensure findings are resolved. DCAE conducts annual performance evaluations. The evaluations process is a data-driven accountability system for adult education programs.

All agencies awarded competitive grants are expected to meet at least 90 percent of the State Performance Target or demonstrate improvement for each educational functioning level. An Adult Education Program Improvement Plan (AEPIP) is required if the DCAE determines an eligible recipient failed to meet at least 90 percent of the state performance target or demonstrate improvement for each functioning level from the agency's previous year completion rates.

An AEPIP is required for each educational functioning level failing to meet required standards and is implemented starting in the second year of funding.

In addition to program improvement plans and other actions taken to improve quality, the following activities are available:

New Director Training

Provides new directors with information such as federal and state guidelines, data collection and NRS reporting and resources needed to administer their programs.**TABE and CASAS Training/Trainers**

Through ongoing training, a network of trained professionals ensures the uniform administration and reporting of assessments used for determining federal level gains.

Data Reporting and Program Improvement Training

Provides training on the fundamentals of the NRS. Topics include monitoring, data analysis and collection, types of data and measures, assessments, data quality and related information.

Technical Assistance

Adult education Bi-monthly calls informing adult educators of program changes, reporting announcements and opportunities to ask questions of the DCAE staff. Technical assistance papers are posted on the FDOE website.

Teacher Training

Provides information and resources to support instruction in the areas of GED® preparation, college and career readiness, career awareness and planning, career pathways, reading and math instructional strategies.

CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that

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. Yes

8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program. Yes

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.

Applicant's Organization **Florida Department of Eduction**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Pamela Stewart**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Commissioner of Education**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to OCTAE_MAT@ed.gov

ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions). 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. 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; Yes

5. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program; and Yes

6. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Yes

7. 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

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 instructions posted at https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.doc.

The Division of Career and Adult Education in the Florida Department of Education is charged with administering WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy and actively demonstrates commitment to Section 427 of GEPA through utilization of the following strategies:

Funding of Eligible Recipients - During the 2017-218 eligible applicants competed to provide AEFLA instructional services and as part of the competitive process the state considered the ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities in accordance with WIOA Section 231(e)(2). As such, applicants were required to describe the policies adopted by the eligible provider to accommodate students and staff with disabilities, including learning disabilities, as described in the American Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102) and WIOA Section 3(25). Additionally applicants were required to describe how the program would identify and provide services to students with physical, emotional, mental and learning disabilities. Responses were weighted and external evaluators assigned points based on the comprehensive nature of the responses.

Additionally eligible recipients are required (annually) to provide a concise description of the process to ensure equitable access to, and participation of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs in accordance with the guidance provided at http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.pdf and sign an assurance statement as well.

Quality Assurance and Compliance - The Division of Career and Adult Education administers quality assurance and compliance through established on-site and desk monitoring protocols. Compliance with Section 427 of GEPA is embedded in its policies and procedures (http://fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/compliance/). The purpose of monitoring is to identify the specific areas in which a provider is in compliance or non-compliance with federal law and regulations, state statutes and rules Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG), Federal Register Part III, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 2 CFR Chapter I, Chapter II, Part 200, et al. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; Final Rule. The timely identification of non-compliance provides a framework to make changes that are expected to result in programs becoming more efficient and effective. However, a comprehensive and multi-dimensional Quality Assurance and Compliance System is a foundation for continuous improvement of services and systems both internally and externally. Our commitment to excellence supports accountability, collaboration, targeted technical assistance, continuous improvement and positive systemic change.

The Quality Assurance section of the Bureau of Grants Administration and Compliance is responsible for the design, development, implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive system of quality assurance including monitoring. The role of the Quality Assurance and Compliance System is to assure financial accountability, program quality and

regulatory compliance. As stewards of federal and state funds, it is incumbent upon the Division to monitor the use of federal funds and regulatory compliance of providers on a regular basis including fidelity of Section 427 of GEPA implementation.

Evidence-Based Professional Development - The Division of Career and Adult Education implements with fidelity its commitment to Section 427 of GEPA through its statewide professional development offerings which consistently provides research-based instructional strategies for serving adults with disabilities in AEFLA funded instructional programs. The Institute for Professional Development for Adult Educators (currently administered by Indian River State College) Adult and Community Educators (ACE) of Florida professional organization, and the Florida Literacy Coalition are the approved statewide professional development providers. IPDAE is the main professional development hub for adult education at http://www.floridaipdae.org. IPDAE provides a web-based site which allows adult educators access to various resources. These resources include, but are not limited to, electronic documents, toolkits, lessons, videos, workshops, webinars, virtual trainings, online training modules, newsletters and consistent communication outreach through an email contact database. IPDAE provides the convergence of subject matter experts, interactivity engagements, planning/coordination and a technology platform to disseminate information required for implementing adult education programs. IPDAE provides methods to measure and assess involvement and effectiveness of adult education programs through data reports, evaluations and surveys. Regional workshops and webinars are conducted on professional development priorities identified by the state advisory committees for ESOL, ABE and GED/Adult High School, results from statewide needs assessments, and the DCAE staff. Priorities identified for implementing this state plan are research-based reading strategies, integrated education and training, contextualized instruction, math training for ABE and GED® preparation and implementation of college and career readiness standards in adult education and ESOL and 504 plan development.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (GENERAL)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

_____

* Sec. 102(b)(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 Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC) is pleased to be a strategic partner with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). The FRC promotes high standards and expectations for every area of service delivery by recommending best practices in policies using data driven recommendations and by sharing each councilmember's unique perspective from the constituency they represent.

The FRC applauds VR's effort to reduce the wait list under Order of Selection for individuals with the most significant (Category 1) and significant disabilities (Category 2). Although there is a current small wait list for individuals with disabilities (Category 3), we note that some of these individuals will be served through job retention if they are working and need services to maintain their employment. Although the FRC will continue to monitor the flow of individuals into the VR program as well as those exiting with successful employment and career outcomes, we congratulate VR for reducing wait times of customers as well as initiating employment related information and referral resources for those on the wait list.

We appreciate VR's enthusiasm to commit resources to web based communication platforms so that the VR Director's report and other FRC presentations can be offered to the public throughout the state rather than those who can only attend the FRC quarterly meetings in person. Advances in meeting technology are opening up a rich resource for the sharing of information and communication. VR has embraced this inclusive model. State Rehabilitation Council Recommendations The FRC offers the following robust recommendations to enhance service delivery and career achievement by individuals with disabilities.

Recommendation 1. Transition

• Promote early contact and the provision of Information and Referral (I&R) guidance for transition students.

• Expand and offer additional opportunities for pre-vocational and/or technical training for students.

• Increase communication and collaboration by VR representatives with school districts and increase participation in the education of options available to students.

• Continue to emphasize peer mentoring in Florida.

• Increase the capacity of transition service providers while encouraging self-employment and entrepreneurial options.

Recommendation 2. Job Placement Strategies

• Analyze and identify any trends in services provided under the rehabilitation engineering service category by service type and VR area.

• Continue strengthening efforts with business leaders to improve employment opportunities and meaningful careers.

• Develop a deeper understanding of customer strengths and develop tools to communicate succinctly to potential employers.

• FRC fully supports the VR initiative to obtain Worker's Compensation coverage to mirror current coverage of CareerSource Florida customers. This will remove a substantial barrier to employment and allow for increased OJT opportunities for VR and DBS customers.

• FRC applauds VR efforts to increase capacity of the number of providers using the Discovery Model. Self-employment (CBTAC) initiatives should continue to be emphasized.

• Evaluate the effectiveness of the Abilities Work Help Desk.

• Further build capacity for job customization and Innovation and Expansion projects to include unserved and underserved populations.

Recommendation 3. Mediation and Conflict Resolution

• Promote Rights education for customers and VR staff as a core principle. Collaborative discussions enhance informed choices.

Recommendation 4. Public Awareness of VR

• Develop a media campaign to share the history of VR, Florida specific services, successes and accomplishments.

• Provide an accessible online application system.

• Engage businesses as mandated partners.

Recommendation 5. Counselor Recruitment, Retention

• Actively promote advocacy curriculum that's been developed.

• Identify new ways to recruit employees while implementing long-term retention strategies.

• Continue to promote supervisor succession training.

Public Forum Summary

The FRC has spearheaded a number of technological improvements to the public forums, which are held quarterly in conjunction with the FRC meetings around the state and whenever substantive policy changes may require public input. There were 4 public forums held during State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2016-17. General areas of comment have included:

• Transportation concerns

• Customer orientation information

• Customer expectations

• Transition

• Agency hiring persons with disabilities

• Outreach to individuals who speak Spanish or Creole

• Communication with VR staff

• Veterans applying for VR services

• Small business development

• Certified Business Technical Assistance Consultants (CBTACs)

• Vendor referrals

We continue to support public access via telephone and have also offered web based communication platforms for meeting access. In addition to the aforementioned platforms, we continue to encourage in-person attendance in varying locations throughout the state.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

The FRC is required to review and analyze the effectiveness of and consumer satisfaction with VR agency functions, rehabilitation services and employment outcomes achieved by eligible individuals including the availability of health and other employment benefits. The FRC and VR contract with Market Decisions to obtain this information. The wealth of data is being used effectively by the FRC and VR to focus on specific areas of excellence for recognition as well as specific opportunities for improvement. Annual highlights from the SFY 2016-17 survey results are below.

VR customers satisfied with Florida's VR program.....82%

VR customers satisfied with the services provided by VR.....80%

VR customers satisfied with their involvement in their VR experience.....83%

VR customers who say VR staff treated them with dignity and respect.....95%

VR customers satisfied with their choice of vocational goal.....82%

VR customers who say VR staff were helpful in achieving their job goal.....88%

VR customers who say VR services they received helped them become more independent.....84%

VR customers who say VR services they received helped them become more financially independent.....80%

VR customers satisfied with what they're doing at their current job.....76%

VR customers who would tell their friends with disabilities to go to VR.....90%

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

Recommendation 1. Transition

Agency Response:

VR has recently lowered the age limit for Transition services to 14 years of age, and will include this age group in future quarterly updates to FRC. VR has many pilot projects and initiatives anticipated to create additional training and employment opportunities for students and youth, summarized below.

- There are 25 school districts currently participating in Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCA). There are currently 39 Employment Specialists working with 300 students, and this number will increase by the end of the year. We are currently revising the contract to allow for the expansion of Pre-ETS to more students with disabilities served by school districts. VR recently provided training and updated resources for school districts and VR staff.
- VR has entered into an Intensive Technical Assistance Plan (ITAP) with the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) for assistance in formalizing VR Youth Peer Mentoring processes. The ITAP will support expansion from the three county pilot to a statewide program. Recent provider recruitment efforts have identified over 50 additional providers interested in providing Youth Peer Mentoring. VR is currently offering training to staff and providers.
- VR has developed the Student Transition Activities Record (STAR) program to track and coordinate Pre-ETS service referrals. Currently, 58 of 74 districts are using the STAR program to refer students for services. VR is working with Project 10 and the Department of Education Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS) to develop ways to engage the remaining districts.
- VR has collaborated with the Florida DD Council to increase the number of Project SEARCH sites across Florida. Ten new sites were added for the 2017-18 school year, and 5 more sites are anticipated to be in place by August 2018.
- VR has made great effort to increase the number of providers for Discovery, Customized Employment, and Certified Business Technical Assistance Consultant (CBTAC) by offering more frequent training opportunities. VR will continue to provide frequent training to increase the number of providers certified to offer these services.

Recommendation 2. Job Placement Strategies

Agency Response:

- VR has provided rehab technology service data to FRC and plans to provide regular updates.
- VR Business Relations is participating with WIOA partners in the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's Integrated Business Services Cohort to improve integration of business services across workforce, education, and economic development.
- Business Relations has created opportunities for summer worksite training with business partners in the Firefighting and Construction Industries by developing a model that includes businesses, local schools, STAR and VR students, and providers. A white paper and reporting on outcomes will occur at the completion of the summer 2018 Construction program, and will be shared with FRC once released.
- VR has made great effort to increase the number of providers for Discovery, Customized Employment, and CBTAC (self-employment) by offering more frequent training opportunities. VR will continue to provide frequent training to increase the number of providers certified to offer these services.
- In the past year, VR has developed contracts for 5 Innovation and Expansion projects, and will keep FRC informed on their status. The upcoming Comprehensive

Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) will help VR further identify unserved and underserved populations.

Recommendation 3. Mediation and Conflict Resolution

Agency Response:

- VR agrees with FRC in the importance of rights education and includes it in training required of all VR staff. VR is currently developing a new ethics course specific to VR and its customers. In addition, VR currently requires staff to complete training on confidentiality procedures, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Disability Etiquette, and Auxiliary Aids. VR has redesigned its customer orientation process, VR Works!, to ensure focus on customer rights and responsibilities within the rehab process.

Recommendation 4. Public Awareness of VR

Agency Response:

- VR would appreciate hearing FRC's ideas and suggestions for a marketing plan, but recommends waiting until after the CSNA is completed to discuss this, as the CSNA may influence targeted marketing segments.
- VR agrees with the recommendation of an accessible, online application, but at this time, IT resources are not available for this project.
- While VR cannot mandate businesses to be partners, the VR Business Relations Program places great priority on establishing partnerships with businesses to create new and increased job opportunities for VR customers.

Recommendation 5. Counselor Recruitment, Retention

Agency Response:

- VR is in agreement with all aspects of the Counselor Recruitment and Retention recommendation and has every intention to continue these activities.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

Florida VR did not reject any SRC input or recommendations. All responses are included above.

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;

Overview

The Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) provides services throughout the state, including Transition Youth services that expand and improve Vocational Rehabilitation options for eligible customers. VR has entered into Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCA) with some local school districts, but services are not currently available in all areas of the state. TPCA and other VR Transition Youth services align with the Pre-Employment Transition Services required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The State Plan cannot assure that the expanded services provided through the TPCAs will be available in all political subdivisions (school districts) of the state. A Waiver of Statewideness is requested in this State Plan.

Types of Services Provided

School and Community-Based Transition Services for Students with Disabilities

On an annual basis, VR has offered new TPCAs to all school districts in the state of Florida. Although VR approaches and offers TPCA to all districts, the partnership is dependent on the individual district's decision to participate. VR currently has TPCAs with 25 school districts and these arrangements expire in June 2018. VR is in the process of revising the contractual agreement it offers to school districts, but new contracts have not been developed yet. Once developed, if the contract changes the way VR delivers Transition services, the State Plan will be amended as needed. The one-year arrangement will provide community-based work experiences to eligible students who have Supported Employment (SE) service needs identified in their Individual Educational Plan and Individualized Plan for Employment. This model reimburses school districts for services provided to VR-eligible students with the most significant disabilities and facilitates a seamless transition into postsecondary employment with supports.

On-the-Job Training (OJT), through VR providers, delivers needed community-based work experiences to VR-eligible students who do not require the intense supports provided through the TPCA. OJT services are available statewide.

Written Assurances

VR assures the Rehabilitation Services Administration that it has TPCAs with certain school districts and will provide written assurances as required. Specifically, each arrangement is formalized through the contract procurement process and contains the following:

1. The local school district will certify to VR that funds used for match funds are non-federal and are not used for match in any other federally- or state-assisted project or program.

2. VR approval will be obtained for all TPCA services.

3. All local school districts with TPCAs will abide by the state's Order of Selection policy.

4. TPCA services are services not typically provided by local school districts, and TPCA services are only available to persons applying for, or already receiving VR services.

5. All other state plan requirements, including those found in the WIOA Unified State Plan, will apply to all services provided under the scope of the arrangement.

6. Program expenditures and employees providing services under the cooperative arrangement are under the administrative supervision of VR.

Third Party Cooperative Arrangement

During state fiscal year 2017-18, VR has arrangements with the following school districts:

1. Bay
2. Bradford
3. Calhoun
4. Citrus
5. Columbia
6. Flagler
7. Franklin
8. Gadsden
9. Gulf
10. Hendry
11. Indian River
12. Jefferson
13. Leon
14. Liberty
15. Manatee
16. Nassau
17. Pinellas
18. Polk
19. Putnam
20. Seminole
21. South Tech Charter
22. St. Johns
23. Taylor
24. Volusia
25. Wakulla

The current arrangements will expire on June 30, 2018. VR is in the process of revising the contractual agreement it offers to school districts, but new contracts

have not been developed yet. Once developed, if the contract changes the way VR delivers Transition services, the State Plan will be amended as needed.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

Noted above in Assurance 2.

3. ALL STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS WILL APPLY

requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

Noted above in Assurance 5.

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 Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) maintains cooperative agreements with agencies and other entities not carrying out activities under the Workforce Investment System. The state of Florida no longer participates in the National Rural Development Program. A description of current VR partners and agreements is below.

The Able Trust

The Able Trust, also known as the Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation, is a 501(c)(3) public-private partnership foundation established by the Florida Legislature in 1990. Its mission is to be a leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment. The Able Trust assists community organizations throughout the state to help thousands of Floridians with disabilities enter the workforce. They accomplish this by administering grants, as well as supporting educational and public awareness programs. The Able Trust youth programs provide career development and transition to many students with disabilities annually, helping to reduce the dropout rate and prepare young adults for life beyond high school. The Able Trust submits its budget, annual report, audit, and any changes to the Articles of Incorporation or by-laws to the Vocational Rehabilitation director annually for review and VR provides necessary certification, as required.

Agency for Persons with Disabilities

The cooperative agreement between the Agency for Persons with Disabilities and VR contains a detailed and specific focus on collaborative planning and funding of Supported Employment services. Specifically, the agreement addresses the transition of secondary students to the community, to provide a seamless transition of services. The cooperative agreement includes local strategies and joint obligations for both agencies. Both agencies have a common goal of assisting eligible persons to achieve greater independence through

employment. The specific goal of this agreement is to coordinate support and services throughout the state, maintaining maximum customer satisfaction and informed choice. This agreement is currently being updated to ensure compliance with the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) regulations.

Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program, Florida Department of Health

VR and the Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program have agreed to expand referrals between the two agencies in order to improve employment outcomes for persons with a traumatic brain or spinal cord injury. The effort will include joint statewide training for those involved in the project and identification of local referral liaisons.

Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology, Inc.

VR and the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology, Inc. agree to share specific information about their customers to optimize service delivery. Both agree to specific procedures that facilitate the delivery of services to their respective and mutual customers. Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology offers an Alternative Financing Program for the purchase of assistive technology to all residents of Florida who have disabilities.

Florida Independent Living Council, Inc.

VR coordinates with Florida Independent Living Council, Inc. (FILC), and the Centers for Independent Living throughout the state. Through memoranda of agreement with each of the 16 Centers, VR provides funding, outlines roles and responsibilities, and ensures cooperative planning. VR and the Division of Blind Services (FDBS) are both partners in the agreement with FILC, and both provide funds for council activities outlined in the agreement.

Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind

VR and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind agree to cooperate in serving students and customers who are deaf or hard of hearing, and in establishing transition meetings. Activities are implemented to increase public awareness of programs serving these customers and to improve transition between the school and local counselors.

Florida Small Business Development Center Network

Coordination with this network is carried out at the local level on a case-by-case basis. VR customers who are seeking self-employment can use a Business Planning Team. A representative from the Small Business Development Center Network can serve on such teams to help VR customers assess their potential for self-employment and analyze the various issues that need to be taken into account.

Institutions of Higher Education

VR has Memoranda of Understanding with the Presidents of Florida's public universities and the Florida College System. Both Memoranda outline the purposes, roles and responsibilities of VR and the educational institutions, as well as financial and programmatic responsibilities. The Memoranda of Understanding provides information regarding financial assistance, sharing of assessment findings, accommodations,

rehabilitation technology services, academic advisement, counseling, confidentiality, and other topics.

The Lower Muscogee Creek Tribe

The Lower Muscogee Creek Tribe is located in southern Georgia and is the recipient of the Federal Section 121 Grant under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended. There is not a 121 program in Florida. However, VR and the Lower Muscogee Creek Tribe have a Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate services for eligible Native Americans with disabilities residing on or near the Lower Muscogee Creek Tribe Tama Reservation within a 150-mile radius. The agreement outlines the responsibilities of both groups, including services for joint customers and technical assistance.

Mental Health Program, Florida Department of Children and Families

VR coordinates with the state mental health authority to assist customers who have mental illnesses. One of these is participation on the Florida Assertive Community Treatment Team, a community-based, outreach-oriented method of delivering services to individuals with mental illnesses coordinated by the Mental Health Program. VR provides staff liaisons with many of these teams to help serve this group of customers in a comprehensive manner. In addition, VR is an active member of the State Mental Health Planning Council of Florida. The cooperative agreement promotes coordination so that appropriate services can be delivered to maximize customer choice and satisfaction. This agreement is currently being updated to ensure compliance with new WIOA regulations.

Division of Blind Services (FDBS), Florida Department of Education

Both VR and FDBS serve individuals with visual impairments. This agreement specifies the roles and responsibilities of each division, including those for individuals with one-eye pathology, bilateral visual impairment, multiple disabilities, and for individuals who are deaf-blind.

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Florida Department of Education; Division of Blind Services; Florida Department of Health; Department of Economic Opportunity

The Florida Interagency Agreement for the Transfer of Assistive Technology, signed in 2006, establishes a framework for an efficient transition of technology as individuals with disabilities move through the continuum from educational services to employment. Specifically, the agreement ensures children and youth with disabilities and their families, educators, and employers are informed about the continued use and transfer of assistive technology devices. These devices may remain with the person as he or she moves from home to school and to post-school activities in order to assist in meeting transition needs. The agreement outlines the conditions for coordination, the authority for transfer of property by local education agencies, financial responsibilities, and other topics.

Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, Employment Standards Administration

Both agencies agree to further the common goal of providing VR equal employment opportunities and protecting against discrimination. VR will provide expertise on matters relating to disability issues and employment, cross-referral of individuals with disabilities,

and will participate in interagency training programs, staff meetings, and conferences. Both agencies agree to a coordinated public outreach effort.

Rehabilitation Foundation of Northwest Florida

The purpose of this agreement is to maximize funding of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with physical disabilities residing in northwest Florida. The Foundation contributes $25,000 to VR toward meeting its non-federal funding requirements. In turn, VR will allocate an additional $92,250 in federal funds to match the Foundation's contribution for vocational rehabilitation services in the following northwest Florida counties: Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton. The intent of these cooperative efforts is to increase the services leading to quality competitive employment outcomes that are responsive to the strengths, resources, interests, and capabilities of individuals with disabilities residing in northwest Florida. VR agrees to provide quarterly reports of expenditures to the Foundation's Trustees. Each report will include the number of individuals served and a description of services provided under the terms of the agreement.

Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Act

One of VR's ongoing objectives for the Ticket to Work Program is to increase the number of partnerships with Employment Networks (Employment and Rehabilitation Service Providers). VR hopes to expand the resources available to customers to meet the current and future levels of demand. It is also the goal of VR to ensure that customers have a choice in service providers available within their communities. VR has also implemented an Employment Network Referral Partnership that creates more opportunity to develop partnerships with Employment Networks. The partnership features a transitional approach by assisting Social Security Administration customers in their efforts to achieve self-sufficiency through core VR services followed by ongoing support services from employment networks. VR will continue to monitor the Agreement's effectiveness in meeting the previously stated goal.

United States Department of Veterans Affairs

The need to serve Florida veterans who have disabilities led to the development of an agreement between the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and VR. The agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of VR and the Department of Veterans Affairs. It clarifies which agency can provide specific services. It also includes information regarding shared planning, joint activities, and coordination.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Florida Department of Education; Division of Blind Services; Florida Department of Health; Department of Economic Opportunity The Florida Interagency Agreement for the Transfer of Assistive Technology, signed in 2006, establishes a framework for an efficient transition of technology as individuals with disabilities move through the continuum from educational services to employment. Specifically, the agreement ensures children and youth with disabilities and their families, educators, and employers are informed about the continued use and transfer of assistive technology devices. These devices may remain with the person as he or she

moves from home to school and to post-school activities in order to assist in meeting transition needs. The agreement outlines the conditions for coordination, the authority for transfer of property by local education agencies, financial responsibilities, and other topics. Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology, Inc. VR and the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology, Inc. agree to share specific information about their customers to optimize service delivery. Both agree to specific procedures that facilitate the delivery of services to their respective and mutual customers. Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology offers an Alternative Financing Program for the purchase of assistive technology to all residents of Florida who have disabilities.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

The state of Florida no longer participates in the National Rural Development Program.

4. NONEDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

Florida Independent Living Council, Inc.

VR coordinates with Florida Independent Living Council, Inc. (FILC), and the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) throughout the state. Through memoranda of agreement with each of the 16 Centers, VR provides funding, outlines roles and responsibilities, and ensures cooperative planning. The CILs provide services that include work readiness and financial literacy training, which are available to out—of—school youth. VR and the Division of Blind Services (FDBS) are both partners in the agreement with FILC, and both provide funds for council activities outlined in the agreement.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

Prison Rehabilitative Industries and Diversified Enterprises, Inc. (PRIDE)

VR uses the services and manufactured items produced in correctional work programs through PRIDE. PRIDE is a Florida corporation that provides these goods and services as a state—use contracting program. A similar product or service of comparable price and quality, found necessary for use by a state agency, may not be purchased from a source other than PRIDE. In addition, contracts between VR and any private vendor require all items be purchased through PRIDE. This is consistent with Section 946.515, Florida Statutes.

D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

Describe:

1. DSU'S PLANS

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.

The Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding in January 2016 to coordinate transition services with state education officials based on new procedures required for the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This was an interim measure while the state awaited the publishing of final regulations before updating the State Interagency Agreement to coordinate transition services for students with disabilities. It is a state-level agreement, including agencies charged with providing transition services to students leaving high school and going to postsecondary education, training and/or employment. The educational agencies listed below agree to meet regularly to share information, ideas, and current initiatives, collaborate on training and special projects, cooperate in planning and budgeting, and generally support any areas of work that are mutually beneficial. These agencies include:

Florida Department of Education:

- Division of Public Schools (DPS)
- Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS)
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
- Division of Blind Services (FDBS)

This formal interagency agreement serves as a transition services model for improved collaboration, communication, coordination, and cooperation among local education agencies and local offices of VR and FDBS.

VR has dedicated five program staff to administer the VR Transition Youth program. An administrator serves as the liaison for the 67 school districts and a Deaf and Hard of Hearing administrator provides additional liaison support for the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind.

Administrators coordinate and plan for effective transition services delivery with VR staff and external stakeholders statewide. The VR Transition Youth program is responsible for training internal employees and making presentations about VR transition services at conferences statewide in an effort to increase understanding and awareness of the agency's role in assisting eligible students with disabilities.

Additionally, the VR Transition Youth program provides transition-related technical assistance to the Florida Rehabilitation Council. An administrator serves as a representative on the State Secondary Transition Interagency Committee and works closely with the regional representatives of Project 10: the Transition Education Network. Project 10 is funded through a grant from BEESS to the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg. Project 10 helps Florida school districts and stakeholders increase their ability to provide secondary transition services to students with disabilities in order to improve their academic success and postsecondary outcomes. Project 10 helps implement secondary transition services, interagency collaboration, transition legislation and policy, and student development and outcomes. VR counselors serving transition students participate in each area's local interagency councils. The interagency councils are a collaborative effort between VR and Department of Education partners, public high schools, adult service agencies, workforce programs, parents, students, advocates, and employers working together to meet the transition needs of students with disabilities.

The VR Director or designee serves on the State Advisory Committee (SAC) for the Education of Exceptional Students. This committee is administered by BEESS. The SAC includes parents of children with disabilities, individuals with disabilities, educators and administrators from secondary and postsecondary institutions as well as foster care and juvenile justice representatives. The SAC also includes representatives of various state agencies that provide transition and other services to children, youth and young adults with disabilities. The committee advises the state education agency on what children with disabilities need and helps them develop corrective action plans to address findings in related federal monitoring reports. The committee also helps the state education agency develop evaluations and policies, implement policies, and report data. The committee may comment publicly on rules and regulations proposed by the state relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

The VR Transition Youth program provides individualized services to help eligible students with disabilities with a seamless transition from high school to an identified career path. Under WIOA, every student with a disability has the opportunity to participate in Pre-Employment Transition Services including sponsored career exploration, work readiness training, and work experiences. The focus is to develop work skills, practice social skills, and acquire a network of community supports while the student is still in high school.

VR services delivered under WIOA do not remove, reduce, or change the school district's responsibility to deliver a *free and appropriate public education* (FAPE) for students served under the auspices of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. VR services supplement, but do not supplant services delivered through the school districts.

The VR Transition Youth program collaborates with education officials and partners to offer youth with the most significant disabilities opportunities to gain work experiences that help them prepare for successful employment. Collaborations such as Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCA), High School High Tech, Project SEARCH, and Inclusive Postsecondary Education (IPSE) programs engage youth in experiences that blend academics with career and technical education. They also provide hands-on career exploration and preparation activities where learned skills, attitudes, and behaviors can be applied. These evidence-based applications of learning, which includes internships and community based work experiences, often lead to successful employment. For some students, these programs include earning postsecondary credentials which allow them to explore professional jobs that may lead to higher-wage careers. VR involvement in these collaborations provides funding for participants to receive needed services and other supports. This shared support helps partner programs serve more youth. VR partnerships deliver career development and employment options through direct services to youth who would not otherwise have access to these opportunities.

VR encourages early referral and application for transition students during high school so that they may receive Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and better coordinate with local education agencies. Pre-ETS includes Career Exploration and Counseling, Work Readiness Training, Work Experiences, Postsecondary Educational Counseling, and Self-Advocacy Training, including Peer Mentoring. Students with disabilities may receive Pre-ETS through the VR STAR program without the need to apply or to be determined eligible. Students who require additional VR services or supports may still obtain Pre-ETS while applying to VR. VR brochures describe how students and families can access Pre-ETS or

other VR services beginning at age 14 and beyond. Students with disabilities who are at high risk for dropping out of school may be referred at any age. This early referral process allows the counselor to develop a rapport with the transition student and family, explore vocational options and comparable benefits, and begin necessary guidance and counseling.

Provisions for Development and Approval of Individualized Plans for Employment for Students with Disabilities

The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), Supported Employment IPE, Individual Support Plan, and/ or Care Coordination Plans are completed or updated as early as possible prior to graduation or leaving school to allow a seamless transition to a student's desired postsecondary outcome.

VR counselors, with assistance from VR technicians, serve as representatives to work with all public high schools statewide and any private high school requesting assistance. They provide outreach and vocational rehabilitation services orientation to students, school officials, parents, and others involved in transition services. Only the counselor may determine a student's eligibility for VR services, develop an approved IPE, and sponsor the delivery of necessary transition services to help the student with planning, preparing for, and achieving successful employment.

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;

Employment First

As an employment leader, VR strongly encourages partner agencies, organizations, and employers to promote competitive integrated employment in the community as the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities. People with disabilities who are employed experience enhanced independence and quality of life. They are also contributing to the rich diversity of the workforce so the entire community benefits. The Employment First Committee submits a report to the Governor annually, describing the coordination of participating agencies to advance the Employment First philosophy and way of work throughout Florida.

Technical Assistance and Consultation

Local education agencies are strongly encouraged to have written agreements with VR and DBS, including other agencies that offer supports or services during student transition. The agreements addresses consultation, coordination, and providing technical assistance to each other, as well as to students and their families/ guardians/surrogates to plan for the transition from high school to postsecondary activities and becoming part of the adult community.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

Local education agencies work collaboratively with VR, FDBS, APD, Children's Medical Services, and Mental Health Services in the Transition Individual Educational Plan process. Local education agencies that are considering transition services during the Individual Educational Plan meeting will invite representatives from any other agency who may be responsible for providing or paying for transition services, after obtaining permission from the parent, guardian, or age-of-majority student. If the agency representative does not attend the meeting, the school will do its best to get someone else to come. If the agency representative will not attend the meeting, the school will then look for alternative ways to provide for the student's transition needs. The local education agency must reconvene the Transition Individual Educational Plan team to identify alternative strategies for providing a student's transition needs if an agency fails to do so.

In order to plan effective transition services for students with disabilities, it is essential that all invited partner agencies encourage and support participation in the Transition Individual Educational Plan (IEP) process.

VR invests 35-40 percent of its statewide staffing resources in transition services to serve students with disabilities in Florida's 67 school districts and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind. Additional improvements to the rehabilitation information management and billing systems are being implemented to improve the collection and analysis of transition student data. Several of these additional data enhancements were implemented to simultaneously meet WIOA requirements. The enhancements will enable VR to conduct differential analysis to better evaluate agency performance and identify how to best improve service delivery and outcomes for students with disabilities.

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 roles and responsibilities for each partner agency as required by federal and state regulations are as follows:

1. Local education agencies provide a *Free and Appropriate Public Education* for students with disabilities, including preparation for transition from school to work or other postsecondary activities.

2. VR and FDBS assist with student transition from secondary school to work through postsecondary training, education, or direct placement services necessary to achieve a successful employment outcome.

3. The Agency for Persons with Disabilities tries to "reduce the use of sheltered workshops and other noncompetitive employment day activities and promote opportunities for gainful employment for persons with developmental disabilities who choose to seek such employment," (Chapter 393, Florida Statutes). Additionally, "to promote independence and productivity, the agency shall provide support and services, within available resources, to assist customers enrolled in Medicaid waivers who choose to pursue gainful employment." If an individual is eligible for APD waiver services and employment is a needed service, then this service must be provided to meet standards as outlined in Florida rule.

4. Children's Medical Services ensures a smooth and successful transition process to adult healthcare services and providers for youth and young adults with special healthcare needs.

5. Mental Health Services, in partnership with families and the community, provides a system of care that enables children and adults with mental health or emotional disabilities to live successfully in the community, become self-sufficient or to attain self-sufficiency at adulthood, and realize their full potential. Mental health support and services enable adults and transitioning students to participate in community activities such as employment and other valued community roles.

Specific Purpose

Specific intent of the interagency agreement is to:

1. Provide guidance to the local education agencies, VR, FDBS, APD, Children's Medical Services, and Mental Health Services' front-line employees, when serving students transitioning from school to work or postsecondary activities.

2. Provide information to parents/students so they know what they can expect from the local education agencies, VR, FDBS, APD, Children's Medical Services, and Mental Health Services during the transition process.

3. Provide parameters to the local education agencies, VR, FDBS, APD, Children's Medical Services, and Mental Health Services' administrators/managers/nursing supervisors when developing, negotiating, and implementing local cooperative agreements.

4. Encourage and support the participation of all agency personnel in the IEP process at the local level through the development of guidelines, policies, and/or procedures.

Financial Responsibilities

The Department of Education, VR, FDBS, APD, Children's Medical Services, and Mental Health Services are committed to meeting financial responsibilities as required by law. Agency/Division heads for the organizations will periodically identify areas for improved programmatic and financial efficiencies and develop strategies to meet financial responsibilities, including joint appropriations requests from the state legislature and negotiations with federal agencies. Each party is financially responsible for the services it provides under its own laws and rules.

Conditions and Terms of Reimbursement

If a non-education agency fails to provide or pay for services for which they are responsible, and which are also considered special education and related services, the local education agency (or state agency responsible for developing the student's IEP) shall provide or pay for these services to the student in a timely manner. The local education agency or state agency may then claim reimbursement for the services from the non-education agency that was responsible for the provision of the services and failed to provide or pay for these services, and that agency shall reimburse the local education agency or state agency in accordance with the terms of this agreement.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

Outreach and Identification of Students

Local education agencies are strongly encouraged to enter into written agreements with VR, FDBS, APD, Children's Medical Services, and Mental Health Services employees, on the outreach methods used to inform students with disabilities who may need, and could benefit from these agencies.

Brochures, flyers, website resources, presentations, transition fairs, or informational letters are available to the local education agency, students, and their parents or guardians, to explain the role that VR and other agencies play in the transition process, and the agencies' referral and application policies and procedures.

VR has executed 25 Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCA) for SFY 2017-18. The goal of these arrangements is to create new or expand existing transition services with a vocational rehabilitation focus. The costs are shared between the agencies. In order for the cooperating agency to receive matching vocational rehabilitation dollars, it must provide a cash match of non-federal funds. Recipients of the TPCA began providing job coaching to eligible students with a Supported Employment IPE in SFY 2011. In SFY 2014, TPCA were redesigned to serve only those students with the most significant disabilities who require Supported Employment services to become employed.

The current arrangements will expire on June 30, 2018. VR is in the process of revising the contractual agreement it offers to school districts, but new contracts have not been developed yet. Once developed, if the contract changes the way VR delivers Transition services, the State Plan will be amended as needed.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(3)). Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

The Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has a variety of relationships and agreements with private non-profit organizations. These include fee based services purchased through registered vendors, contracts, and other cooperative, non-financial agreements.

All new vendors/ providers, whether through a contractual or vendor relationship, must go through a registration and approval process. VR reviews the qualifications of vendors providing services to its customers in order to ensure the quality of these services, as well as the safety of the public. In addition to approving and registering vendor/ provider services, VR conducts employment verifications on customer placements facilitated by vendors /contract providers.

VR policy ensures that customers have a choice of qualified service providers to select from. Customers are also informed if the provider has employees experienced in working with special disability populations, foreign languages, and other communication skills. Customers have a choice of necessary services, service providers, and settings in which to receive the services included in the written Individualized Plan for Employment.

Currently, VR has approximately 263 registered Employment Services Providers that deliver employment, supported employment, OJT, Pre-ETS, and other related services on a fee-for-service basis. Additionally, VR maintains the following contracts and/or agreements:

- 16 agreements with the Centers for Independent Living located throughout the state to provide independent living services
- 25 Third Party Cooperative Arrangements with local school districts
- Additional contracts with agencies for services such as delegable VR services, outreach for migrant and seasonal farm workers, interpreting services, rehabilitation engineering, and a project involving the use of virtual reality simulators for customers with severe disabilities

VR also has 5 contracts for Innovation and Expansion pilot projects to benefit and complement WIOA-related initiatives. These contracts are for various innovative opportunities that could improve employment services to and successful closures for individuals with "unique abilities," defined in Florida legislation as including individuals who have intellectual disabilities or Autism Spectrum Disorders.

VR also has collaborative, non-contractual arrangements and agreements with non-profit organizations that provide referrals, other vocational rehabilitation services, and comparable benefits. Through coordinating with Centers for Independent Living, individuals with disabilities receive life skills training, employability skills training, and support such as transportation, clothing, and emergency funds.

Relationships with organizations that serve customers with hearing impairments provide opportunities for support groups, sign language classes, and placement assistance.

Throughout the state, many VR employees serve as liaisons with specific groups and organizations. Individuals are referred to those groups if it is determined that they can benefit from their services. Services are coordinated with numerous non-profit hospitals and clinics for referrals and medical assistance. Foundations and associations such as the Easter Seals Society, Muscular Dystrophy Association, National Kidney Foundation, Brain Injury Association of Florida, Epilepsy Foundation, Family Network on Disability of Florida, and others provide individual and family support groups and disability education to mutual customers.

VR intends to continue with the above referenced contractual agreements, cooperative arrangements, and liaison relationships through FFY 2020.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(4)). 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.

The Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has cooperative agreements with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), Department of Children and Families Mental Health and Substance Abuse Program and the Department of Education.

VR is currently in the process of developing and implementing an updated Memorandum of Agreement with APD and the Agency for Healthcare Administration (AHCA) the state agency responsible for administering the State Medicaid Plan.

VR continues to be an active partner with other state agencies and organizations in implementing Employment First, a national effort to assure individuals with disabilities are offered employment as the first and preferred option in planning their lives. Employment First is consistent with VR's belief that individuals with disabilities, even the most significant disabilities, can achieve meaningful employment when provided with appropriate supports.

Executive Order 13-284 (Reaffirming Commitment to Employment for Floridians with Disabilities) was signed by the Governor of Florida in October 2013. The order mandates that an Interagency Cooperative Agreement be developed and requires nine agencies/organizations to participate in the agreement. This order has now been placed in Florida's statute.

- The Department of Education-Division of Blind Services
- The Department of Education-Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- The Department of Education-Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- The Agency for Persons with Disabilities
- The Department of Children and Families-Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- The Department of Economic Opportunity
- CareerSource Florida
- The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council
- RESPECT of Florida

Six broad-based objectives govern the Employment First Interagency Agreement. VR works closely with the partners to continue to make progress on these objectives.

1. Continue to develop and enhance Supported Employment for persons with the most significant disabilities. The state system for the provision of Supported Employment reflects: (a) mutually agreeable definitions of the services to be provided; (b) administrative responsibility of the intensive component of Supported Employment services to eligible individuals as the primary responsibility of VR for individuals with the most significant disabilities; and (c) administrative responsibility of the extended services component as the primary responsibility of other stakeholders, including APD and the Department of Children and Families, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Program.

2. Continue to improve the statewide management of Supported Employment programs by avoiding duplication of effort and funding while ensuring accountability. This process will provide a coordinated system of program development for SE services.

3. Maximize the quality of service delivery ensuring a comprehensive, continuous, efficient, and effective referral process, individual program planning, coordination of intensive

vocational services with extended services, information collection and dissemination, confidentiality, and technical assistance.

4. Identify issues, policies, and practices that present systemic barriers to effective participation of individuals with the most significant disabilities, and develop appropriate resolutions to remove such barriers.

5. Continue to implement an interagency planning process for budget coordination, which defines and projects the number of people in need of intensive and extended services for each fiscal year and facilitates program and fiscal planning.

6. Support the belief that all individuals with disabilities can work if provided appropriate services and supports and that a team approach is needed to facilitate quality and appropriate services.

Supported Employment Services

VR is responsible for the first phase of Supported Employment services. VR provides intensive vocational services until the individual and employer are satisfied with the Supported Employment placement, and then the individual transitions to a plan for extended services. Supported Employment services consist of intensive, time-limited vocational rehabilitation services (the responsibility of VR) and extended services, also known as the second phase. Funding for the second phase of services is provided by other sources that may include, but are not limited to, APD, the Department of Children and Families' Mental Health and Substance Abuse Program, natural supports or other identified funding sources.

Extended Services

The purpose of extended services is to maintain the individual in SE that is competitive and integrated, enhance the individual's involvement in the workplace culture, and provide supports for career advancement. The nature of services provided during the intensive and extended phases may be similar to the initial services provided by VR but will differ in intensity.

VR and its partners continuously seek alternative methods (e.g. social security incentives, natural supports, etc.) to provide extended services. VR has encouraged Supported Employment providers to focus on developing natural supports and to encourage employers to act in a support role since this will often occur naturally in the labor market.

VR is now authorized to fund Extended Services for youth with the most significant disabilities for a time period of up to four years, if necessary, and funding permits. Allowances would be made for individuals who, while receiving extended services, require additional intensive services through VR because they have destabilized on the job. When appropriate, VR will again assume the responsibility and cost of providing intensive vocational services, including necessary job-related support services.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(5)). Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

1. VR SERVICES; AND

The Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has formalized a Business Relations Program, with the vision to build and sustain partnerships with business and industry through effective services that are driven by the needs of employers. These partnerships will lead to competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for VR customers, including those receiving pre-employment transition services.

Efforts are underway in the Business Relations Program to define and customize services to employers, create strategic partnerships to support workforce needs, and establish an employment-focused culture within the rehabilitation process. Listed below are the program's goals, objectives, and strategies.

Goal 1: Become the foremost recognized and trusted resource for employers' disability inclusion needs.

Objective: Increase the number of employers engaged as business partners.

Strategies:

1. Develop and use a standard business needs assessment.

2. Develop and use a business customer satisfaction tool.

3. Staff and train a team that is responsive to business. The team includes: the program administrator; a senior VR consultant; a business projects specialist; and 11 business relations representatives located across the state in each of VR's seven administrative areas.

4. Implement a business customer relationship management tool.

5. Define the services offered to employers and customize them to meet business needs.

6. Create statewide consistency in business relations outreach and services.

7. Use targeted marketing to engage employers across multiple industries.

8. Participate in business-led organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce, US Business Leadership Network, etc.

9. Create strategic practices that can be replicated.

10. Align services with the Workforce Development Boards and other community partners.

11. Participate in the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation's National Employment Team (NET) and the NET-Southeast regional team to share referrals and best practices.

12. Engage with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core partners to share best practices.

Goal 2: Become a top resource for employers in need of qualified employees.

Objective: Increase referrals of qualified applicants to business partners.

Strategies:

1. Facilitate direct access to qualified applicants through business relationships.

2. Market career opportunities internally to VR staff.

3. Use the AbilitiesWork Help Desk for applicant-matching services for employers.

4. Coordinate support services provided by VR contractors.

5. Provide a seamless connection to VR services and qualified applicants across a company's footprint locally, regionally, statewide, and nationally through the NET.

6. Engage in local talent pool coordination with other agencies to meet businesses' workforce needs.

7. Participate with the NET and the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) to create increased opportunities for VR jobseekers and employers recruiting VR jobseekers.

8. Collaborate with business to create a pipeline of qualified candidates.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

Goal 3: Expand career opportunities for VR candidates.

Objective: Prepare ready-to-work applicants for in-demand careers and jobs that are available now.

Strategies:

1. Meet with business and industry to assess workforce needs to better align training with those needs.

2. Communicate information from employers about business needs and qualification requirements to VR staff.

3. Engage in sector partnerships.

4. Provide information to VR staff about in-demand jobs and high growth industries and sectors using labor market information.

5. Collaborate with business and education to determine industry recognized training opportunities and inform VR staff about them.

6. Collaborate with WIOA core partners to share resources and best practices.

7. Generate opportunities for worksite training, including pre-employment transition services such as work-based learning experiences, with business partners.

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;

VR is in the process of developing and implementing a cooperative agreement with the state agency responsible for administering the State Medicaid Plan (AHCA) and the agency

primarily responsible for providing services to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (APD). This agreement will specifically focus on Supported Employment services and the roles and responsibilities for coordinating these services on a state wide basis.

The purpose of the agreement is to establish a framework, including terms and conditions that will guide collaborative efforts to advance the development, improvement, and expansion of opportunities for competitive integrated employment as the first and preferred option for persons with significant disabilities.

The agreement will formalize the collaborative processes that have been implemented to improve employment outcomes for mutual customers. It will focus on coordinating efforts in interagency planning, referrals, informed choice, cross and joint training as well as the provision of technical assistance.

The agreement endorses a shared philosophy with a common set of guiding principles. These principles include but are not limited to the following:

- All programs, projects, and activities will be person-centered and include respect for individual dignity, self-determination, pursuit of meaningful careers, and informed choice.
- Reliance on and pursuit of evidence-based best, promising and emerging practices.
- The use of qualified staff to facilitate the achievement of competitive integrated employment.
- Establishment of a referral process for mutual customers.
- To clearly define and clarify boundaries between the VR and APD programs to ensure the complimentary provision of employment services and promote timely access for persons with the most significant disabilities.

In addition to these collaborations, VR works in partnership with local education agencies and partners to offer youth with the most significant disabilities opportunities to gain work experiences that help them prepare for successful employment.

Collaborations such as High School/ High Tech (HSHT), Project SEARCH, Third Party Cooperative Agreements and Postsecondary Education programs engage youth in experiences that blend academics with career and technical education. They also provide hands-on career exploration and preparation activities where learned skills, attitudes, and behaviors can be applied. These evidence-based applications of learning, which includes internships and other work experiences, often lead to successful employment with appropriate supports.

For some students, these programs include earning postsecondary credentials which allow them to explore professional jobs that may lead to higher-wage careers. VR involvement in these collaborations provide funding for participants to receive services and other supports needed to prepare for and maintain employment. This shared support helps partner programs serve more youth. VR partnerships deliver career development and employment options through direct services to youth who would not otherwise have access to these services.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

VR is working closely with APD to develop competitive integrated employment alternatives for individuals receiving services in a segregated setting. VR will provide technical assistance and support as APD expands these program options. Under WIOA requirements, VR will provide or coordinate information and education for individuals receiving services in sheltered workshops receiving subminimum wages.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

VR collaborates with the Florida Department of Children and Families Mental Health and Substance Abuse Program to improve and increase employment opportunities for people with mental illness. Part of this collaborative work is conducted through a formalized Employment First agreement, while other coordination occurs during a customer's transition from the initial and intense Phase of Supported Employment to the ongoing and extended service phase of Supported Employment services.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.10)). Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

1. DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS.

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

i. the number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

Assurance of an adequate supply of qualified rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessional personnel is the major driver for the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's (VR) Human Resource Development Section. Data from numerous sources is used to determine current and projected needs, as well as VR's progress toward meeting them. The table below includes VR personnel and turnover data for SFY 2016-17, and projected staffing requirements for SFY 2017-18. It should be noted that positions are vacated for many reasons, including termination, promotion, lateral position transfers, or retirement. VR continues to employ strategies to address turnover as well as develop and prepare staff for advancement opportunities.

Personnel Category*	Number of Personnel, as of 10/1/17	Turnover Rate for SFY 2016-17	**Projected Staffing Needs for SFY 2017-18

Personnel Category*	Number of Personnel, as of 10/1/17	Turnover Rate for SFY 2016-17	**Projected Staffing Needs for SFY 2017-18
Counselor Staff	381	30%	114
Staff Supporting Counselor Activities	320	15%	48
Administrative Staff	191	18%	34
Total Full-time Equivalents	892	N/A	N/A
Contracted Counselor Staff	74	N/A	N/A
Total Contracted Field Staff	148	N/A	N/A

*Categories are based on RSA-2 Report definitions, and positions included in each category.

**This number is an annual average derived by multiplying the number of positions for the job category by the percentage of vacated positions.

Staffing needs for Transition Youth Program counselors remains consistent with overall counselor staffing projections. When factoring in population growth, the projected five-year staffing needs are slightly higher than noted above, but would require that VR be provided with additional FTEs.

The state's automated People First personnel system maintains employment histories to help project human resource needs. The state continues to make available a deferred retirement option program (DROP) that allows individuals to continue working for the state for five years beyond their original retirement date. Because it is impossible to anticipate how many individuals will accept the deferral option, projecting future employment needs is difficult. However, it is known that there are currently 58 individuals in DROP, 62 individuals with 30 or more years of service, and 110 individuals over the age of 62.

VR collects data from the Rehabilitation Information Management System (RIMS) to calculate the counselor- customer ratio. This is another tool for assessing current and projected staffing needs. The average counselor-customer caseload is 1:97 in relation to assisting customers from the application phase to case closure. This ratio is based on both regular counselor positions and contracted counselor positions.

VR uses People First and RIMS data, as well as internal reports, to obtain:

- The number and classification of authorized positions for each local unit and state headquarters in relation to the number of individuals served
- The number and classification of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services

- The projected number and classification of personnel who will be needed in five years to provide vocational rehabilitation services
- The state institutions of higher education that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by program type
- The number of students in each of these institutions, by program type
- The number of students graduating from each program and the credentials they have received

In order to ensure the continuity of quality rehabilitation services and to address employee vacancies and turnover in particularly difficult to fill geographic areas, VR has contracted for employees. The contracts ensure that qualified personnel are hired to provide necessary rehabilitation services. A VR counselor/ analyst reviews each case and performs/ authorizes administrative activities that federal regulations (34 CFR 361.13) specify are the responsibility of VR, and cannot be delegated to private providers. These activities include:

- All decisions affecting eligibility for VR, the nature and scope of available services and the provision of these services, and the suspension, reduction, and termination of these services
- The determination to close the records of services of an individual who has achieved an employment outcome
- Policy formulation and implementation
- Allocation and expenditure of VR funds
- Participation as a partner in the CareerSource Florida service delivery system

ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

Personnel Category*	Number of Personnel, as of 10/1/17	Turnover Rate for SFY 2016-17	**Projected Staffing Needs for SFY 2017-18
Counselor Staff	381	30%	114
Staff Supporting Counselor Activities	320	15%	48
Administrative Staff	191	18%	34
Total Full-time Equivalents	892	N/A	N/A
Contracted Counselor Staff	74	N/A	N/A
Total Contracted Field Staff	148	N/A	N/A

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.

Staffing needs for Transition Youth Program counselors remains consistent with overall counselor staffing projections. When factoring in population growth, the projected five-year staffing needs are slightly higher than noted above, but would require that VR be provided with additional FTEs.

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;

Described in the following table is information from institutions of higher education in Florida that prepare vocational rehabilitation professionals, categorized by institution and type of program.

Institution, Program Type and Degree	Students Currently Enrolled	VR/RSASponsored Employees	VR/RSASponsored Graduates	Previous Year Graduates
Florida Atlantic University- Graduate-level Rehabilitation Training Program; MEd and PhD	MEd- 30 PhD- 3	MEd- 0 PhD- 0	MEd- 0 PhD- 0	MEd- 6 PhD- 0
Florida International University- Rehabilitation Counseling Program; MS in Counselor Education	MS- 12	MS- 0	MS- 2	MS- 2
University of South Florida- Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling Program; MA	MA- 136	MA- 1	MA- 7	MA- 40

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

Institution, Program Type and Degree	Students Currently Enrolled	VR/RSASponsored Employees	VR/RSASponsored Graduates	Previous Year Graduates
Florida Atlantic University- Graduate-level Rehabilitation Training Program; MEd and PhD	MEd- 30 PhD- 3	MEd- 0 PhD- 0	MEd- 0 PhD- 0	MEd- 6 PhD- 0
Florida International University- Rehabilitation Counseling Program; MS in Counselor Education	MS- 12	MS- 0	MS- 2	MS- 2
University of South Florida- Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling Program; MA	MA- 136	MA- 1	MA- 7	MA- 40

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.

Institution, Program Type and Degree	Students Currently Enrolled	VR/RSASponsored Employees	VR/RSASponsored Graduates	Previous Year Graduates

Institution, Program Type and Degree	Students Currently Enrolled	VR/RSASponsored Employees	VR/RSASponsored Graduates	Previous Year Graduates
Florida Atlantic University- Graduate-level Rehabilitation Training Program; MEd and PhD	MEd- 30 PhD- 3	MEd- 0 PhD- 0	MEd- 0 PhD- 0	MEd- 6 PhD- 0
Florida International University- Rehabilitation Counseling Program; MS in Counselor Education	MS- 12	MS- 0	MS- 2	MS- 2
University of South Florida- Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling Program; MA	MA- 136	MA- 1	MA- 7	MA- 40

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.

VR maintains close relationships with universities including minority institutions such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities and disability-specific organizations. VR employees collaborate with universities in securing grant funding, invite university employees to help with training and education activities, and provide practicum and internship slots for students.

VR acknowledges that it will not be able to recruit an adequate number of qualified rehabilitation counselors to replace those retiring and departing for other reasons. VR is

currently engaged in the activities indicated below to address recruitment, preparation, and retention of counselors.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 34 CFR 361.18(c) 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

There is not a state-approved or recognized certification, licensure, or registration of Vocational Rehabilitation counselors. VR, in conjunction with the Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC) established the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) educational eligibility requirement as its standard.

Efforts are made to recruit and hire counselors who meet the CRC educational eligibility status. If VR is unsuccessful in finding enough qualified applicants, it will accept those who meet the minimal initial standard for providing counseling and guidance services. The individual(s) must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited university and one year of experience counseling individuals with disabilities. Alternative majors other than social, behavioral, or rehabilitative science may be considered along with the minimum qualification requirements for the position. When evaluating the suitability of alternative majors, the hiring authority should consider the major area of study's applicability to the required knowledge, skills, and abilities. A master's degree from an accredited university in a social, behavioral, or rehabilitative science can substitute for the year of required experience.

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.

The State of Florida allows employees to use a tuition waiver to enroll in six hours (or less) of courses per semester on a space-available basis at public universities. This approach is how many counselors worked to reach the CSPD standard until fall 2006. As recently as six years ago, Florida had six Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling (MRC) programs, five of which were CORE-accredited. As of 2016, Florida now has three CACREP-accredited programs (Florida Atlantic University, the University of South Florida, and the Florida International University).

In recent years, VR has implemented a more aggressive approach in meeting the CSPD standard. VR employees will be encouraged to use the State of Florida Tuition Waiver program as much as possible, since it represents a significant savings to VR. A substantial portion of the in-service training grant was allocated solely to VR's CSPD activities. In-service training grant funds were used to pay tuition for individuals who could not get the

coursework they needed through the waiver program, such as those who do not live near a public university or who otherwise cannot use the waiver program. In-service training grant funds were also allocated for textbook reimbursement. The elimination of the in-service training grant to states has severely reduced VR's ability to continue support for these activities. It is not currently clear how much of the basic support grant will be available for this kind of support. The Learning and Development Office (LDO) has implemented a data system to track academic classes taken and progress toward certification eligibility.

In addition to the Florida public universities referenced above, VR uses the resources of Auburn University, Southern University, Virginia Commonwealth University, the University of Kentucky, the University of Arkansas-Little Rock, the University of West Virginia, and the University of Wisconsin-Stout, all of whom provide online Masters-level rehabilitation programs. VR also uses the resources of the University of North Texas and San Diego State through the Consortium on Distance Education in Rehabilitation. VR will continue to use additional programs, as appropriate.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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

LDO efforts will continue to be oriented toward appropriate and adequate training for all employees, with available resources allocated to the CSPD effort. Although the in-service training grant was the primary funding source for these activities, it was not the only money used to fund staff development and training activities. Supplemental funds were provided from other budget resources.

Although there has been an emphasis on helping counselors meet the CSPD standard and developing the technical, managerial, and leadership skills of supervisors and managers, VR provides staff development opportunities to employees at every level. In FFY 2017-18, LDO will train all employees of the Division in a program titled VR Works!. This program is designed to return the agency to its mission of helping people with disabilities find and maintain employment by refocusing on impediments to employment and job readiness.

VR continues to offer individual training allocations for each staff member. This allocation can be used for job-related professional development activities, such as attending conferences, purchasing books, CDs, DVDs, or other materials, taking online short courses, or any other approved professional development activity. Supervisory approval is required for these professional development activities to ensure that employees participate in activities consistent with their individual needs and job responsibilities and requirements. LDO provides consultation and technical assistance to VR employees as needed.

Florida State University offers a Certified Public Manager (CPM) program, which requires a two-year commitment. In support of leadership development, VR has developed an internal application, selection, and CPM mentoring process. VR tries to support 2-4 new candidates each year through the program, and once they obtain the CPM credential, VR works to involve staff appropriately in division-wide improvement projects. There are currently six employees from HQ and field operations enrolled in some phase of CPM.

VR purchased a learning management system (LMS) in the spring of 2013 and began implementation in May 2014. The system is named TED, for Training, Education, and Development. The system not only tracks learning participation, but also serves as a host for online learning activities for all employees.

Additionally, VR purchased licenses for WebEx for training purposes. Every effort is made to ensure that the correct medium is used to address each particular issue. The ability to deliver interactive training through the LMS greatly expands the capacity of VR to provide a more extensive and comprehensive array of learning activities for all employees.

VR produces a monthly newsletter for all employees, as well as a quarterly newsletter for supervisors to share information about what is happening in the different areas, keep them up to date on new policies and procedures, and offer articles that can help them do their jobs better.

Whether offered directly or contracted by LDO, VR's staff development and training programs are designed with the goal of maintaining a well-prepared, competent workforce equipped with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to successfully facilitate the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. VR is responsible for ensuring that employees, including contracted employees, receive necessary development and training. Accordingly, LDO includes contracted employees at all training programs.

B. ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE

procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

The Organization and Employee Support Team (OES) recently designed a new human resource information site, available through VR's SharePoint application. Using SharePoint increases the level of support and customer service provided to VR's employees, volunteers, contracted staff, supervisors, and personnel liaisons. The intent is to provide user-friendly experiences for new and existing employees. The OES Homepage provides job opportunity announcements, access to more than 900 HR forms, procedures, and policies, and a calendar of upcoming important HR dates and events.

Onboarding

Onboarding helps new personnel successfully assimilate into their new position, with a quicker ramp-up to productivity. VR wants to help all personnel be successful in their new job, get up-and-running with their new duties quickly and smoothly, and contribute to VR's success. Since VR personnel includes career service, selected exempt service/senior management service and OPS employees, as well as volunteers and contracted staff, all with differing onboarding needs, it became apparent that a one-size-fits-all approach to onboarding was not sufficient.

Based on that, OES created Onboarding resource sites specific to needs of VR's career service, selected exempt service/senior management service, and OPS employees, as well as sites specific to VR's volunteers and contracted staff. Each site provides onboarding information for the specific

personnel category, such as New Hire Paperwork that provides the new employee with all of the required hiring forms and related policies, VR Mentorship Program information, TED-Training, Education, and Development links and resources, and the Human Resources Page.

VR's Mentorship Program

A major reason why newly hired employees struggle and ultimately leave is failure to establish connections and build strong interpersonal relationships within the organization. Understanding that new employees need connection, a sense of belonging, a sense of their potential, and a need to feel valued, OES worked with various sections within VR to create a Mentorship Program.

Mentors often play an important role in making new employees feel valued, developing coworker relationships, and helping new employees feel comfortable during the first few months of employment. Each new employee, or protégé, will be assigned to a mentor for a period of up to a year. No mentor will be assigned to more than two active protégés at any one time.

The Mentorship Program is composed of two parts. The first is a comprehensive information resource site delivered through SharePoint. The site has information specific to mentors, protégés, Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), and supervisors. The second component is the Individualized Mentoring Action Plan, or IMAP. The IMAP is a software application designed specifically for the mentorship program. In the IMAP, mentors and SMEs create personalized profiles. The profiles are used to assist with assigning mentors and SMEs to appropriate protégés. The software is designed to quickly sort through hundreds of mentor and SME profiles that match the needs identified in the protégé's profile.

Human Resources Page

The Human Resources page is a one-stop information resource for VR personnel. The Human Resources page consists of six functional groups, which are further divided into subject groups, specific categories, and detailed information pages. Topics include employee rights, benefits and responsibilities, resources such as forms, procedures, and policies, and useful information about VR and state government. Most pages have embedded links to either an internal portion of the VR Intranet, or to an outside website. Each employee can then bookmark any page for easy access.

Needs Assessment and Evaluation

A bi-annual training needs assessment is conducted using information from a number of sources. These include a formal needs assessment instrument, performance evaluation data, training evaluation sheets obtained from every sponsored program, exit interviews, and supervisory input. The needs assessment data determines program development and modification.

Annual performance evaluations are conducted on each employee, with intermittent evaluation, if indicated. Performance is evaluated according to standards and goals

established at the beginning of the evaluation period. Employees are evaluated in the context of their knowledge, skills, and abilities within the field of rehabilitation, and on policy about priority of service to individuals with the most significant disabilities. If circumstances change, training and professional development activities are provided to help the employee meet his/her goal in support of VR's mission.

In-Service Training Grant (please note this grant ended on 9/30/15)

Funds were requested for the in-service training grant based on current and anticipated needs. VR continues to provide a variety of in-house training programs, including counselor training, supervisory training, policy training, new legislation, casework review training, etc.

In carrying out its staff development and training program, VR addresses several topics in its training curricula. The training curricula include (but are not limited to) modules on the following: preliminary assessment, eligibility determination, assessment, IPE development, vocational counseling (within the modules on eligibility determination and individualized plan for employment development), job placement, rehabilitation technology, cultural competence, ethics, supported employment, transition from school to work, medical and psychological issues, caseload management, and special programs.

VR places emphasis on the professional development of unit supervisors, area supervisors, and area directors. Topics are selected based on policy or procedure changes, new initiatives, audit and review findings, and general professional development.

Counseling and non-counseling employees, including administrative employees, will continue to receive training in core subjects through distance and on-site learning. As caseloads and customer needs continue to grow more complex, the role of the paraprofessional technician becomes more and more critical to the effective management of caseloads. All counseling staff will continue to work toward CRC eligibility and/or degrees in rehabilitation or counseling through tuition waivers and other mechanisms.

Engineers from the Rehabilitation Technology Engineering Program, contracted through the University of South Florida, provide training on rehabilitation technology and engineering. The contract ensures that rehabilitation technology engineers are available statewide.

State labor market information, as well as national data, provides information on the employment and advancement of qualified individuals with disabilities. Job announcements are published online through the People First website, providing access to all state jobs through one internet portal.

Manuals related to policy and rehabilitation information management are available online. Employees can access the internet to find information about medical and psychological conditions, rehabilitation technology, Federal/State Plan, legislation and regulations, and employment-related information.

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.

VR employees need to be able to work with Florida's diverse population. One way VR does this is to actively recruit counselors and support employees who have diverse backgrounds. VR places advertisements in ethnic newspapers and collaborates with local civic and social service groups. VR also provides a five percent pay increase to bilingual staff, for positions where this is beneficial to the agency. Bilingual individuals are on staff, but qualified interpreters or translators will continue to be used when a counselor is unable to communicate directly with a customer in his/her preferred language. VR will continue partnerships with local vendors to offer this service.

American Sign Language interpretation needs for customers who are deaf or deaf-blind are met using a combination of employee positions and arrangements with qualified local interpreter service providers. When either staff interpreters or local interpreters are not available, VR will reschedule appointments or use available text communication devices with customers. VR also has assistive listening devices available in most offices for VR employees to communicate with individuals who are hard of hearing or late-deafened and do not know sign-language.

VR complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act by providing materials in Braille and large print, through having qualified sign language interpreters, and offering text-based communication access. In addition, VR arranges for foreign language translators when needed.

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.

Presenters provide orientation and training for employees serving transition students with disabilities from VR, the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), and community partners. Cross- training between BEESS and VR staff is emphasized through interagency agreements as presented in Section (d) of this plan portion. The Department of Education's State Education Agency (SEA) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) profiles are used to gather important statistical information on graduation rates, dropout rates, Individual Educational Plan compliance, and postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities. Additionally, BEESS and VR continue to share and analyze student data to identify students with Individual Education Plans or 504 Plans who can benefit from VR services and any potential gaps in service.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act was signed into law on July 24, 2014. The new law required VR to fund specific Pre-Employment Transition Services to youth while still in high school, including career exploration, work readiness training and work experiences. VR updated the Rehabilitation Information Management System (RIMS) and the Rehabilitation Electronic Billing Application (REBA) to collect transition data elements and track expenditures for transition youth.

VR strives to help LEAs meet the mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004. VR support includes offering an early VR referral and application process during high school, VR Transition Liaisons Contact List, VR Transition Brochures, and coordination of the Individual Education Plan with the Individualized Plan for Employment when served by both agencies. VR endorses evidence-based LEA services that benefit students with disabilities, including educating students in the least restrictive environment with their non-disabled peers and having access to the original curricula. VR counselors continue to attend regular in-service training that specifically targets transition youth issues and helps meet the requirements of the CSPD.

VR and community partners continue to make presentations and participate in annual transition conferences at the national, state, and local level to better serve students with disabilities. These events allow for agency updates, contributing information on promising initiatives and sharing evidence-based best practices. When VR employees and local educators are assigned to teams at events, they use this time to discuss issues and learn from one another about effective transition practices. This information is often incorporated into VR staff trainings.

Statewide transition training is provided on yearly basis. New counselors also receive this training which includes resources from the VR Transition Youth Program. The *VR Transition Youth Guidelines and Best Practices* is a resource for VR transition teams to assure statewide consistency in coordinating services to students with disabilities. VR employees have access to the "*Effective Practices for Working with the School System*" and the "*Outreach for the School System*" presentations developed to improve collaboration between VR and the LEAs. At the local level, VR employees participate in interagency groups with a transition focus to improve local coordination and services to students, families, schools, employers, and agency partners.

J. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(a)).

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;

During FFY 2014-15, the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), in partnership with the Florida Rehabilitation Council, conducted a comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) to identify factors that affect the ability of job seekers with disabilities to get and keep jobs, and any barriers or limitations they may experience. The CSNA consisted of the following components: state demographic profiles, a statewide public survey, stakeholder interviews, and additional information from agency performance data, customer satisfaction surveys and public input. Findings and recommendations from the CSNA guided agency planning and development of the VR unified plan portion for program years 2016-20. VR will continue to use this information to guide statewide and agency planning, as well as future collaborations with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core programs and other stakeholders.

In October 2014, VR conducted 35 Key Informant Interviews with VR staff, partner council members, employers, and stakeholders. VR's new WIOA partners were well represented, with responses from eight different CareerSource FL regions, as well as FL Division of Blind Services. Group responses were also received from Florida's Project TEN team and Orange County Public Schools. Interview themes, in the form of recommendations, include:

- Make the business case for hiring people with disabilities. It is no longer sufficient to approach hiring individuals with disabilities only as the 'socially responsible' thing to do.
- Increase community presence.
- Increase marketing and outreach to employers; get out and get to know local businesses and employers.
- VR needs "true employment specialists," and needs to better match customer skills to jobs available. This requires knowing what jobs are available and knowing the needs of employers. VR and its contracted employment partners must get out into the community.
- Review the benchmark payment system, because it disincentivizes working with customers who may have more difficulty finding a job. Customers requiring more time to find employment increase the length of time and effort required for providers to reach benchmark payments.

Goal 1 of VR's strategic plan focuses on ensuring customer success and satisfaction by improving business and support processes. All strategies are anticipated to increase opportunities for job seekers with disabilities, as well as increase VRs community presence and marketing. Strategies within that goal include the following.

- Develop and implement all components of the VR Business Relations Program.
- Redesign and implement pre-employment services for transition-age customers.
- Design and implement a program about service alternatives for customers to use in making an informed choice prior to entering subminimum wage employment.
- Design and implement enhancements to the Vendor Profile document for customer use in making informed choices regarding employment providers.

Florida conducted a statewide public survey during December 2014, with over 2,200 responses received and over half of those submitted by people with disabilities. Key results from the statewide public survey are as follows.

CSNA Survey Items	Results
Factors rated most important to job seekers with	○ Type of job matches personal abilities (83.65%) ○ Work location / available

CSNA Survey Items	Results
disabilities	transportation (79.59%) Work environment / culture (72.73%)
VR services rated most important to job seekers	○ Training (61%) ○ Job Search, Placement and/or Coaching (60%) Supported Employment (52%)
VR services rated most needed now by job seekers	○ Supported Employment (34%) ○ Job Search, Placement and/or Coaching (30%) Training (29%)
VR services rated most in- demand in the future	○ Job Search, Placement and/or Coaching (66%) ○ Supported Employment (65%) Training (64%)
Groups rated as having least access to services	○ Individuals living in rural areas (58.86%) ○ Individuals with a criminal background (48.57%) ○ Individuals on waiting list (43.95%)

CSNA Survey Items	Results
	○ Individuals with a mental health disability (43.57%) Individuals with an intellectual disability (43.42%)
Greatest barriers to employment for job seekers with disabilities	○ Job seekers need transportation (personal or public) (76.16%) ○ Employers underestimate the talent and skills of people with disabilities (70.67%) Employers need training on working with people with disabilities (66.9%)

Based on agency and state data, survey and interview responses, and input from stakeholders and other data sources, VR has developed the following additional CSNA findings and recommendations to address barriers and factors that affect VR customers' ability to get and keep jobs.

CSNA Findings	Strategic References and Future Considerations
VR's current benchmark payment system disincentivizes working with customers who have more difficulty or require more time, finding a job.	VR has recently added a customized placement benchmark payment to its reimbursement schedule, with a higher reimbursement rate. This will be monitored for effectiveness in the future.

CSNA Findings	Strategic References and Future Considerations
VR needs to explore collaborative opportunities to increase access to services and employment for people with mental health or intellectual disabilities.	VR is piloting innovative service models such as Individual Placement and Support (IPS) / peer mentoring to provide more service options to individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. VR has expanded the use of Discovery and Customized Employment statewide, and is now focusing on increasing provider capacity to provide these services. VR continues to develop agreements and partner with other agencies and organizations to provide customers more access to community resources.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

Although results of the CSNA public survey and a review of VR customer data and state demographic estimates did not indicate any specific ethnic groups with limited access to VR services, VR continues to assess its services to individuals with the most significant disabilities and individuals who may be unserved or underserved, as well as those with the most significant disabilities who may be from minority populations. Strategic projects and local-level outreach activities include the following:

• Develop and implement all components of the VR Business Relationship Program.

• Redesign and implement pre-employment services for transition-age customers.

• Design and implement a program about service alternatives for customers to use in making an informed choice prior to entering subminimum wage employment.

• Design and implement enhancements to the Vendor Profile document for customer use in making informed choices regarding employment providers.

• Continue to explore partnership opportunities with community/faith-based organizations. Develop contact lists of faith-based and other diverse programs as resources for partnership opportunities.

• Continue to identify outreach activities conducted by VR area offices for underrepresented populations. Conduct outreach in local communities to promote VR as an agency, and help individuals with disabilities who are minorities or who may be unserved or underserved to return or remain in the workplace.

• Continue to conduct outreach to migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families through contracts with community-based organizations and other partners.

• Continue to implement activities outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding with the Lower Muscogee Creek Tribe.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Results of the CSNA public survey indicated the following groups as having limited access to VR services.

- Individuals living in rural areas (58.86%)
- Individuals with a criminal background (48.57%)
- Individuals on waiting list (43.95%)

- Individuals with a mental health disability (43.57%)
- Individuals with an intellectual disability (43.42%)

VR continues to assess its services to individuals with the most significant disabilities and individuals who may be unserved or underserved, as well as those with the most significant disabilities who may be from minority populations. VR anticipates that continued WIOA implementation will increase access to the groups mentioned above. In addition, complimentary strategic projects and local-level outreach activities include the following:

- Develop and implement all components of the VR Business Relationship Program.
- Redesign and implement pre-employment services for transition-age customers.
- Design and implement a program about service alternatives for customers to use in making an informed choice prior to entering subminimum wage employment.
- Design and implement enhancements to the Vendor Profile document for customer use in making informed choices regarding employment providers.
- Continue to explore partnership opportunities with community/faith-based organizations. Develop contact lists of faith-based and other diverse programs as resources for partnership opportunities.
- Continue to identify outreach activities conducted by VR area offices for underrepresented populations. Conduct outreach in local communities to promote VR as an agency, and help individuals with disabilities who are minorities or who may be unserved or underserved to return or remain in the workplace.
- Continue to conduct outreach to migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families through contracts with community-based organizations and other partners.
- Continue to implement activities outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding with the Lower Muscogee Creek Tribe.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

In October 2014, VR conducted 35 Key Informant Interviews with VR staff, partner council members, employers, and stakeholders. VR's new WIOA partners were well represented, with responses from eight different CareerSource FL regions, as well as FL Division of Blind Services. Group responses were also received from Florida's Project TEN team and Orange County Public Schools. Interview themes, in the form of recommendations, include:

- Make the business case for hiring people with disabilities. It is no longer sufficient to approach hiring individuals with disabilities only as the 'socially responsible' thing to do.
- Increase community presence.
- Increase marketing and outreach to employers; get out and get to know local businesses and employers.
- VR needs "true employment specialists," and needs to better match customer skills to jobs available. This requires knowing what jobs are available and knowing the needs of employers. VR and its contracted employment partners must get out into the community.
- Review the benchmark payment system, because it disincentivizes working with customers who may have more difficulty finding a job. Customers requiring more

time to find employment increase the length of time and effort required for providers to reach benchmark payments.

WIOA presents requirements and opportunities for VR to strengthen its partnership with entities of the Statewide Workforce Development System. In addition to the above CSNA recommendations and requirements outlined in WIOA, the following strategies will increase partnerships with the statewide workforce development system to further help jobseekers with disabilities.

- Continue implementation of WIOA with other core programs, including design of the one-stop career center system and integrated performance accountability system.
- Collaborate with and offer training to CareerSource Florida and Employment Networks to provide services.
- Continue area directors' and representatives' participation on the local Workforce Boards.
- Continue to promote VR's presence in CareerSource Florida through co-location of VR units in One- Stop Career Centers, employees being out-stationed, and/or through regular visits by VR employees to One-Stop Career Centers.
- Develop a network of qualified benefits planners to augment the SSA contracts for Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program services. SSA contracted networks are insufficient in quantity, and they have reprioritized their service population so that ticketholders, youth and SSI/ SSDI beneficiaries who are not yet working or ready to work are in last place. VR believes benefits planning must be provided early to families and youth, and will purchase these services when not available through SSA capacity.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

Florida VR's most recent CSNA was conducted prior to the addition of this provision. The VR Transition Youth Program conducted an analysis of "VR Engagement of Youth with Disabilities in High School". Data from the VR Rehabilitation Information Management System (RIMS) and the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services' (BEESS) State and Local Education Agency profiles was used to determine the extent to which VR was engaging youth while still in high school.

The analysis compared the number of youth with disabilities who had applied for VR services to the total number of youth with disabilities (having an IEP) in a given school district. This provided a percentage of VR engagement for each Florida School District and a way to make comparisons between and among school districts. The information is being used to target intensive technical assistance in poorly engaged areas and facilitate improved communication and collaboration in all school districts. VR will use student engagement data to improve consistency of effort throughout the state and as an additional way to measure gains in performance. In addition to findings and recommendations derived from the Transition Youth Program Analysis, VR has identified the following strategies that will further increase services to youth and students with disabilities.

- Continue to offer Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCA) to all school districts annually. Although VR approaches and offers TPCA partnerships to all school districts in Florida, the partnership is dependent on the individual district's decision to participate. VR has recently hired another transition administrator to ensure that information is provided consistently to all school districts, and to coordinate and monitor active and potential TPCA partnerships. VR currently holds 25 TPCA, which will expire on June 30, 2018. VR is in the process of revising the contractual agreement it offers to school districts, but new contracts have not been developed yet. Once developed, if the contract changes the way VR delivers Transition services, the State Plan will be amended as needed.
- Two peer mentoring initiatives are planned at this time. A peer mentoring/IPS project with a youth element is being developed in Broward County, and a youth-specific peer mentoring project is being developed in partnership with Florida Atlantic University.
- Additional initiatives are under way to increase provider capacity and offer more opportunities to youth. These include approval of CareerSource Florida to provide pre-placement services, revision of Certified Business and Technical Assistance Consultants (CBTAC) recertification procedures, and increase in CBTAC and Discovery providers. VR is also partnering with Volunteer Florida, Centers for Independent Living, Florida ARC, and High School High Tech to offer more OJT and community work experiences.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

VR assesses its business processes and organizational capacity on an ongoing basis to make consistent improvements. Results of the FFY 2014-15 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment did not indicate a need to establish or develop community rehabilitation programs, although it was indicated that employment providers have a need to better promote and raise awareness of their services. Strategies to improve business relationships with community rehabilitation programs are included previously in Figure 9.04, and discussed further in Section o) State's Strategies.

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 .

Florida VR's most recent CSNA was conducted prior to the addition of this provision. The VR Transition Youth Program conducted an analysis of "VR Engagement of Youth with Disabilities in High School". Data from the VR Rehabilitation Information Management System (RIMS) and the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services' (BEESS) State and Local Education Agency profiles was used to determine the extent to which VR was engaging youth while still in high school. The analysis compared the number of youth with disabilities who had applied for VR services to the total number of youth with disabilities (having an IEP) in a given school district. This provided a percentage of VR engagement for each Florida School District and a way to make comparisons between and

among school districts. The information is being used to target intensive technical assistance in poorly engaged areas and facilitate improved communication and collaboration in all school districts. VR will use student engagement data to improve consistency of effort throughout the state and as an additional way to measure gains in performance.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES;

From October 1, 2018, to September 30, 2019, the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) anticipates that approximately 42,343 Floridians will be eligible for VR services.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

From October 1, 2018, to September 30, 2019, the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) anticipates a workload of 42,343 individuals. Because of limited resources, VR has determined that vocational rehabilitation services cannot be provided to all individuals with disabilities in the state who apply for services. The following projections for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2018-19 are based on case management and budget projection models.

The projected number of eligible individuals to receive vocational rehabilitation services by priority category, and cost of services per category are as follows:

Priority Category	Projected Number Served	Projected Service Cost
Category 1	24,677	$65,082,905
Category 2	16,783	$38,281,595
Category 3	883	$3,140,499
Total	42,343	$106,505,000

The estimated number of customers to be served in Supported Employment (Part B of Title VI of the Act) is 8,080.

Total projected costs for IPE services are $106,505,000. Additionally, the cost for assessment services is projected at $20,342,455. Total projected revenue needed for IPE and assessment services for FFY 2019 is $126,847,455. The revenue available for IPE and assessment services is estimated to be $125.3 million.

Some expenditures associated with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) initiatives such as pre-employment transition services, and Job Retention Services (discretionary services under Order of Selection) have not been factored into these projections. Until these costs are fully realized and included into service and cost projections, VR will continue its current management of wait list categories under Order of Selection.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

The estimated number of customers to be served in Supported Employment (Part B of Title VI of the Act) is 8,080.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION;

Priority Category	Projected Number Served	Projected Service Cost
Category 1	24,677	$65,082,905
Category 2	16,783	$38,281,595
Category 3	883	$3,140,499
Total	42,343	$106,505,000

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 December 31,2017, 92 individuals remain on Category 3 of the waiting list.

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.

Projected Outcome and Service Goals and Time Frames for FFY 2018-19

Priority Category	Projected Number Served	Average Case Cost	Projected Service Cost	ProjectedSuccessful Closures	ProjectedUnsuccessful Closures	Months to Complete
Category 1	24,677	$2,513	$65,082,905	2,880	6,168	20
Category 2	16,783	$1,757	$38,281,595	2,274	3,892	12

Priority Category	Projected Number Served	Average Case Cost	Projected Service Cost	ProjectedSuccessful Closures	ProjectedUnsuccessful Closures	Months to Complete
Category 3	883	$6,704	$3,140,499	431	61	6

L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The designated State unit must:

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED

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.

During FFY 2014-15, VR, in collaboration with the Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC), completed its three- year comprehensive statewide needs assessment. Information obtained from the needs assessment, management reports, and feedback from VR employees, stakeholders, and customers, is used to evaluate current goals, objectives, and projects, and establish new strategic priorities.

Following the previously established planning process, the Senior Leadership Team regularly reviews progress and updates strategies as needed. Annually, the Senior Leadership Team completed a thorough review of the strategic plan, and then held a planning meeting to determine which projects to include in the updated strategic plan. Strategy updates are provided quarterly and reported out to VR Leadership and stakeholders.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) completed their monitoring visit with VR in April 2017. In addition, VR is planning for its next Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), which will inform agency planning in FFYs 2019-21. VR will update its strategic goals and priorities after receipt of the RSA Monitoring Report and completion of the next CSNA. Currently, VR agency priorities are to ensure IT systems are fully capable of collecting data required for federal reporting, and to refine its service delivery procedures to meet Pre-ETS budget requirements while continuing to meet the needs of other customers.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.

VR Vision

To become the first place people with disabilities turn when seeking employment and a top resource for employers in need of qualified employees.

VR Mission

To help people with disabilities find and maintain employment, and enhance their independence.

Current Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal 1: Ensure Customer success and satisfaction by improving business and support processes. Objective 1.1: Improve and align VR business processes to support WIOA implementation

Strategy: 1. Develop and implement all components of the VR Business Relations Program.

Measure of Success:

• Full integration and implementation of all components, including business services, field services operations and IT support systems

Strategy: 2. Redesign and implement pre-employment services for transition-age customers.

Measures of Success:

• Services re-aligned to new WIOA guidelines and implemented within required timeframes

• Budget set-aside requirements met

Strategy: 3. Design and implement a program about service alternatives for customers to use in making an informed choice prior to entering subminimum wage employment.

Measure of Success:

• Number of people diverted from or transitioned out of subminimum wage jobs

Strategy: 4. Design and implement enhancements to the Vendor Profile document for customer use in making informed choices regarding employment providers.

Measures of Success:

• Establish baseline use of Vendor Profile

• Customer satisfaction with Vendor Profile

Objective 1.2: Redesign supports for VR service & business processes

Strategy: 1. Coordinate and develop the VR services portion of the statewide plan.

Measure of Success:

• Timely submission of all required information

Strategy: 2. Design and implement an approach for integration of performance and business intelligence information.

Measures of Success:

• Number of revised management reports implemented

• Satisfaction of affected VR Managers with revised reports

Goal 2: Ensure Employee success and satisfaction by improving development opportunities and workplace environment.

Objective 2.1: Provide a comprehensive workforce planning and development system

Strategy: 1. Implement employee onboarding and mentoring processes statewide.

Measures of Success:

• Percentage of new employees completing all requirements within 90 days

• Percentage of new employees assigned a mentor within 10 days from start date

• Protégé/mentor/supervisor satisfaction ratings

Strategy: 2. Develop an agency-wide workforce and succession management plan, including a process to capture organizational knowledge.

Measures of Success:

• Process accurately identifies critical positions and information

• Participant satisfaction with process / components

Strategy: 3. Design a program for identifying and developing VR Leadership candidates.

Measures of Success:

• Successful pilot/ rollout of program

• Percent of VR employees initiating participation

• Participant satisfaction with program components

Strategy: 4. Develop standards, guidelines and curriculum for VR employee training.

Measures of Success:

• Improvement in climate survey items: Q8. Opportunities to learn and grow- 83.61%

• Q11. I am satisfied with the training provided by VR- 77.19%

• Percentage of VR employees successfully completing identified training requirements

Objective 2.2: Provide a safe, accessible, and adequately equipped work environment

Strategy: 1. Develop a comprehensive safety plan for monitoring VR facilities statewide. Specific components include a process for reporting defective/unsafe working conditions, safety and facilities management training for area staff, a move manual, a statewide safety manual, statewide first aid info, furniture inspection instructions, and a facility security / building access policy at HQ.

Measures of Success:

• Improvement in climate survey item: Q17. Physically safe work environment- 81.94%

• Pulse survey results following implementation of each improvement

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

During FFY 2014-15, VR, in collaboration with the Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC), completed its three-year comprehensive statewide needs assessment. Information obtained

from the needs assessment, management reports, and feedback from VR employees, FRC members, VR stakeholders, and customers, is used to evaluate current goals, objectives, and projects, and establish new strategic priorities.

Following the previously established planning process, the Senior Leadership Team regularly reviews progress and updates strategies as needed. Annually, the Senior Leadership Team completed a thorough review of the strategic plan, and then held a planning meeting to determine which projects to include in the updated strategic plan. Strategy updates are provided quarterly and reported out to VR Leadership and stakeholders.

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A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

During FFY 2014-15, VR, in collaboration with the Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC), completed its three-year comprehensive statewide needs assessment. Information obtained from the needs assessment, management reports, and feedback from VR employees, FRC members, VR stakeholders, and customers, is used to evaluate current goals, objectives, and projects, and establish new strategic priorities.

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B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

During FFY 2014-15, VR, in collaboration with the Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC), completed its three-year comprehensive statewide needs assessment. Information obtained from the needs assessment, management reports, and feedback from VR employees, FRC

members, VR stakeholders, and customers, is used to evaluate current goals, objectives, and projects, and establish new strategic priorities.

Following the previously established planning process, the Senior Leadership Team regularly reviews progress and updates strategies as needed. Annually, the Senior Leadership Team completed a thorough review of the strategic plan, and then held a planning meeting to determine which projects to include in the updated strategic plan. Strategy updates are provided quarterly and reported out to VR Leadership and stakeholders.

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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.

During FFY 2014-15, VR, in collaboration with the Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC), completed its three-year comprehensive statewide needs assessment. Information obtained from the needs assessment, management reports, and feedback from VR employees, FRC members, VR stakeholders, and customers, is used to evaluate current goals, objectives, and projects, and establish new strategic priorities.

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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.

Order of Selection Priority Category Description

Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities (Priority Category 1)

An eligible individual with a disability which:

406. Seriously limits three or more functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome;
407. Requires three or more primary services;
408. Requires services which must be provided over an extended period of time (at least 12 months); and
409. Requires services that are not likely to be corrected through surgical intervention and/or other treatment modes.

Individuals with Significant Disabilities (Priority Category 2)

An eligible individual with a disability which:

410. Seriously limits one or two functional capacities, in terms of an employment outcome;
411. Requires two or more primary services;
412. Requires services which must be provided over an extended period of time (at least six months); OR
413. The individual is a recipient of Social Security Disability Benefits (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) as a result of disability or blindness.

Other Eligible Individuals (Priority Category 3)

An eligible individual with a disability which:

414. Limits one or more major life's activities; and/or
415. Services are expected to last less than six months.

The OOS remains in effect statewide and does not select one type of disability over another. The OOS is not established based on age, sex, marital status, religion, race, color, national origin, or political affiliation, and is not based on the vocational goal of the individual with a disability. Elements that relate to the significance of disability are the only factors used in OOS.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) determined that sufficient resources were not available to provide rehabilitation services to all individuals with disabilities who apply. Consequently, VR established an Order of Selection (OOS) within the state to ensure that individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected first for vocational

rehabilitation services, those with significant disabilities second and all other eligible individuals selected last. This decision was based on use of funds in the preceding years, projected funding, projected number and types of referrals, number of eligible individuals, and counselor caseloads.

A historical account of VR's management of OOS wait list categories is as follows.

- August 4, 2008 - the Order of Selection was initially implemented, closing all categories
- February 15, 2010 - VR determined that sufficient fiscal and human resources were available to serve all Category 1 individuals and opened Category 1
- August 2, 2010 - Category 2 was opened, but Category 3 remained closed
- November 15, 2013 - VR again closed Category 2
- February 19, 2014 - VR again closed Category 1, but received an additional $1.4 million in nonrecurring general revenue. This state match funding allowed VR to draw down an additional $5,172,770 of its federal grant.
- June 2014 - VR opened Category 1 and began a structured release
- February 2015 - VR opened Category 2
- As of December 2015, all individuals previously on the Category 2 wait list are receiving services
- As of March 15, 2016, 1,512 individuals remain on the Category 3 wait list
- As of September 30, 2017, 37 individuals remain in Category 3
- As of December 31, 2017, 92 individuals remain in Category 3

The OOS remains in effect statewide and does not select one type of disability over another. The OOS is not established based on age, sex, marital status, religion, race, color, national origin, or political affiliation, and is not based on the vocational goal of the individual with a disability. Elements that relate to the significance of disability are the only factors used in OOS. In accordance with Section 412 of WIOA, VR has elected to provide Job Retention Services (discretionary services to eligible individuals regardless of order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment).

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS.

Projected Outcome and Service Goals and Time Frames for FFY 2018-19

Priority Category	Projected Number Served	Average Case Cost	Projected Service Cost	ProjectedSuccessful Closures	ProjectedUnsuccessful Closures	Months to Complete
Category 1	24,677	$2,513	$65,082,905	2,880	6,168	20
Category 2	16,783	$1,757	$38,281,595	2,274	3,892	12

Priority Category	Projected Number Served	Average Case Cost	Projected Service Cost	ProjectedSuccessful Closures	ProjectedUnsuccessful Closures	Months to Complete
Category 3	883	$6,704	$3,140,499	431	61	6

Service Costs for FFY 2018-19

Total projected costs for IPE services are $106,505,000. Additionally, the cost for assessment services is projected at $20,342,455. Total projected revenue needed for IPE and assessment services for FFY 2019 is $126,847,455. The revenue available for IPE and assessment services is estimated to be $125.3 million.

Some expenditures associated with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) initiatives such as pre-employment transition services, and Job Retention Services (discretionary services under Order of Selection) have not been factored into these projections. Until these costs are fully realized and included into service and cost projections, VR will continue its current management of wait list categories under Order of Selection.

D. THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER.

Projected Outcome and Service Goals and Time Frames for FFY 2018-19

Priority Category	Projected Number Served	Average Case Cost	Projected Service Cost	ProjectedSuccessful Closures	ProjectedUnsuccessful Closures	Months to Complete
Category 1	24,677	$2,513	$65,082,905	2,880	6,168	20
Category 2	16,783	$1,757	$38,281,595	2,274	3,892	12
Category 3	883	$6,704	$3,140,499	431	61	6

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

Order of Selection Policies

Individuals needing Supported Employment services are assessed as having a most significant disability. Additionally, individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Insurance benefits as a result of being determined to be disabled

or blind are assessed as having at least a significant disability and are evaluated to determine whether they meet the criteria for individuals with most significant disabilities.

After an individual is found eligible for VR services, an OOS determination is completed. Additional evaluations or assessments to make this determination may be needed. The VR counselor and individual jointly determine the individual's OOS priority category by evaluating his or her functional limitations, anticipated services needed, and the duration of the services.

This policy does not affect an individual who began to receive services under an approved individualized plan for employment prior to the implementation date of OOS, or those individuals who are in need of post-employment services.

VR officially notifies all individuals of their individual OOS determination. Individuals not immediately activated for development of an employment plan are offered Information and Referral services and the option to be placed on a waiting list until employment plan development services can be initiated. Individuals on the waiting list are contacted annually to determine if additional information is available. As resources become available, those with the most significant disabilities are selected first for vocational rehabilitation services, those with significant disabilities second, and all other eligible individuals selected last.

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.

VR provides Job Retention Services (discretionary services to eligible individuals regardless of order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment). This is a new option created by WIOA. Between May 2016 and January 2018, 658 customers were released from the OOS wait list and received Job Retention Services.

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.

Goal 1: Increase the number of individuals with most significant disabilities who receive Supported Employment services.

VR will:

- Continue to provide supported employment services on a statewide basis through Title I funds. Statewide allocation of funds allows for equal delivery of services throughout Florida. Individuals may receive supported employment services using a combination of Title I funds, and revenues generated from Social Security reimbursements, community rehabilitation partners, or other state program revenues.
- Provide a variety of training and awareness programs designed to increase the awareness of supported employment as a vocational service for individuals with the most significant disabilities. VR Senior Program Consultants have increased

outreach activities with a focus on state and local education partnerships. The VR consultants have provided trainings with a focus on sharing information to assist youth, adults, and families in their consideration of pursuing Supported Employment Services.

- Review pilot and innovative employment practices and assess the feasibility of replicating programs with successful strategies.
- VR has initiated Discovery Services, a person-centered planning tool as a way to increase the number of individuals with significant and complex disabilities receiving supported employment services. Discovery provides an opportunity for individuals to move seamlessly from this person centered assessment and planning to Supported Employment Services.
- VR has initiated a Supported Employment Customized Placement Benchmark to incentives providers to work with individuals who will need more intense supports and assistance to become successfully employed. Training opportunities were developed for providers and VR staff on this customized employment strategy.

Goal 2: Use Title I funds for Supported Employment services to achieve the maximum number of quality employment outcomes for individuals with most significant disabilities with a focus on youth.

- Use Title I funds to provide supported employment services as specified in the Individualized Plan for Employment for youth.
- Purchase supported employment services based upon established performance benchmarks. The contract for supported employment focuses on performance and reinforces the focus on successful outcomes for individuals served.
- Funds may also be used for related customized employment strategies of Supported self-Employment Services
- Provide up to four years of extended services for youth 24 and under when appropriate
- VR Consultants have provided extensive outreach to educators, community providers, individuals, families, community partners, VR staff to promote Supported Employment as an opportunity for youth to become successful in becoming employed and developing a career path.
- VR works closely with the Statewide Employment First Interagency Committee. This group focuses on promoting competitive integrated employment as a first choice for youth and adults with disabilities in Florida.
- The Program Development and Assistance Bureau provides technical assistance and support to a wide variety of stakeholders.
- VR has provided youth receiving subminimum wage employment training opportunities to encourage their consideration of competitive integrated employment opportunities. There is a four hour course focused on self-advocacy, communication, employment options in local communities, how to obtain supports and services, and other related topics.

Goal 3: Increase Supported Employment training opportunities for VR Counselors, Community Rehabilitation service staff, families, and individuals.

VR will:

- Increase supported employment training opportunities for VR counselors, providers, families, and individuals.
- Participate in the development of a consortium of providers designed to identify, share, and promote innovative employment practices.
- Promote awareness of social security benefits planning as a way to fund extended services.
- Continue to provide joint training opportunities for VR employees and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD).
- Provide funding to support collaboration between VR and other community resources through networking and leadership activities.
- Participate as an advisory member on a variety of grants from the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council that provide training and collaborative activities for providers, counselors, and other agency employees.

Goal 4: Leverage resources for extended ongoing support services.

VR will:

- Participate as a key member of the Employment First Interagency Committee. This committee is composed of nine agencies/organizations. The focus is on competitive integrated employment as a preferred option for youth and adults. The group also works on a state wide level to leverage and collaborate on the use of resources to benefit all of the individuals served by the agencies. This includes mutual training, technical assistance, advocacy and other mutually beneficial activities.
- Continue to work with APD to make sure that referred customers know about the extended service resources they can get through Medicaid Waiver Funding and/or general revenue funding.
- Continue to work with a network of providers to provide technical assistance and support of innovative projects that promote employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- Provide training on the availability of funding ongoing support through Ticket to Work-Employment Network partnerships, natural supports, and Social Security Work Incentives as possible resources for ongoing supports.
- Encourage the use of employer and natural supports as a resource for ongoing supports.
- Enhance relationships with businesses and employers to let them know that on-the-job supports for individuals in supported employment are available. VR will continue efforts to strengthen community partnerships to increase access to appropriate employment services.
- Use the Business Relations Team to provide training and technical assistance to employers interested in working with VR customers. They will also develop positive relationships with employers to increase employment opportunities.
- Use the AbilitiesWork Help Desk as a resource to link employers to qualified jobseekers with disabilities. VR is a partner in the development of and administers the AbilitiesWork Help Desk, a collaboration between the state's Workforce system, Division of Blind Services, and APD.

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

To meet the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) collaborates and contracts with community partners in order to be able to provide Supported Employment Services. For FFY 2017-18, Supported Employment services are funded solely by Title I funding, as Title VI-B funding was not federally approved for this fiscal year. These funds are available on a state wide basis. Florida VR uses the majority of its Supported Employment expenditures on allowable services to youth.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) presents VR with the opportunity to provide a wide array of services with a focus on youth. Additional opportunities available include the provision of Extended Services to youth for up to four years or until 24 years of age, as funds permit. VR is now also authorized to provide supported employment services up to 24 months and may extend this time period if necessary.

VR has increased its age range of services to include 14 year olds. VR has focused on youth services and has expanded several options designed to help youth achieve employment outcomes. These options allow youth to gain a variety of skills and exposure to multiple career options, and are designed to provide skills and direction for youth so that when they are ready for Supported Employment services they have skills and knowledge to help their efforts be successful.

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.

Goal 4: Leverage resources for extended ongoing support services.

VR will:

- Participate as a key member of the Employment First Interagency Committee. This committee is composed of nine agencies/organizations. The focus is on competitive integrated employment as a preferred option for youth and adults. The group also works on a state wide level to leverage and collaborate on the use of resources to benefit all of the individuals served by the agencies. This includes mutual training, technical assistance, advocacy and other mutually beneficial activities.
- Continue to work with APD to make sure that referred customers know about the extended service resources they can get through Medicaid Waiver Funding and/or general revenue funding.
- Continue to work with a network of providers to provide technical assistance and support of innovative projects that promote employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

- Provide training on the availability of funding ongoing support through Ticket to Work-Employment Network partnerships, natural supports, and Social Security Work Incentives as possible resources for ongoing supports.
- Encourage the use of employer and natural supports as a resource for ongoing supports.
- Enhance relationships with businesses and employers to let them know that on-the-job supports for individuals in supported employment are available. VR will continue efforts to strengthen community partnerships to increase access to appropriate employment services.
- Use the Business Relations Team to provide training and technical assistance to employers interested in working with VR customers. They will also develop positive relationships with employers to increase employment opportunities.
- Use the AbilitiesWork Help Desk as a resource to link employers to qualified jobseekers with disabilities. VR is a partner in the development of and administers the AbilitiesWork Help Desk, a collaboration between the state's Workforce system, Division of Blind Services, and APD.

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.

Council Support

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) continues to provide support for the Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC) and Florida Independent Living Council (FILC). VR allocates funds for the operation of FRC to achieve the goals and objectives in their strategic plan. FRC participates as an active strategic partner with VR in carrying out the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act. VR and FILC operate under a contract which aligns with the State Plan for Independent Living.

Use of Innovation and Expansion Funds

VR recognizes Innovation and Expansion projects as beneficial and complementary to WIOA-related initiatives. Following a formal procurement process, VR has entered into contracts for five Innovation and Expansion projects, described below. Contracts for the projects run through SFY 2020.

462. The Business Center for Diversity and Inclusion (BCDI) - Operated by The Diversity Initiative, Inc. (TDI). TDI is providing a "no fee" Business Center provides consultation, development, training, and support services to local businesses and organizations to facilitate employment placement for individuals with unique abilities. The BCDI serves Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Hernando counties.

463. The Arc-2-Work: a work-skills training program - Operated by Arc of Alachua County. The Arc-2-Work program is providing pre-employment training and participation in volunteering positions to high school students and clients of the Arc that will foster employment placement for individuals with unique abilities in Alachua County.
464. The Industry Readiness Training (IRT) Program - Operated by Brevard Achievement Center. The IRT Program is providing pre-employment training and participation in volunteering positions that will foster employment placement for individuals with unique abilities in Brevard County.
465. Discovering Your Potential (DYP) - Operated by Gulfstream Goodwill Industries, Inc. The DYP Program is providing highly focused, intensive discovery, training, and support to individuals with unique abilities in order to increase employment outcomes in Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, and Okeechobee counties.
466. Discovering Your Potential (DYP) - Operated by Gulfstream Goodwill Industries, Inc. The DYP Program is providing highly focused, intensive discovery, training, and support to individuals with unique abilities in order to increase employment outcomes in Palm Beach County.

Expansion and Improvement of Services

Results gained through the Innovation and Expansion projects described above will contribute to increased employment opportunities for VR customers. In addition to the innovation and expansion projects, VR's strategic plan contains the following initiatives anticipated to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities:

- Develop and implement all components of the VR Business Relations Program.
- Redesign and implement pre-employment services for transition-age customers.
- Design and implement a program about service alternatives for customers to use in making an informed choice prior to entering subminimum wage employment.
- Design and implement enhancements to the Vendor Profile document for customer use in making informed choices regarding employment providers.

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.

Rehabilitation Technology

Rehabilitation Technology is provided through a contractual agreement with the Center for Assistive, Rehabilitation and Robotics Technologies at the University of South Florida. The program provides rehabilitation technology assessment and evaluation services for VR customers across all stages of the rehabilitation process. Rehabilitation technology includes a range of services and devices that supplement and enhance individual functions. It includes services like job redesign or worksite modifications that improve the work environment.

Assistive Technology Services and Devices

VR sponsors the Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology Project that is directed by the Assistive Technology Advisory Council in accordance with Section 413.407, Florida Statutes. The project provides for the coordination and delivery of appropriate, cost-effective, state-of-the-art assistive technology services and devices on a statewide basis. The Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology, Inc. (FAAST), is a not-for-profit corporation for which the Assistive Technology Advisory Council acts as the board of directors, manages the project, and provides administrative and technical support to the council.

FAAST is responsible for administering a low interest loan authority that provides funding to individuals with disabilities who may be unable to qualify for traditional loans and bank financing to purchase assistive technology devices.

Assistive technology includes both devices and services. A device is any item or piece of equipment used to maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a person with a disability. Many high-tech and low-tech devices are available to help people with disabilities in daily living tasks, communication, education, work, and recreation.

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 to Individuals with Disabilities who are Minorities and/or who have been Unserved or Underserved

VR continues to assess its services to individuals with the most significant disabilities and individuals who may be unserved or underserved, as well as those with the most significant disabilities who may be from minority populations. VR will be completing its next CSNA during FFY2018-19, which will further identify unserved and/ or underserved groups, as well as recommendations for how to better serve these groups. Strategic projects and local-level outreach activities include the following:

- Develop and implement all components of the VR Business Relationship Program.
- Redesign and implement pre-employment services for transition-age customers.
- Design and implement a program about service alternatives for customers to use in making an informed choice prior to entering subminimum wage employment.
- Design and implement enhancements to the Vendor Profile document for customer use in making informed choices regarding employment providers.
- Continue to explore partnership opportunities with community/faith-based organizations. Develop contact lists of faith-based and other diverse programs as resources for partnership opportunities.
- Continue to identify outreach activities conducted by VR area offices for underrepresented populations. Conduct outreach in local communities to promote VR as an agency, and help individuals with disabilities who are minorities or who may be unserved or underserved to return or remain in the workplace.
- Continue to conduct outreach to migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families through contracts with community-based organizations and other partners.

- Continue to implement activities outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding with the Lower Muscogee Creek Tribe.

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).

Improving and Expanding VR Services for Students with Disabilities

WIOA provides great opportunities for VR to increase transition services and opportunities to youth with disabilities. Increased information and referral to transition age youth is built into WIOA, and VR has already begun providing more transition service-related information to youth. Strategies noted below are anticipated to increase opportunities for students with disabilities.

- Continue to offer Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCA) to all school districts annually. Although VR approaches and offers TPCA partnerships to all school districts in Florida, the partnership is dependent on the individual district's decision to participate. VR has recently hired another transition administrator to ensure that information is provided consistently to all school districts, and to coordinate and monitor active and potential TPCA partnerships. The current arrangements will expire on June 30, 2018. VR is in the process of revising the contractual agreement it offers to school districts, but new contracts have not been developed yet. Once developed, if the contract changes the way VR delivers Transition services, the State Plan will be amended as needed.
- Continue to provide activities for youth and students designed to assist in developing a concept of work, navigating the community, and obtaining work experience during high school. Pre-Employment Transition Services include vocational evaluation, career guidance and counseling, work readiness and self-advocacy training, and experiential activities such as community-based work experience and on-the-job training. Support services include assistive technology and services, transportation and uniforms. Intensive services are designed for those who need additional support with appropriate work behavior, require repetition to acquire skills, build endurance to work, and identify the right fit or environment for work. These services include Discovery, Youth Peer Mentoring, Project SEARCH, services provided under Third Party Cooperative Arrangements with school districts, and tuition, books and supplies for Post-Secondary Education programs.
- Additional initiatives are under way to increase provider capacity and offer more opportunities to youth. These include approval of CareerSource Florida to provide pre-placement services, revision of Certified Business and Technical Assistance Consultants (CBTAC) recertification procedures, and increase in CBTAC and Discovery providers. VR is also partnering with Volunteer Florida, Centers for Independent Living, Florida ARC, and High School High Tech to offer more OJT and community work experiences.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

Improving Community Rehabilitation Programs

VR assesses its business processes and organizational capacity on an ongoing basis to make consistent improvements. Results of the FFY 2014-15 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment did not indicate a need to establish or develop community rehabilitation programs, although it was indicated that employment providers have a need to better promote and raise awareness of their services.

In April 2017, VR established the Field and Provider Relations Unit (FLPR) within its Bureau of Vendor and Contracted Services (BVCS), to better connect employment service providers to field operations. This unit works complimentary to the Monitoring and Employment Contracting Unit (MECU) to ensure that providers have the tools and resources needed to provide quality services to VR customers. The Field and Provider Relations Unit has 7 Area Provider Liaisons housed throughout VR's service areas. The supervisor is housed in VR headquarters in Tallahassee.

MECU and FLPR work together to engage providers on a regular basis and deliver support and consistent information. BVCS will be engaging the providers on a quarterly basis through face-to-face meetings, area wide provider trainings, and a Provider Engagement Conference Call. FLPR Provider Liaisons hold bi-annual face-to-face meetings with providers in their service area. During these meetings the MECU Provider Managers, Provider Liaisons, and CRP staff discuss internal agency changes, CRP performance and concerns, as well as provide individualized service training if needed. Another component of provider engagement efforts are planned area wide group provider trainings, and a management level provider engagement call that gives CRP staff access to BVCS leadership. The first Provider Engagement Conference call took place in November 2017. CRP staff had access to BVCS leadership to ask questions and learn about updates. FLPR and MECU are working to build provider capacity by revamping the provider onboarding and orientation process.

MECU recently developed a new Intake Process for Provider Applicants. The Applicant's packet goes through several vetting processes before being considered for approval. After the initial intake and background screening is completed, the Applicant goes through an Onboarding. Prior to scheduling the Onboarding, the Applicant is sent a Welcome Guide. The Welcome Guide was developed by the Managers and includes the Manual, Helpful Tips, contact information and resource documents. The Welcome Guide is sent to the Applicant through the mail. Once the Welcome Guide has been received, the Manager will schedule a call to complete the Onboarding. The Manager will go over the Welcome Guide, provide technical support, and answer any questions. After Onboarding, the Provider Liaison will schedule an Orientation. The Orientation provides the Applicant the opportunity to meet face-to-face with the Liaison and Area staff. Both units have put great effort into standardizing provider materials and resources, and centralizing provider information by creating a dedicated page on the VR external website for provider resources.

Additional initiatives for these units are to identify required training for VR providers and new provider staff, and to develop a Provider Newsletter, which is rolling out in January

2018. VR anticipates the work of these units to be beneficial in improving relations with VR employment service providers, leading to improved services for VR customers.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

Federal Standards and Indicators

Federal Performance Indicators and Targets	Actual Performance(FFY 17)	Previous (FFY 16)
Indicator 1.1**: Change in Employment Outcomes (RSA Target: Increase over prior year)**	+265	+419
Indicator 1.2**: Percent of Employment Outcomes (RSA Target: 55.8%)**	37.9%	40.8%
Indicator 1.3**: Competitive Employment Outcome (Primary) (RSA Target: 72.6%)**	96.94%	97.7%
Indicator 1.4**: Significance of Disability (Primary) (RSA Target: 62.4%)**	92.56%	99.5%
Indicator 1.5**: Earnings Ratio (Primary) (RSA Target: 52%)**	55%	53%
Indicator 1.6**: Self-Support (RSA Target: 53%)**	54.53%	60.2%
Indicator 2.1**: Ratio of Minority to Non-Minority Service Rate (RSA Target: 80%)**	94**%**	95%

VR's rehabilitation rate remains below the federal target, but has increased over the past two years, as has the overall number of customer employment outcomes. This is expected as VR continues to release customers from the Category 3 wait list.

VR collaborates with partners at the state and local levels to maximize employment services for people with disabilities. VR anticipates that the following projects will have a positive impact on program performance.

- Support employers and community partnerships through the Business Relations program.
- Expand the Youth Peer Mentoring pilot to all VR areas.
- Provide Career Counseling / Information and Referral (CCIR) services to individuals participating in subminimum wage employment. Due to the positive response to CCIR services, VR is developing an orientation and follow-up process for CCIR service recipients who expressed interest in VR services.
- Assist customers in making informed choices about employment providers through use of the Service Provider Choice Directory.

- Redesign and implement pre-employment services for transition-age customers.
- Implement additional mental health training for counselors, and develop transitional employment, Individual Placement and Support, and peer specialist models to improve success with individuals with severe and persistent mental illness.
- Expand the capacity for providing Discovery and Customized Employment services.
- Establish additional casework quality assurance review practices to validate data entry.
- Continue data validation practices to detect errors prior to reporting.
- Expand use of Benefits Planning services for Social Security recipients that will promote self-support. Purchase these services when not available from SSA.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

WIOA presents requirements and opportunities for VR to strengthen its partnership with entities of the Statewide Workforce Development System. In addition to requirements outlined in WIOA, the following strategies will increase partnerships with the statewide workforce development system to further help jobseekers with disabilities.

- Continue implementation of WIOA with other core programs, including design of the one-stop career center system and integrated performance accountability system.
- Collaborate with and offer training to CareerSource Florida and Employment Networks to provide services.
- Continue area directors' and representatives' participation on the local Workforce Boards.
- Continue to promote VR's presence in CareerSource Florida through co-location of VR units in One- Stop Career Centers, employees being out-stationed, and/or through regular visits by VR employees to One-Stop Career Centers.
- Develop a network of qualified benefits planners to augment the SSA contracts for Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program services. SSA contracted networks are insufficient in quantity, and they have reprioritized their service population so that ticketholders, youth and SSI/ SSDI beneficiaries who are not yet working or ready to work are in last place. VR believes benefits planning must be provided early to families and youth, and will purchase these services when not available through SSA capacity.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

The agency's strategies were based on several informational sources, one being the FFY 2014-15 CSNA findings. The CSNA survey and interviews included input from WIOA partners.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

By using CSNA findings, performance data, stakeholder and FRC input, and customer satisfaction survey results to inform agency planning, strategies are intentionally designed to support innovation and expansion activities and address barriers and factors that impact jobseekers with disabilities.

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.

Since 2013, VR has made great progress in accommodation and access to services for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Specific accomplishments include completion of revised best practices guides for services and communication, as well as hiring a specialized consultant in the field of deaf- blindness to develop best practices, provide consultation, training, and advocacy with stakeholders involved in these cases. VR also repurposed a vacated FTE into a Deaf-Blind Specialist position, which was filled during FFY 2014.

Key administrators from VR and FDBS held monthly meetings to revise and update the Memorandum of Agreement, develop strategies, discuss training needs, create informational guides needed by both agencies for this population, and provide case consultation. Additional VR strategies and activities to increase equal access to individuals requesting services are as follows:

- Develop a comprehensive safety plan for monitoring VR facilities statewide. Specific components include a process for reporting defective/unsafe working conditions, safety and facilities management training for area staff, a move manual, a statewide safety manual, statewide first aid information, furniture inspection instructions, and a facility security/building access policy at HQ.
- Continue to use interpreters and translators and VR's online resources as well as the websites of other partners and stakeholders (where permitted) to reach underserved populations and increase communication with customers.
- Offer reasonable accommodations to give equal access to services, and make sure materials and other program information are available in English, Spanish, and Haitian-Creole for various agencies, employers, churches, community leaders, health clinics, and other settings.
- Continue to assign counselors and consultants to serve specialized populations, such as the deaf and hard-of-hearing, transition students, mental health customers, and brain and spinal cord injury customers.
- Collaborate with CareerSource Florida and other One-stop system partners to implement universal design principles into the workforce development system's facilities and operations, with the intent to include universal design as a separate component of the One-stop career center certification process.

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 Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), in collaboration with the Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC), established three strategic goals for FFY 2015. These goals and priorities were developed based on an analysis of VR's performance on the federal standards and indicators, the preliminary results of the statewide needs assessment, and input from customers, providers, and other stakeholders.

The following section provides VR's evaluation and report of progress towards achieving its strategic goals.

Review of Current Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal 1: Ensure Customer success and satisfaction by improving business and support processes.

Objective 1.1: Improve and align VR business processes to support WIOA implementation

Strategy: 1. Develop and implement all components of the VR Business Relations Program.

Performance Measure:

- Full integration and implementation of all components, including business services, field services operations and IT support systems

Actual Performance:

The VR Business Relations Program (BRP) developed processes to streamline their operations and better integrate into field service operations. BRP has developed partnerships with businesses and industry sectors to expand customized employment and summer worksite opportunities. BRP staff have provided numerous trainings and presentations to businesses, providers, VR staff and local groups such as Chambers and trade-group chapters. BRP implemented and customized Salesforce software to track employer information and outreach activities, and allows for reporting out area level employer and performance data. BRP also participates in collaborative activities such as the ApprenticeshipUSA grant team and USDOL-ETAs Integrated Business Services Cohort.

Strategy: 2. Redesign and implement pre-employment services for transition-age customers.

Performance Measures:

- Services re-aligned to new WIOA guidelines and implemented within required timeframes
- Budget set-aside requirements met

Actual Performance:

VR has recently lowered the age limit for Transition services to 14 years of age, and implemented pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) through the following activities-

- Expansion of Third Party Cooperative Agreements with school districts to include pre-employment transition services, and providing updated training and resources to schools, providers and VR staff.
- Piloting Youth Peer Mentoring Services in 3 counties, and entering into an Intensive Technical Assistance Plan to expand the program statewide.
- Developing the Student Transition Activities Record (STAR) Program to track Pre-ETS referrals, and providing training to school districts, providers and VR staff. VR is also working with stakeholders to develop ways to engage school districts not using the STAR program.

VR is still working toward meeting the Pre-ETS budget requirements, and is working with WINTAC on a Technical Assistance Agreement to better plan future services.

Strategy: 3. Design and implement a program about service alternatives for customers to use in making an informed choice prior to entering subminimum wage employment.

Performance Measure:

- Number of people diverted from or transitioned out of subminimum wage jobs

Actual Performance:

VR has successfully implemented Career Counseling/ Information and Referral (CCIR) services for participants in subminimum wage employment. During SFY 2016-17, approximately 4,780 participants received CCIR services. VR has approved 21 agencies and 315 individuals to provide this service. VR also provides internal and external stakeholders technical assistance and support on compliance with Section 511.

CCIR services have received positive feedback from providers and participants, and VR is working with stakeholders to develop a follow-up process for CCIR participants who express an interest in VR services or employment.

Strategy: 4. Design and implement enhancements to the Vendor Profile document for customer use in making informed choices regarding employment providers.

Performance Measures:

- Establish baseline use of Vendor Profile
- Customer satisfaction with Vendor Profile

Actual Performance:

VR launched the Service Provider Choice Directory (SPCD) in August 2017, through the VR external website. Prior to its launch, VR delivered live orientation webinars for VR staff and

providers to discuss the information available in the Directory and system use. Usage statistics for October- December 2017 are below.

Usage Statistics for Website: http://ChoiceDirectory.Rehabworks.org (external)

- Date Range: October 1st, 2017 - December 30th, 2017
- Total number of Visit During this Date Range: 114,132
- Total Number of Pages Viewed by Visitors: 1,544,497

Usage Statistics for Website: http://it-in-web-01/vendorprofile (internal)

- Date Range: October 1st, 2017 - December 30th, 2017
- Total number of Visit During this Date Range: 3,442
- Total Number of Pages Viewed by Visitors: 6,309

Objective 1.2: Redesign supports for VR service & business processes

Strategy: 1. Coordinate and develop the VR services portion of the statewide plan.

Performance Measure:

- Timely submission of all required information

Actual Performance:

VR successfully developed and submitted the VR services portion of the Unified State Plan.

Strategy: 2. Design and implement an approach for integration of performance and business intelligence information.

Performance Measures:

- Number of revised management reports implemented
- Satisfaction of affected VR Managers with revised reports

Actual Performance:

This strategy is on hold until after all current reporting processes are modified to meet WIOA requirements.

Goal 2: Ensure Employee success and satisfaction by improving development opportunities and workplace environment.

Objective 2.1: Provide a comprehensive workforce planning and development system

Strategy: 1. Implement employee onboarding and mentoring processes statewide.

Performance Measures:

- Percentage of new employees completing all requirements within 90 days
- Percentage of new employees assigned a mentor within 10 days from start date
- Protégé/mentor/supervisor satisfaction ratings

Actual Performance:

From June to July 2016, a series of webinars provided VR staff information on the new mentoring program, how to use the system, and setting up personal profiles. This concluded with a Mentor / Protégé Matching Day. The Mentoring Program officially kicked off on August 1st. The VR Organization and Employee Support Section (OES) is available via the Mentorship Program Help Desk email to assist with any Mentorship program questions, and IMAP software assistance.

Strategy: 2. Develop an agency-wide workforce and succession management plan, including a process to capture organizational knowledge.

Performance Measures:

- Process accurately identifies critical positions and information
- Participant satisfaction with process / components

Strategy: 3. Design a program for identifying and developing VR Leadership candidates.

Performance Measures:

- Successful pilot/ rollout of program
- Percent of VR employees initiating participation
- Participant satisfaction with program components

Actual Performance (3 & 4):

VR's Supervisor Succession Training Program (SSTP) was successfully launched statewide in October 2016. As of December 2017, 32 participants have successfully graduated from SSTP.

Strategy: 4. Develop standards, guidelines and curriculum for VR employee training.

Performance Measures:

- Improvement in climate survey items: Q8. Opportunities to learn and grow- 83.61%
- Q11. I am satisfied with the training provided by VR- 77.19%
- Percentage of VR employees successfully completing identified training requirements

Actual Performance:

VR's Learning and Development Office (LDO) has developed standardized resources for designing VR training and courses, that allow curriculum to be designed in various (blended) formats. LDO has collaborated with program and administrative staff to revise New Counselor Training materials, and provides consultation and support to VR staff on training aspects when launching new programs or services.

<u>Objective 2.2: Provide a safe, accessible, and adequately equipped work environment</u>

Strategy: 1. Develop a comprehensive safety plan for monitoring VR facilities statewide. Specific components include a process for reporting defective/unsafe working conditions,

safety and facilities management training for area staff, a move manual, a statewide safety manual, statewide first aid info, furniture inspection instructions, and a facility security / building access policy at HQ.

Performance Measures:

- Improvement in climate survey item: Q17. Physically safe work environment- 81.94%
- Pulse survey results following implementation of each improvement

Actual Performance:

VR has developed a comprehensive safety plan and resources that are used in all VR offices and facilities. This strategy continues operationally.

Explanation of Performance:

Strategies that contributed to achievement of goals and priorities

Following the previously established planning process, VR Senior Leaders regularly review progress and update strategies as needed. Annually, the Senior Leadership Team completed a thorough review of the strategic plan, and then held a planning meeting to determine which projects to include in the updated strategic plan. Strategy updates are provided quarterly and reported out to VR Leadership and stakeholders.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) completed their monitoring visit with VR in April 2017. In addition, VR is planning for its next Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), which will inform agency planning in FFYs 2019-21. VR will update its strategic goals and priorities after receipt of the RSA Monitoring Report and completion of the next CSNA. Currently, VR agency priorities are to ensure IT systems are fully capable of collecting data required for federal reporting, and to refine its service delivery procedures to meet Pre-ETS budget requirements while continuing to meet the needs of other customers.

Smooth operation of the strategic planning process is in part due to VR senior leaders' commitment to provide all supports necessary for project teams to be successful. Senior leaders also realize the value of feedback received from VR customers, personnel, stakeholders, and concerned citizens. Arrangements are in place so that anyone can provide feedback on the state plan, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, using a dedicated email address on the Florida VR website, www.rehabworks.org/plans.shtml. The email address is vrplan@vr.fldoe.org. Concerted effort has also been made to standardize and streamline VR operational processes and procedures, such as staff development, planning, IT governance and development schedules, and business intelligence functions.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

Barriers that impeded achievement of goals and priorities

Despite obstacles such as changes to waitlist management, fiscal strains, preparing for and implementing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), staff turnover and rising caseload sizes, VR made great progress towards achieving its strategic projects and agency

priorities. When waitlist categories were closed due to fiscal and human resource deficits, field staff used this time to reconnect and engage customers, as well as close cases for customers no longer interested in services. Budget and caseload projection models were also developed during this time, and have allowed VR to better manage and plan.

Preparing for WIOA implementation forced VR to reexamine its business processes and organizational structure, which has resulted in more efficient and standardized operations. It has also allowed VR to develop true partnerships and connections with other employment-focused entities. These improvements, borne out of necessity, have increased VR's ability to plan for the future, as well as to be flexible when barriers are encountered.

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.

Review of Section (n) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI-B Funds in 2016-17

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is committed to providing quality Supported Employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. VR collaborates and contracts with community rehabilitation providers across the state of Florida. VR has focused this year on increasing the quality and capacity of the employment providers. VR may now provide Supported Employment services for up to 24 months, if necessary.

VR has also focused on expanding services to Transition Youth. Career Exploration, Workplace Readiness, Community-Based Work Experiences, Self-Advocacy, Youth Peer Mentoring, and Postsecondary Educational Counseling are all services that were expanded to assist youth in their eventual pursuit of employment.

VR may also offer youth extended services for up to four years, as necessary.

Goal 1: Increase the number of individuals with most significant disabilities who receive Supported Employment Services.

- VR continues to provide Supported Employment Services on a statewide basis through Title VI- B funds, and with Title I funds when Title VI-B funds are expended
- Fully expend Title VI-B funds for the provision of Supported Employment services after reserving no more than 5% for program administration
- Provide a variety of training and outreach programs designed to increase the awareness of Supported Employment as an appropriate vocational program for individuals with most significant disabilities
- Review pilot and innovative employment practices and assess the feasibility of replicating programs using successful strategies

Update:

Supported Employment services were provided to adults and youth who required these services on a state wide basis. Supported Employment funds were used to pay for

Placement, Stabilization, Transition, and placement for successful Employment Outcomes. Funds were fully expended on services. Five percent or less was used to support program administration.

VR increased training opportunities for individuals, youth, counselors, providers, and other stakeholders to promote Supported Employment services as a first and preferred service option. Transition Youth services were expanded to offer an array of services that would support youth in pursuing competitive integrated employment opportunities. Fifty percent of the Title VI B funding was expended on youth 24 and under.

VR developed and implemented a Career Counseling Information and Referral Course for individuals participating in subminimum wage employment in 14 (C) entities as required under the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act. This course provides information that allow individuals to make an informed choice about current and future employment opportunities. Approximately 5,000 individuals participated in this training opportunity. Individuals who stated an interest in pursuing VR services will be provided the information and support needed to apply for VR services.

VR staff have worked with Employment First Partners, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Project 10 staff, local Education Agencies and other partners to increase Third Party Cooperative Arrangements, Project SEARCH programs and other work experience programs that provide training opportunities that lead to employment.

VR staff have also collaborated with the Florida Association for Rehabilitation Facilities and the ARC of Florida to develop a package of VR services that would assist individuals with most significant disabilities to pursue competitive integrated employment opportunities.

Goal 2: Use Title VI, Part B funds to achieve the maximum number of quality employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities

- Use Title I funds, supplemented with Title VI B funds to provide Supported Employment services as specified in the individual plan for employment.
- Purchase Supported Employment services based upon established performance benchmarks. The contracts for Supported Employment focuses on performance and reinforces the focus on successful outcomes.
- Funds may also be used for related customized employment strategies and supported self-employment services.

Update:

VR provided Supported Employment services to individuals with most significant disabilities who requested these services. Data below represents VR's performance in serving Supported Employment customers.

SFY 2016-17 Supported Employment Performance Data

- Number of active cases: 8,553
- Number of Individualized Plans for Employment: 3,099
- Number of Employment Outcomes: 920

VR has increased the number of Supported Employment Providers throughout Florida. Additional training and support has been provided to new employment providers. VR has also added a Customized Job Placement benchmark to support individuals with most significant disabilities who may need a customized employment option.

Goal 3: Increase Supported Employment training opportunities for VR Counselors, Community Rehabilitation Providers, families and individuals.

- Increase Supported Employment training opportunities for VR counselors, providers, families, and individuals.
- Participate in the development of a consortium of providers designed to identify, share, and promote innovative employment practices.
- Promote awareness of social security benefits planning as a way to fund extended services.
- Continue to provide joint training opportunities for VR employees and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD).
- Provide funding to support collaboration between VR and other community resources through networking and leadership activities.
- Participate as an advisory member on a variety of grants from the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council that provide training and collaborative activities for providers, counselors, and other agency employees.

Update:

The Supported Employment Senior Consultant continues to provide training on service delivery for individuals with the most significant disabilities to new counselors, as well as follow-up trainings and technical assistance to seasoned counselors and supervisors at conferences, meetings, and workshops.

VR Consultants provided training to families and members in the community as requested. These sessions are designed to provide information and a vision that Supported Employment services are designed for individuals with the most significant disabilities. They provide families and customers with the information they need to become successfully employed. The sessions were provided to the groups and organizations listed below. Additional presentations are made throughout the year to local stakeholder groups.

- Florida Developmental Disability Council
- Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities
- Florida ARC Membership
- Florida Rehabilitation Council
- Florida Project SEARCH Sites
- Certified Business and Technical Assistance Consultant Area Trainings
- Standing Transition Committees throughout Florida
- Individualized Technical Assistance and Trainings as requested
- Florida Department of Education - Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- Family Café Participants
- Visions Conference Attendees

VR Senior Consultants provide technical assistance and consultations on individual cases as requested by supervisors, family members, VR staff, and individual customers.

A number of strategies were used to support collaboration between VR and other community resources through networking and leadership activities listed below.

- Representation on the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council and Employment Task Force. This included helping develop pilot projects on a wide array of employment topics. Administrators were involved as task force members, on advisory committees, and as monitors of projects. The projects complimented and supported VR's mission of helping individuals prepare for, get or keep a job.
- Presentations on Supported Employment at conferences around the state. Audiences included professionals, families, and students regarding employment options.
- Participation as a board member for the Florida Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE).
- Representation on the Statewide Employment First Initiative by VR's Supported Employment and Transition Consultants.
- The VR Senior Consultant coordinated and developed training for providers and staff on Discovery and Customized Employment Services.

VR initiated and implemented training opportunities for adults who were participating in subminimum wage employment. This service was provided in collaboration with 14 (C) employers and community providers. 4,780 individuals received Career Counseling Information and Referral Services during the first year of the program. This course is designed to promote competitive integrated employment opportunities.

Goal 4: Leverage resources for extended ongoing support services

- Continue to work with APD to make sure that referred customers know about the resources for extended service they can get through Medicaid Waiver Funding and/or general revenue funding.
- Continue to work with a network of providers to provide technical assistance and support of innovative projects that promote employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- Provide training on the availability of funding extended services through Ticket to Work-Employment Network partnerships, natural supports, and Social Security Work Incentives.
- Encourage the use of employer and natural supports as a resource for extended services.
- Enhance relationships with businesses and employers to let them know that on-the-job supports for individuals in Supported Employment are available. VR will continue efforts to strengthen community partnerships to increase access to appropriate employment services.
- Use the Business Relations Team to provide training and technical assistance to employers interested in working with VR customers. They will also develop positive relationships with employers to increase employment opportunities.

- Use the AbilitiesWork Help Desk as a resource to link employers to qualified jobseekers with disabilities. VR is a partner in the development of and administers the AbilitiesWork Help Desk, a collaboration between the state's Workforce system, Division of Blind Services, and APD.

Update:

VR continues to work closely with the Agency for Persons (APD) with Disabilities to assist VR customers in receiving seamless ongoing support services. VR and APD staff are working together to identify mutual customers and coordinate the needed services.

VR continues to expand its services to include Discovery and Customized Placement services to help individuals with most significant disabilities become employed. Discovery improves the quality of the placements, increases the success of the job placements, and reduces the need for intense follow up supports. Concentrated efforts are in place to continue to increase capacity across the state.

VR and APD consultants work together to provide training for VR counselors, waiver support coordinators, and for APD field staff on best practices in Supported Employment and the roles and responsibilities of all partners. Training included a focus on all of the possible extended service options.

VR may offer youth extended services for up to four years, as necessary.

The Supported Employment administrator provides training to field staff on the multiple options available for extended services. The development of natural and employer supports available on the jobsite has been a specific focus of VR efforts.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

Barriers:

VR's desire to provide supported employment services was complicated by the lack of sufficient partner resources for commitment of long-term supports. As budgets are reduced at state and local levels, creative resource sharing and options are being explored with stakeholders.

In response to these challenges, VR increased its collaboration with the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council and other stakeholders to develop pilot projects designed to increase employment opportunities for individuals with most significant disabilities.

VR's focus on expanding current supported employment service options with Discovery and other related customized services is an important step in reducing the reliance on paid Follow Along/Extended services.

VR was also contending with wait lists for part of the reporting year which caused cases to be on hold for supported employment services. The wait list caused hardships for some of the providers and they reduced their staff during this time. Providers will now have the opportunity to serve increased numbers of individuals. The Category 1 and 2 wait lists were eliminated and referrals and services are progressing.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

Federal Performance Indicators and Targets	Actual Performance(FFY 17)	Previous (FFY 16)
Indicator 1.1**: Change in Employment Outcomes (RSA Target: Increase over prior year)**	+265	+419
Indicator 1.2**: Percent of Employment Outcomes (RSA Target: 55.8%)**	37.9%	40.8%
Indicator 1.3**: Competitive Employment Outcome (Primary) (RSA Target: 72.6%)**	96.94%	97.7%
Indicator 1.4**: Significance of Disability (Primary) (RSA Target: 62.4%)**	92.56%	99.5%
Indicator 1.5**: Earnings Ratio (Primary) (RSA Target: 52%)**	55%	53%
Indicator 1.6**: Self-Support (RSA Target: 53%)**	54.53%	60.2%
Indicator 2.1**: Ratio of Minority to Non-Minority Service Rate (RSA Target: 80%)**	94%	95%

Federal Performance Indicators and Targets	Actual Performance(FFY 17)	Previous (FFY 16)
Explanation of Performance:VR's rehabilitation rate remains below the federal target, but has increased over the past two years, as has the overall number of customer employment outcomes. This is expected as VR continues to release customers from the Category 3 wait list. VR has multiple strategies and initiatives anticipated to improve the rehabilitation rate, overall agency performance, and customer outcomes.		

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED.

Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

In FFY 2016-17, with the agreement of the FRC, VR continued to use funds designated under this section to support the functions of the FRC and Florida Independent Living Council (FILC), and to support opportunities for improving the efficiency of service delivery.

Actual Performance:

VR continues to support and collaborate with the FRC and FILC as required in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. In SFY 2016-17, a total of 15,222 independent living plans were developed, and 24,339 independent living goals were set through the network of 16 Centers for Independent Living (CIL). CILs served a total of 19,452 individuals with significant disabilities. Information and Referral services were provided to approximately 22,932 individuals and Community Transition Assistance was provided to 56 individuals.

VR recognizes Innovation and Expansion projects as beneficial and complementary to WIOA-related initiatives. Following a formal procurement process, VR has entered into contracts for five Innovation and Expansion projects, described below. Contracts for the projects run through SFY 2020.

1. The Business Center for Diversity and Inclusion (BCDI) - Operated by The Diversity Initiative, Inc. (TDI). TDI is providing a "no fee" Business Center provides consultation, development, training, and support services to local businesses and organizations to facilitate employment placement for individuals with unique abilities. The BCDI serves Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Hernando counties.

2. The Arc-2-Work: a work-skills training program - Operated by Arc of Alachua County. The Arc-2-Work program is providing pre-employment training and participation in volunteering positions to high school students and clients of the Arc that will foster employment placement for individuals with unique abilities in Alachua County.

3. The Industry Readiness Training (IRT) Program - Operated by Brevard Achievement Center. The IRT Program is providing pre-employment training and participation in volunteering positions that will foster employment placement for individuals with unique abilities in Brevard County.

4. Discovering Your Potential (DYP) - Operated by Gulfstream Goodwill Industries, Inc. The DYP Program is providing highly focused, intensive discovery, training, and support to individuals with unique abilities in order to increase employment outcomes in Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, and Okeechobee counties.

5. Discovering Your Potential (DYP) - Operated by Gulfstream Goodwill Industries, Inc. The DYP Program is providing highly focused, intensive discovery, training, and support to individuals with unique abilities in order to increase employment outcomes in Palm Beach County.

Explanation of Performance:

These collaborative efforts helped strengthen leadership and improve services, which led to increased employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. It is anticipated that the new Innovation and Expansion projects will contribute positively to VR's rehabilitation rate and provide more informed customer choice and options.

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.

Quality

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is committed to providing quality Supported Employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. VR supports the individual in making employment choices consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and interests. The scope of services varies based on the amount, intensity, and support needed by each individual.

VR counselors work in partnership with the individual when developing the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This plan guides the services and supports that are needed for that individual. The IPE is evaluated throughout the process and updated as needed.

The quality of Supported Employment outcomes is assessed individually. Each individual receives services that are determined based on the specific needs of that person. A key component of evaluating the service is the individual satisfaction with the services and supports, as well as a successful employment outcome.

VR makes every effort to provide opportunities for individuals to provide their feedback on the services they received from VR. This feedback is useful information in adjusting and improving VR services to better meet their needs. There are formal service surveys, public hearings and satisfaction surveys. The VR counselor has regular communications with the individual and the Supported Employment provider to monitor, provide counseling, and assist the individual, as needed.

VR recognizes that it is important to get feedback from the employer and provider's perspectives to determine the quality of service and make necessary improvements. They are also encouraged to let VR know at any point if support is needed.

Scope

The scope of Supported Employment services varies based on the amount, intensity, and type of support each person may need to obtain and maintain a job. VR provides the intensive initial services needed to help an individual with a most significant disability obtain and maintain a job of his/her choice.

Supported Employment makes possible competitive integrated employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities and for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred, and because of the severity of their disability, need ongoing support services in order to maintain their jobs.

Service limits have recently been increased from 18 months to 24 months. Under special circumstances, the customer and VR counselor may jointly agree in writing to extend the time, when doing so will achieve the employment outcome identified in the IPE.

Services are individually designed around the needs and desires of the individual and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Initial placement
- Stabilization in the workplace
- Job Coaching
- Assistive Technology
- Specialized Job Training
- Social Skills Training
- Discovery
- Establishing formal and informal worksite-related expectations (e.g., time and attendance, dress, communication)
- Supported Self-Employment
- Customized Job Placement

VR has added Discovery as a service option to its array of Supported Employment services. It offers a more thorough person-centered planning approach for those individuals with the most significant and complex disabilities who may need a more customized approach to employment.

VR has also added a customized job placement option for individuals in Supported Employment who may need a more individualized job development process. Individuals receiving Supported Employment services will have access to this service as needed.

Post-Employment supports and services may be provided when an intensive need arises during the provision of ongoing extended services. This may occur when job duties substantially change, the work environment is altered or the impact of the individual's disability increases.

Extent

VR will continue to expand Supported Employment services by educating community members, providers, and relevant stakeholders on the need and advantages that Supported Employment provides for individuals and employers.

Supported Employment services are available for individuals with most significant needs who meet the criteria for VR services and supports.

VR has increased its focus on youth and expanded its Transition Youth services to begin at age 14. In addition VR has increased several initiatives designed for youth with most significant disabilities. The following experiences are anticipated to help youth in their desire to have a successful career.

- High School High Tech
- Project Search
- Inclusive Postsecondary Education programs
- Third Party Cooperative Transition Agreements
- Pre-Employment Transition Services

The VR Transition Youth program collaborates with education officials and partners to offer youth with the most significant disabilities opportunities to gain work experiences that help them prepare for successful employment. These evidence-based applications of learning, which include internships and other work experiences, often lead to successful employment.

VR also provides the opportunity for youth to receive up to four years of extended services funded through VR, when necessary. This is the only situation where VR is permitted to provide extended services.

VR will continue to actively engage and partner in order to:

- Develop a collaborative agreement with APD specific to Supported Employment and removing or reducing barriers for employment for individuals with significant disabilities.
- Implement the Interagency Employment First Agreement between the nine signatory parties. Continue to implement the agreements at the local and state level with appropriate stakeholders.
- Maximize the quality of service delivery ensuring an efficient and effective referral process, individual program planning, and coordination of intensive vocational services with extended services available for youth and adults.
- Expand available services through youth-related initiatives.
- Seek additional resources for extended services through collaborations with agency partners, including APD, Agency for Healthcare Administration, Florida

Developmental Disabilities Council, Department of Education agencies, and other stakeholders.

- Collaborate with community organizations, employers, families, and support groups to develop natural supports for Supported Employment extended services.
- Distribute information and train counselors about Social Security Work Incentives. Increase awareness of using a Plan for Achieving Self-Sufficiency or other work incentives as an option for funding extended services. Include training on the new Able Act as a potential way for individuals to fund their own services.
- Provide opportunities for counselors, providers, and support coordinators to receive training on innovative employment strategies designed to promote employment success for individuals.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

Extended Services

VR's approach for Supported Employment uses the nationally accepted "best practices" models of Supported Employment services and has added new customized strategies as well. The key to the approach is an emphasis on person-centered planning and facilitation of natural supports. Individualized job development is conducted and based on job-matching assessments, informed choice, strengths, interests, and skills. Individuals are assisted with employment planning and placement by selected providers. Job skills training is provided at the job site either by job coaches or through natural supports of existing resources.

Transition to Extended Services occurs when an individual has sufficient time to learn the tasks and is comfortable in the work culture, has had the supports addressed and is satisfied with the type of work and work hours. At the time of transition, the counselor, providers, individual, and others, as applicable, will have agreed that the individual is stable in their employment and expected to succeed. VR counselors confirm this information with the individual, provider, and employer. They will continue to monitor the case until the person reaches a successful employment outcome of a minimum of 90 days of stabilized employment after transitioning to extended services.

VR continues to:

- Emphasize providing services to all racial/ethnic minorities
- Seek additional resources for extended services in collaboration with VR partners
- Collaborate with community organizations, families, and support groups to develop natural supports as an option for assisting customers on the job site
- Participate on interagency committees to expand initiatives and increase employment outcomes
- Distribute and provide technical assistance to counselors on the use of Social Security Work Incentives to help with funding extended services

Extended services are provided and/or funded by sources other than VR. VR works collaboratively with other state agencies and organizations to ensure that extended support services, identified on the individualized plan as needed for employment, are available for as long as the customer needs them.

A Senior Consultant serves as a statewide coordinator who monitors Supported Employment issues that arise in the field and serves as a resource person to field staff. The coordinator also assists leadership when implementing programmatic policies in accordance with federal mandates, developing effective programs, recommending training for Supported Employment staff, and other liaison duties as requested.

CERTIFICATIONS

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate **Florida Department of Education**

Name of designated State agency **Florida Department of Education**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Pam Stewart**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Commissioner of Education**

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. The **designated State agency or designated State unit (as appropriate) listed above** 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*, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.** Yes

2. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the **designated State agency listed above** agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan; Yes

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* , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;** Yes

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; Yes

5. The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement. Yes

6. All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law. Yes

7. The **Authorized Representative listed above** 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; Yes

8. The **Authorized Representative listed above** has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services; Yes

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. Yes

FOOTNOTES

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Certification 1 Footnotes

* Public Law 113-128.

** Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

Certification 2 Footnotes

* All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

** No funds under title 1 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.

*** 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 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

Certification 3 Footnotes

* No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

** Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in *** under Certification 2 footnotes

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE CERTIFICATIONS FROM THE STATE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING — VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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.

Applicant's Organization **Florida Department of Education**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Pam Stewart**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Commissioner of Education**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to MAT_OCTAE@ed.gov

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING — SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

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.

Applicant's Organization **Florida Department of Education**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Pam Stewart**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Commissioner of Education**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)
(http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

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:**

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. ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN:

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:

A. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

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 **(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council**

C. CONSULTATIONS REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(16)(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

D. THE FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION BY THE STATE, OR IF THE STATE SO ELECTS, BY THE STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES, TO PROVIDE THE AMOUNT OF THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF THE COST OF CARRYING OUT THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(3).

E. THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds **No**

F. THE SHARED FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION OF JOINT PROGRAMS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs: **No**

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? See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. **Yes**

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.

I. ALL REQUIRED METHODS OF ADMINISTRATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(6) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

J. THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(7) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

K. THE COMPILATION AND SUBMISSION TO THE COMMISSIONER OF STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS, ESTIMATES, STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES, STRATEGIES, AND PROGRESS REPORTS, AS APPROPRIATE, AND AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(15), 105(C)(2), AND 606(B)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

L. THE RESERVATION AND USE OF A PORTION OF THE FUNDS ALLOTTED TO THE STATE UNDER SECTION 110 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, PARTICULARLY INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

M. THE SUBMISSION OF REPORTS AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(10) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES:

The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

A. COMPLY WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 101(A)(5)(D) AND (20) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. IMPOSE NO DURATION OF RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT AS PART OF DETERMINING AN INDIVIDUAL'S ELIGIBILITY FOR VR SERVICES OR THAT

EXCLUDES FROM SERVICES UNDER THE PLAN ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO IS PRESENT IN THE STATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(12) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

C. PROVIDE THE FULL RANGE OF SERVICES LISTED IN SECTION 103(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AS APPROPRIATE, TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT?

Agency will provide the full range of services described above **Yes**

D. DETERMINE WHETHER COMPARABLE SERVICES AND BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE INDIVIDUAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

E. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

F. COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE PROVISIONS OF INFORMED CHOICE FOR ALL APPLICANTS AND ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(D) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

G. PROVIDE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES TO AMERICAN INDIANS WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING IN THE STATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(13) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

H. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF SEMIANNUAL OR ANNUAL 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.

I. MEET THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTIONS 101(A)(17) AND 103(B)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT IF THE STATE ELECTS TO CONSTRUCT, UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, FACILITIES FOR COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

J. WITH RESPECT TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THE STATE,

DC. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT,

A. STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ASSESSMENTS; AND

B. STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE STATE, TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON A STATEWIDE BASIS; AND

DCI. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO PROVIDE PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES (SECTIONS 101(A)(15) AND 101(A)(25)).

5. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION FOR THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT TITLE VI SUPPLEMENT:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE 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.

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.

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:

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.

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:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AS DEFINED IN SECTION 7(39) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT:

DCII. 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

DCIII. 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.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE ASSURANCES FROM THE STATE

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (BLIND)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

_____

* Sec. 102(b)(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 FDBS partners with the Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (FRCB) in serving individuals with visual impairments. The FRCB is an integral part of helping the FDBS improve its services and achieve its goals. The FDBS and FRCB formed a joint taskforce that identified initiatives, such as holding yearly meetings with stakeholders, participating in outreach events, and increasing awareness of the council's position. The Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind(FRCB) welcomed four newly appointed members and one reappointed member at their quarterly business meeting held on February 6-7, 2018 in Fort Lauderdale, FL: Paul Kurtz of Jacksonville, Denise Valkema of Miami, Rose Conry of

Orange, Park Michael Wiseman of Hialeah and Louise Payton of Tampa. Governor Rick Scott released the names on January 26 and 29 allowing for a well- attended, highly spirited and productive meeting. Currently, the FRCB has twelve active voting members and seven vacancies. Robert L. Doyle, the Director of Blind Services, serves as an ex-officio member of the Council. Vacant seats include representatives from advocacy groups, business/industry, State Educational Agency and Deaf/Blind. The FRCB communicates with the Governor's appointment office regularly on the status of applications under consideration. Recruiting new applicants will focus on individuals who are passionate, dedicated and interested in improving the lives of visually impaired individuals. The FRCB held its first meeting and public forum in February 2018 with the election of its officers and a well-attended public forum. Three future business meetings and two public forums are scheduled for the remainder of 2018. The Council continues to focus on increasing awareness in our public forums through collaboration with the Division of Blind Services and stakeholders in each host district. FDBS has a Memorandum of Agreement with the Florida Independent Living Council. The Department of Education/Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is also included in this agreement. FILC's purpose is to promote independent living opportunities for persons with disabilities throughout the state of Florida. By collaborating with FDBS and having a member of FILC represented on the council, FDBS ensures the independent living needs of individuals with visual impairments and disabilities are identified and met. The council works closely with FDBS in tracking employment outcomes for individuals with visual impairments. The council meets quarterly in select areas around the state and a public forum is held at three of these meetings. The public forums provide FDBS with important feedback from consumers and stakeholders to ensure clients are provided the best services possible. The FRCB contracts with the Florida State University Survey Research Laboratory to conduct the client satisfaction survey. The Client Satisfaction Subcommittee successfully completed their evaluation and revision for the 2014-2015 Survey. The new survey questions were tested and Dr. Minna Jia reported survey results at the May 2017 quarterly meeting. Results from the annual report of 2017/2018 will be available in 2019.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

The FDBS values FRCB's contributions in assisting with policy revisions and ensuring federal regulations are implemented. FRCB members are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of individuals with visual impairments, and with that enthusiasm, will enhance programs.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

Not applicable.

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;

Overview

The FDBS provides services throughout the state, including transition services that increase and improve vocational rehabilitation options for eligible customers. Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Florida Department of Education's Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS) and partnerships with community rehabilitation programs across the state, the FDBS provides quality services to clients. The FDBS is not requesting a Waiver of Statewideness for this State Plan.

Types of Services Provided

This is a state-level interagency agreement charged with providing transition services to high school students who are progressing to postsecondary education/training, support services, and/or employment. These agencies agree to meet regularly to share information, ideas and current initiatives; collaborate on training and special projects; cooperate in planning and budgeting; and support areas of work that are mutually beneficial. The purpose of this agreement is to encourage collaboration among the local leadership and staff of the Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and local offices of VR, FDBS, Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), Children's Medical Services, and the Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Office, within the context of applicable federal and state regulations required of each agency, namely: • LEAs provide FAPE for students with disabilities, including preparation for transition from school to work or other post-school activities;

• VR and FDBS assist student transition from secondary school to work through postsecondary educational supports and/or employment supports for a successful employment outcome;

• APD strives to "reduce the use of sheltered workshops and other noncompetitive employment day activities and promote opportunities for gainful employment for persons with developmental disabilities who choose to seek such employment" (Chapter 393, Florida Statutes). F.S. 393 states that "to promote independence and productivity, the agency shall provide supports and services, within available resources, to assist clients enrolled in Medicaid waivers who choose to pursue gainful employment." If an individual is eligible for APD waiver services and employment is a needed service, then this service must be provided to meet standards as outlined in rule;

• Children's Medical Services works to ensure youth and young adults with special health care needs are provided with a smooth and successful transition of leaving pediatric or child health care services to receiving services from adult health care providers. Starting at age 12, care coordinators work with parents and children/young adults to prepare them for their future health care needs and services; and

• The Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Office works to provide a system of care, in partnership with families and the community enabling children and adults with mental health problems or emotional disturbances to successfully live in the community, to be self-sufficient or to attain self-sufficiency at adulthood, and to

realize their full potential. Mental health supports and services will enable adults and transitioning students to participate in community activities such as employment and other valued community roles.

Written Assurances

The FDBS has MOU's with the above entities and will provide written assurances as required. See Certifications and Assurances included within Section X.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

Not applicable.

3. ALL STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS WILL APPLY

requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

Not applicable.

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;

FDBS maintains cooperative agreements with agencies and other entities not carrying out activities under the Workforce Investment System. Current FDBS partners and agreements are described below.

Community Rehabilitation Programs FDBS has a long-standing contract relationship with their statewide Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) and values the services they provide to clients. A CRP is defined as a private, non-profit program that provides rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. CRPs provide education, independent life skills, job training, and job placement services to clients who are participants in vocational rehabilitation program and their families.

The list of community rehabilitation programs includes:

• Center for the Visually Impaired

• Conklin Centers for the Blind

• Elder Care of Alachua County

• Florida Center for the Blind

• Florida Outreach Center for the Blind

• Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind

• Florida State College at Jacksonville

• Independence for the Blind of West Florida

• Lighthouse Central Florida

• Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches

• Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind

• Lighthouse of Broward

• Lighthouse of Collier, Inc.

• Lighthouse of Manasota

• Lighthouse of Pinellas • Lighthouse of the Big Bend

• Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired

• New Vision for Independence

• Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind

• Lighthouse of Southwest Florida, Inc.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

The FDBS provides Rehabilitation Technology services statewide through a contractual agreement between FDBS and the Tampa Lighthouse Rehabilitation Engineering Program. The program provides rehabilitation technology assessment and evaluation services for FDBS clients across all stages of the VR process. Rehabilitation technology includes a range of services and devices that supplement and enhance individual functions, such as job redesign or worksite modifications that improve the work environment for individuals with visual impairments.

The FDBS provides purchased assistive technology equipment to blind and visually impaired clients based on need and assessment. FDBS partners with the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (FAAST) as a resource for blind and visually impaired clients to access equipment to help them obtain independence.

FAAST services delivers appropriate, cost-effective, state-of-the-art assistive technology services and devices on a statewide basis. FAAST is a not-for-profit corporation for which the Assistive Technology Advisory Council acts as the board of directors, manages the project, and provides administrative and technical support to the council. FAAST administers a low interest loan authority that provides funding to individuals with disabilities who may be unable to qualify for traditional loans and bank financing to purchase assistive technology devices. Assistive technology includes both devices and services. A device is any item or piece of equipment used to maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a person with a disability. Many high-tech and low-tech devices are available to help people with disabilities in daily living tasks, communication, education, work, and recreation.

The FDBS assesses its services to individuals with most significant disabilities and individuals in unserved or underserved populations and minorities. The FDBS identified the following strategies to better serve this population. District offices submit monthly data reports that are compiled and analyzed by the state office. Improvements to enhance district follow-through are evaluated and implemented on an ongoing basis.

Strategies include:

- Meeting with community organizations and civic groups on a regular basis to educate and increase their awareness of the division, vocational rehabilitation services and the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.
- Employment Placement Specialists (EPS) present to community organizations and civic groups quarterly. The EPS engage employers who have secured blind or visually impaired employees to participate in the presentations.
- Each district holds an annual open house for employers and potential employers. The district invites employed clients and clients seeking employment.
- Each district nominates at least one employer for the joint agency statewide exemplary employer event in October. The nominees receive plaques from the division.
- Utilizing these strategies increased successful employment outcomes statewide. The total number clients obtaining employment increased by 93 from 2016 to 2017.

Results of the FFY 2014 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment indicated a need to improve services to minorities. Specifically, the needs assessment revealed the only minority group that may be underserved is persons of Hispanic/Latino origin. The district offices conduct outreach activities to identify under-represented populations on a monthly basis. Activities include outreach to vision clinics, optometrists' offices, senior centers, participation in White Cane Day events, health fairs, and low vision expos. FDBS developed a list of transportation contacts to assist field staff with identifying transportation vendors for clients in need of this resource. The list is updated as needed. FDBS assesses its business processes and organizational capacity on an ongoing basis to make consistent improvements.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

Not applicable.

4. NONEDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

Currently the Division of Blind Services has agreements with non-educational agencies serving out of school youth such as Career Source, Goodwill Industries and Community Rehabilitation Providers. The Division will work to establish additional cooperative agreements with non-educational agencies.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

Yes, FDBS has cooperative agreements with agencies not carrying out activities under the statewide Workforce Development System. FDBS has 32 contracts which include vocational rehabilitation, pre-employment transition, transition, supported employment, and rehabilitation engineering services. FDBS has collaborative, non-contractual arrangements with other non-profit organizations that provide referrals, vocational rehabilitation services, and comparable benefits. The Division maintains cooperative agreements with agencies and other entities not carrying out activities under the Workforce Investment System. Current FDBS partners and agreements are described below.

Community Rehabilitation Programs

FDBS has a long standing contract relationship with their statewide Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs). A CRP is defined as a private, non-profit program that provides rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. The CRPs provide education, independent life skills, job training, and job placement services to our clients who are participants in our vocational rehabilitation program and their families. The list of community rehabilitation providers includes:

- Center for the Visually Impaired
- Conklin Centers for the Blind
- Elder Care of Alachua County
- Florida Center for the Blind
- Florida Outreach Center for the Blind
- Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind
- Florida State College at Jacksonville
- Independence for the Blind of West Florida
- Lighthouse Central Florida
- Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches
- Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind
- Lighthouse of Broward
- Lighthouse of Collier, Inc.
- Lighthouse of Manasota
- Lighthouse of Pinellas
- Lighthouse of the Big Bend
- Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- New Vision for Independence
- Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind
- Lighthouse of Southwest Florida, Inc.

D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

Describe:

1. DSU'S PLANS

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.

The FDBS has an interagency agreement with education officials. It is a state-level agreement, between agencies charged with providing transition services to high school students progressing to postsecondary education/training, support services, and/or employment. The agencies listed below agree to meet regularly to share information, ideas and current initiatives; collaborate on training and special projects; cooperate in planning and budgeting; and support areas of work that are mutually beneficial. These agencies include:

• Florida Department of Education

• Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS)

• Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

• Division of Blind Services

• Agency for Persons with Disabilities

• Florida Department of Health, Children's Medical Services

• Florida Department of Children and Families, Mental Health Services

This formal interagency agreement functions as a transition services model for improved collaboration, communication, coordination, and cooperation among local education agencies and local offices of VR, FDBS, APD, Department of Children and Families, and Children's Medical Services. The FDBS employs a program consultant as the central point of contact for the School to Work Transition Program. The consultant serves as the liaison for the 67 school districts and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind. The consultant coordinates and plans for effective transition services delivery and is responsible for training internal employees and making presentations about FDBS transition services at statewide conferences to increase understanding and awareness of the agency's role in assisting eligible students with disabilities. Additionally, this position serves as a representative on the State Secondary Transition Interagency Committee.

Provisions for Development and Approval of Individualized Plans for Employment for Students with Disabilities

The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for vocational rehabilitation consumers is completed or updated annually as needed, prior to graduation or leaving school for seamless transition to a student's desired postsecondary outcome.

The FDBS transition specialists, with assistance from FDBS rehabilitation technicians, serve as representatives who work with public high schools statewide and private high schools requesting assistance. Transition specialists provide and coordinate outreach and vocational rehabilitation services to students, school officials, parents, and others involved in transition services. The counselor determines eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services, develops an approved IPE, and sponsors the delivery of necessary transition services to assist the student with planning, preparing for, and achieving successful postsecondary employment.

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;

Local education agencies are strongly encouraged to have written agreements with the FDBS, VR, APD, Children's Medical Services, and Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Office. Written agreements enable employees to consult, coordinate, and provide technical assistance to each other, as well as to students and their families/guardians/surrogates, so they can plan for the student's transition from high school to postsecondary activities.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

Local education agencies work collaboratively with the FDBS, VR, APD, Children's Medical Services, and Department of Children and Families in the Transition Individual Educational Plan process. Local education agencies considering transition services during the Individual Educational Plan meeting invite representatives from other agencies responsible for providing or paying for transition services, after obtaining permission from the parent, guardian or age-of-majority student. It is essential to effective transition for partner agencies to encourage and support participation in the Transition Individual Educational Plan process.

If the agency representative is unable to attend the meeting, the school attempts to find a replacement. If the agency representative will not attend the meeting, the school researches alternative methods to provide for the student's transition needs. The local education agency must reconvene the Transition Individual Educational Plan team to identify alternative strategies for providing a student's transition needs if an agency fails to do so.

The FDBS enhanced the AWARE Case Management System to collect and track transition data required by the Rehabilitation Services Administration. The enhancements will enable FDBS to conduct differential analysis and tracking to better evaluate agency performance and identify how to best improve service delivery and outcomes for students with disabilities.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

VR Responsibilities:

A.Outreach to Students, Families, and Community Partners. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

629. Assigning VR staff to every public and charter high school in Florida and providing information regarding services to private schools upon request.

630. Presenting information about services and programs at education conferences and other transition focused training sessions.

631. Providing printed materials and other collateral to the schools to share with students, family members and other interested parties.

632. Providing training to school district staff on VR services and programs at the beginning of the school year.

633. Local VR staff participating on Interagency Councils.

634. Local VR staff presenting information on VR services and programs to students and family at orientations or information sessions at the schools.

635. State staff participation in ESE director calls and State Advisory Committee meetings.

636. Provide information for education focused newsletters such as the BEESS Weekly, and Project 10 Topical Brief.

B.Student Referrals and Eligibility Criteria. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

637. Receiving, accepting, and processing referrals of LEA students for Pre-ETS when those students do not wish to apply for VR services. These students would be able to receive Pre-ETS under the Student Transition Activities Record (STAR) program.

638. Receiving, accepting, and processing applications of LEA students for determination of eligibility for all VR services, including Pre-ETS in accordance with Federal and State regulations.

639. Ensuring that persons with disabilities meet the basic eligibility criteria for VR services, including supported employment services under Title I and Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act and implementing Federal and State regulations.

640. Assisting, as appropriate, in making a referral to a Partner vendor.

C. Service Delivery. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

641. Serving all LEA students, in accordance with VR policy, who are appropriately referred and who meet STAR or VR requirements.

642. Communicating with the LEA on status of VR referrals, services being accessed by student, and student progress on services.

643. Coordinating with the LEA prior to case closure for mutual students, to share information on needed services or reengage with the student and student's support system.

644. Assuring access to Community Work Incentive Coordinator for students desiring employment to receive benefits planning.

645. Identifying, supporting, and/or linking to appropriate financial literacy programs to improve informed financial decision-making and advance economic self-sufficiency.

646. Engage youth in required VR services as outlined in Section 511 of WIOA.

647. Coordinating with LEA to meet the required coordinated document process for youth as required under Section 511 of WIOA.

648. Sharing progress reports, when appropriate, with the LEA.

D. Financial Responsibility. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

VR shall set aside 15% of the yearly federal allotment for client services to fund Pre-ETS for students with disabilities.

E. Release and Confidentiality of Information. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

649. Determining the extent to which medical or psychological information may be harmful to the student and then determine that such information may be released if the LEA assures VR that the information will be used only for the purpose for which it is being provided and the information will not be further released to the person.

650. Obtaining a signed authorization for release of information from each individual being referred by VR to LEA and share only information that is required for provision of transition services, including Pre-ETS.

651. Complying with Federal regulations regarding confidentiality and State law, including Section 511, which specifies confidentiality agreements must comply with IDEA and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In addition, VR Counselors are expected to perform in compliance with the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Commission Professional Code of Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors.

DBS Responsibilities:

A. Outreach to Students, Families, and Community Partners. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

DBS staff will make every effort to develop and maintain cooperative working relationships with state and local secondary education staff (including alternative school programs), post-secondary education staff, state operated programs, and workforce development partners (e.g., CareerSource, Department of Economic Opportunity, etc.) to coordinate Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Coordination activities include:

1) Participating in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings for both eligible and potentially eligible students. Participation may be in person or by teleconference, when invited, pending DBS representative availability.

2) Making every effort to attend person-centered planning meetings for students with disabilities receiving services under title XIX of the Social Security Act, when invited.

3) Working with CareerSource, other WIOA Programs, and employers to develop work-based learning experiences for students with disabilities.

4) Encouraging referral sources to refer students with disabilities in secondary education as early as age 14 for pre-employment transition services and to check on the status of these referrals.

5) Providing accurate information to referral sources regarding the timeline and application process for vocational rehabilitation services.

B. Student Referrals and Eligibility Criteria. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

1) Accepting referrals for potentially eligible individuals from school personnel, family members, guardians or other interested persons via an electronic or paper referral or verbal request (phone call), regardless of whether they have applied for or have been determined eligible for VR services.

2) Contacting the individual and/or parent/legal guardian upon receipt of referral to discuss services and the individual's needs, collect additional information, and determine if the individual is potentially eligible or should apply for VR services.

3) Providing potentially eligible students with visual impairments services under Pre-Employment Transition Services as prescribed in DBS Policy 2.36, and in accordance with Federal and State regulations.

4) Processing applications for students with disabilities to determine eligibility for other Vocational Rehabilitation services.

5) Ensuring persons with disabilities meet the eligibility criteria for VR services and providing those services as identified on the IEP and/or IPE.

6) Referring clients, as appropriate, to a Partner vendor.

C. Service Delivery, Including Customized Employment, and Extended Services. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

1) Serving LEA students with disabilities who are referred to DBS and meet the eligibility requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation services.

2) Coordinating activities necessary for arranging and providing Pre-ETS, such as attending IEP meetings, working with local workforce development boards, one-stop centers and employers, working with schools, and attending person-centered meetings for students with disabilities.

3) Providing the activities included under Pre-ETS as defined in Section 7(30) of the Rehabilitation Act and §361.5(c)(42), to students with visual impairments, as appropriate and necessary.

4) Providing auxiliary aids and other accommodations/services (e.g., interpreting services, assistive technology, etc.), as required for participation in Pre-ETS.

D. Financial Responsibility. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

1) DBS shall set aside 15% of the yearly federal allotment for client services to fund Pre-ETS for students with disabilities.

2) Pre-ETS services are not contingent on a student's financial need. The Division's financial need policy and the possibility of a family contribution will not apply when the student participates in these.

E. Release and Confidentiality of Information: The Partner to this Agreement shall be responsible for the following, including:

652. Maintaining all confidential information, including medical and psychological information in the student's file. This information will remain private except under the following situations:

a.If your RC believes you are going to harm or endanger yourself or others, he/she is required to notify the endangered individual(s), the proper authorities and/or officials.

b. If your RC believes you are going to harm or endanger yourself or others, he/she is required to notify the endangered individual(s), the proper authorities and/or officials.

c. If your RC or this agency is sued or court ordered and a properly issued subpoena is received, then information in your file may be released.

d. If you are a minor or *not* your own legal guardian, then the information in your file may be available to your legal guardian or advocate.

653. Obtaining a signed authorization for release of information from each individual being referred and sharing only the information that is required for provision of transition services, including Pre-ETS.

DPS Responsibilities:

654. **Outreach to Students, Families, and Community Partners.** The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

655. Providing training and technical assistance regarding transition to districts and other partners.

656. Providing print/web products such as Secondary Transition Roadmap for Families and Family Guide to Transition.

657. Providing funding for local Interagency Councils.

658. Providing information via websites, including the following:

1. www.fldoe.org/ese
2. http://project10.info/
3. http://forparents.florida-ese.org/

659. Hosting State Secondary Transition Interagency Committee and State Advisory Committee transition sub-group to bring together all partners in transition.

B. Student Referrals and Eligibility Criteria. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

660. Ensuring students with disabilities with IEPS or 504 Plans meet eligibility requirements for those programs.

661. Encouraging the LEA to refer students with IEPS, 504 Plans, or students with a disability who does not qualify for an IEP or 504 plan, after obtaining parental permission for students under the age of 18 or over the age of 18 if rights have not transferred, to VR or DBS for Pre-ETS and for other VR services.

C. Service Delivery, Including Customized Employment, and Extended Services. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

662. Requiring the LEA to provide students with disabilities the transition services documented on the IEP, as required by IDEA.

663. Encouraging the LEA to communicate with VR or DBS on services being accessed by student, and student progress on services.

E. Financial Responsibility. The Partner to this Agreement shall have the following responsibilities, including:

664. Distributing and providing oversight of IDEA funds to the LEAs for all programs and services to students with disabilities who have IEPs, including secondary transition services.

665. Providing funds to Project 10: Transition Education Network and other discretionary projects to provide LEAs with training and technical assistance related to secondary transition services.

F. Release and Confidentiality of Information: The Partner to this Agreement shall be responsible for the following, including:

666. 1) Obtaining a signed release from the parent or the student if over the age of 18 and rights have transferred,before referral for Pre-ETS or invitation to IEP meeting.

2) Complying with Federal regulations regarding confidentiality and State law, including Section 511, which specifies confidentiality agreements must comply with IDEA and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

Please refer to d. 2. A.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(3)). Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

FDBS contracts with private non-profit organizations for specialized services for individuals who are blind. The primary services include: Vocational Rehabilitation, Pre-Employment Transition, Transition, Supported Employment, and Rehabilitation Engineering. All new vendors/providers, whether through a contractual or vendor relationship, must go through a registration and approval process. FDBS reviews the qualifications of vendors to ensure

the quality of services and the safety of the public. FDBS conducts employment verifications on all customer placements facilitated by vendors/contract providers.

Policy 2.02 Informed Choice ensures customers select qualified service providers. Customers are informed if the provider has employees experienced in working with special disability populations, foreign languages, and other communication skills. FDBS customers choose necessary services, service providers, and the setting in which to receive the services, as specified in the Individualized Plan for Employment.

FDBS has 32 contracts which include vocational rehabilitation, pre-employment transition, transition, supported employment, and rehabilitation engineering services. FDBS has collaborative, non-contractual arrangements with other non-profit organizations that provide referrals, vocational rehabilitation services, and comparable benefits.

FDBS collaborates with the Florida State University Survey Research Laboratory on an innovation and expansion project. This project involves conducting consumer satisfaction surveys to determine satisfaction with program services.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(4)). 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.

The FDBS has a contractual agreement with the Florida Lion's Conklin Center for the Blind to identify and provide supported employment and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities. FDBS partners with other state agencies and organizations in implementing Employment First, a national effort to ensure individuals with disabilities are offered employment on a preferred basis. Employment First is consistent with the FDBS belief that individuals with disabilities, even the most significant disabilities, can achieve meaningful employment when provided with appropriate supports.

The Governor of Florida signed Executive Order 13-284 (Reaffirming Commitment to Employment for Floridians with Disabilities) in October 2013. The Executive Order mandates an Interagency Cooperative Agreement be developed between multiple state agencies and organizations serving persons with disabilities to ensure the continuation of long-term commitment to improving employment outcomes for this population. FDBS is one of the mandated partners and played a significant role in drafting the Executive Order. The Interagency Cooperative Agreement formalizes efforts to improve employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and promote collaboration and service innovation.

The following Agencies were named as mandatory partners:

- The Department of Education- Division of Blind Services
- The Department of Education- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

- The Department of Education- Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
- The Agency for Persons with Disabilities
- The Department of Children and Families- Substance Abuse and Mental Health
- The Department of Economic Opportunity
- CareerSource Florida
- The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(5)). Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

1. VR SERVICES; AND

The FDBS works collaboratively with the statewide workforce systems. The Agency Director serves on the statewide workforce board, local district administrators collaborate with local boards and FDBS employees visit workforce centers and other venues. The following strategies will increase partnerships with the statewide workforce investment system:

- Work with Florida's one-stop career centers to ensure centers meet accessibility needs of clients both in construction (universal design) and equipment. FDBS works with the career centers to ensure appropriate and client-specific assistive technology is consistent with the needs of all clients.
- Educate one-stop career centers on the importance of establishing centers in areas that are easily accessible to public transportation.
- Work to ensure disability coordinators are cross trained on the processes of core partners. FDBS collaborates with the CareerSource Centers and shares information about its services and the referral process with the Disability Navigators at the CareerSource Centers.
- Communicate, strategize and execute agreed upon methods of meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities. FDBS participates in regularly scheduled conference calls and meetings. FDBS solicits feedback from core partners regarding contracts and policies.
- Identify opportunities to expand services/programs to meet ongoing needs of individuals with disabilities. FDBS has an online application to increase accessibility to individuals who may qualify for services. FDBS created multiple initiatives throughout the state to increase referrals, such as the See Different initiative and FDBS 75 Years Celebrations. Several PSAs were shown throughout the state via Comcast. The revised version of Policy 2.16 Timeliness of Services, effective October 18, 2017, includes language to prioritize services to individuals at risk of becoming unemployed.

- A memorandum of understanding with the local board, relating to the operation of the one-stop career center system. MOUs are in with each local CareerSource to ensure individuals who are blind and visually impaired fully participate in the workforce system.
- Participate in the operation of the one-stop career center system consistent with the terms of the memorandum of understanding and legal requirements. FDBS provides Employment Placement Specialists with marketing tools/toolkit to use when meeting with CareerSource staff. CareerSource staff receive education regarding FDBS programs/services with the goal of increasing opportunities for clients seeking employment.
- Continue representation on the state board, and gain membership on local boards.
- Continue collaboration with LWDB partners to fully engage the state's employee recruitment, retention, and training services. Recommend career centers use universal design principles in their operations, and maintainthe integrity of systems for unique constituent populations to ensure individuals with disabilities seeking employment are given opportunities to be successful.

The FDBS plans to utilize and implement the identified strategies listed in section (l) to aid in ensuring blind and visually-impaired Floridians have the tools, support and opportunities to achieve success. These strategies assist FDBS in providing equal access for clients, increasing the number of employers hiring clients, generating FDBS program awareness and strengthening infrastructure. In SFY 2016-2017, FDBS achieved 851 successful employment outcomes, which is well over the performance standard. FDBS implements strategies that foster success for blind and visually impaired Floridians.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

FDBS has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Florida Department of Education's Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS). This is a state-level interagency agreement charged with providing transition services to students and youth with disabilities who are progressing to postsecondary education/training, support services, and/or employment. These agencies agree to meet regularly to share information, ideas and current initiatives; collaborate on training and special projects; cooperate in planning and budgeting; and support areas of work that are mutually beneficial. Through various partnerships, FDBS provides the following transition services, including pre-employment for students and youth with disabilities:

- **Assessment** - Includes a comprehensive evaluation in orientation and mobility, adaptive daily living skills, assistive technology, low vision needs, functional assessments, vocational evaluation and job readiness
- **Activities of Daily Living** - Training in related in augmentative skills to include rehab teaching,
- **Assistive Technology** - Trains an individual or group to use adaptive devices and technology for communications, daily living needs including computer, keyboarding, access software, screen readers, note takers, closed circuit televisions, accessible cell phones and other devices.

- **Communication Skills Training - Training an individual or group to use writing guides, read and write braille, use phones, take messages, access time with watch or clock, access mail, use tape recorders, keyboarding skills, CCTV**
- **Community Integration - Activities that ensure that people with disabilities are provided opportunities to contribute to their communities and participate in the everyday life activities such as, building social contacts, exploring work options, economic independence, educational advancement, and cultural enrichment.**
- **Counseling Services** - Provides counseling to address psychological and social issues related to vision loss.
- **Job Development** - Activities for the purpose of obtaining, maintaining, or regaining an employment outcome.
- **Job Placement** - Placement activities for an individual in integrated settings for the maximum number of hours possible.
- **Job Readiness** (and soft skills training)- Includes resume preparation, interview training, appropriate hygiene and grooming training, accessing transportation and time management training. Services also include simulated job tasks to enable the individual to adjust to work or provide a work experience.
- **Job Coaching** - Provides on-site instruction to enable a participant to perform the assigned job related activities.
- **Low Vision Training** - Training an individual or group to use low vision devices to perform every day tasks.
- **Orientation and Mobility** - Training an individual to move around safely and effectively indoors, outdoors, and in the community.
- **Self-advocacy Training** - Training an individual privately or in a group to advocate for one's self and to make one's needs known in an assertive and positive manner, to learn to speak up for one's self in order to get one's needs met in an appropriate way.
- **Travel** - Travel costs related to the provision of services, which do not fall under the category of administrative costs as defined by 34 CFR 361.5 (b)(2)(xii).
- **Work Experience** (work based learning experience) - Placement of an individual with an employer in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible.
- **Additional Training** - Training not listed elsewhere such as, home and personal management.

Local education agencies work collaboratively with the FDBS, VR, APD, Children's Medical Services, and Department of Children and Families in the Transition Individual Educational Plan process. Local education agencies considering transition services during the Individual Educational Plan meeting invite representatives from other agencies responsible for providing or paying for transition services, after obtaining permission from the parent, guardian or age-of-majority student. It is essential to effective transition for partner agencies to encourage and support participation in the Transition Individual Educational Plan process.

If the agency representative is unable to attend the meeting, the school attempts to find a replacement. If the agency representative will not attend the meeting, the school researches alternative methods to provide for the student's transition needs. The local education

agency must reconvene the Transition Individual Educational Plan team to identify alternative strategies for providing a student's transition needs if an agency fails to do so.

The FDBS enhanced the AWARE Case Management System to collect and track transition data required by the Rehabilitation Services Administration. The enhancements will enable FDBS to conduct differential analysis and tracking to better evaluate agency performance and identify how to best improve service delivery and outcomes for students with disabilities.

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;

The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) is responsible for the State Medicaid Plan. FDBS works with AHCA to assist clients with obtaining Medicaid if they do not have insurance.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) provides services to individuals with developmental disabilities. If an individual is eligible for APD waiver services and employment is a needed service, then this service must be provided to meet standards as outlined in rule. FDBS counselors contact the closest APD office and refer clients to the agency for services. The counselor will arrange an appointment and provide the client with all contact information for the APD office.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

Mental health supports and services enable adults and transitioning students to participate in community activities, such as employment and other valued community roles. The FDBS works with the Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Office (DCF) to provide mental health assessments and treatment for clients in need of such services. Counselors connect clients to DCF via referrals and follow up with the agency to share reports and plans for a multidisciplinary approach.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.10)). Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

1. DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS.

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

i. the number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

There is no state-approved or recognized certification, licensure, or registration of vocational rehabilitation counselors; therefore, the FDBS indicates the specific academic and professional standards for each position. People First is the State of Florida's human resource system. It was developed to collect and maintain personnel information related to the selection and hiring process, monitoring and evaluating, and corrective actions of all staff. The Bureau of Client Services utilizes the AWARE case management system to track the caseload of each district office employee per program.

Personnel Employed by FDBS

Staff Title Number of Staff

Administrative Staff 50

Counselor Staff 53

Support Staff 59

Other Staff 96

Total 258

ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

Figure 10.02

Personnel Employed by FDBS

Staff Title	Number of Staff
Administrative Staff	50
Counselor Staff	53
Staff Supporting Counselor Activities	59
Other Staff	96
Total	258

In relation to the chart above, administrative staff include: district administrators, vocational rehabilitation supervisors, rehabilitation center supervisor, and select state office program staff. Staff supporting counselors include, rehabilitation technician, rehabilitation specialist, and residential instructors. Other staff include select state office

staff, staff assistants, sr. word processing systems operators, and word processing systems operation rehabilitation center staff. To address the requirements under the Workforce Investment Opportunities Act (WIOA) related to pre-employment transition, FDBS reclassified a Government Operations Consultant II position from the Contracts Unit to secure a Transition Program Consultant position in the Bureau of Client Services. This reclassification increased the number of Administrative Staff by one and decreased the number of Other Staff by one.

Individuals hired by DBS have five years to meet CSPD standards. Paraprofessionals (e.g., Rehabilitation Technicians and Employment Placement Specialists Personnel) and support personnel (e.g., word processors) are not directly identified as part of the approved CSPD plan; however, FDBS still provides them with training to ensure quality services to all participants.

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.

In SFY 2016-2017, FDBS served 5,038 individuals in the Vocational Rehabilitation Program. In SFY 2015-2016, FDBS served 5,202 individuals (163 less individuals). The average ratio of customers per counselor was 64 to 1 in the VR Program. A comparison of the previous year indicates a slight change in the ratio of customers served per counselor (See Counselor to Client Ratio Table below). This slight change in the total number of clients served is attributed to a decrease in the number of applicants who met the eligibility criteria. Specifically, for SFY 2015-2016, FDBS had 1,399 applicants met the eligibility criteria while in the SFY 2014-2015, there were 1,876applicants. Data to determine the counselor to client ratio was obtained from the Accessible Web-based Activity and Reporting Environment (AWARE) case management system.

Figure 10.03

Counselor to Client Ratio

State Fiscal Year	Number served	Ration (person served/counselor)
2016	5,038	64
2015	5,202	75
2014	5,225	74
2013	5,242	64

In SFY 2016-2017, the successful closure outcomes increased from 761 to 854, when compared to SFY 2015-2016. FDBS attributes this success to becoming fully staffed with Employment Placement Specialists (EPS), which ensured that each district office had targeted support for job placement services. FDBS strengthened its relationship with

Community Rehabilitation Partners and local employment networks by holding monthly meetings, trainings and joint activities related to job placement.

The table below provides the number of staff by job titles serving vocational rehabilitation clients; the number of positions, the current vacancies; and the projected vacancies over the next five years.

Figure 10.04

Personnel Serving Vocational Rehabilitation Clients:

Vacancy Information

Job Title	Total Positions	Current Vacancies	Projected Vacancies Over 5 Years
District Administrator	10	1	4
Supervisor	13	2	4
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist	53	2	4

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;

The FDBS works closely with VR to track the number and type of graduate students that are enrolled in state universities offering rehabilitation counseling degrees. This information is maintained by the Program Administrator. A $2,000 incentive is added to the salary of all counselors and supervisors who hold or receive a CRC during their tenure. The following state universities offer a graduate counseling degree that fulfills the educational requirements for Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification with a minimum of other required classes. • Institution: Florida International University Type of Program: Master of Science in Counselor Education - Rehabilitation Counseling Track (MS) • Institution: University of South Florida Type of Program: Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling (MA)

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

Program Data for Institutions of Higher Education

The following information is derived from Florida institutions of higher education that prepare vocational rehabilitation professionals. The information is categorized by institution and type of program.

Institution: Florida International University

Type of Program: Master of Science in Counselor Education - Rehabilitation Counseling Track (MS)

Number and Type of Students Enrolled: 5 MS

Institution: University of South Florida

Type of Program: Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling (MA)

Number and Type of Students Enrolled: 162 graduate students

Number of Graduates Eligible for CRC Certification: 22

None of the graduates in the referenced educational programs were sponsored by Rehabilitation Services Administration. The division acknowledges that there are many graduate level counseling related majors at public state universities that qualify graduates for CRC certification.

All Florida state employees can take up to six credit hours per semester using the Florida Tuition Waiver Program. FDBS expects employees who do not meet CSPD requirements to take advantage of the state's tuition waiver program or participate in federal grant/stipend programs (e.g., Auburn, San Diego State University). When necessary, FDBS may pay for tuition, e.g., when a state university is not within driving distance, or when a staff member is unable to use tuition waiver for any required courses.

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.

Institution: Florida International University

Type of Program: Master of Science in Counselor Education - Rehabilitation Counseling Track (MS)

Number of Graduates Anticipated:

- 2014 - 1 MS
- 2015 - 3 MS
- 2016 - 1 MS
- 2017 - 3 MS

Institution: University of South Florida

Type of Program: Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling (MA)

Number of Graduates Eligible for CRC Certification: 22

Number of Graduates Anticipated:

- 2014 - 41 MA

- 2015 - 50 MA
- 2016 - 22 MA

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.

FDBS annually plans for recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel. FDBS uses People First for recruitment efforts. Personnel must be hired using minimum qualifications with the expectation that standards will be met within a specified period. The Division implemented recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel strategies to meet known barriers. Salary is the number one factor impacting recruitment and retention. FDBS focuses on recruiting persons with disabilities and referring employment opportunities to disability organizations. FDBS is an equal opportunity employer and hires persons with and without disabilities at all levels of employment.

Specific recruitment strategies include:

- When cash resources are available, FDBS awards $2,000 to the vocational rehabilitation specialist base salary upon receipt of CRC on a one-time basis. If a vocational rehabilitation specialist has CRC Certification at the time of hire the beginning salary is set at $2,000 above the base salary.
- FDBS works with the state universities that provide master's degrees in rehabilitation counseling. Activities include attending board meetings and presentations to college classes upon request to share pertinent information related to the Division and recruitment efforts.
- FDBS encourages clients with Master's Degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling to apply for vacant positions.
- When feasible, FDBS will seek legislative approval to increase the base salaries of counseling staff to be more competitive with comparable positions within the state. This process begins with approval from DOE leadership. FDBS has taken initial steps to evaluate the salary structure and recommend increases based on education and tenure.

Specific retention strategies include:

- FDBS provides current personnel the opportunity to obtain higher salaries if they receive their CRC. When feasible, FDBS will seek legislative approval to increase the base salaries of existing counseling staff to be more competitive with comparable positions within the state.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 34 CFR 361.18(c) 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

Due to difficulty in hiring individuals who meet current CRC certification standards, FDBS routinely hires personnel who meet the academic standards. Personnel with a master's degree in a discipline other than counseling must meet the following academic requirements. For this degree to be considered a related degree, the individual must have a master's degree and must document at least 18 credit hours of coursework at the master's level or above, acquired postmaster's, in the following core areas:

- One graduate course with a primary focus on the Theories and Techniques of Counseling. (This is a basic requirement for future consideration of relatedness of degree.)
- Three graduate courses, each with a primary focus in one of the following areas:
  - Occupational Information
  - Job Development and Placement
  - Medical Aspects of Disabilities
  - Foundations of Rehabilitation
  - Psychological Aspects of Disabilities
  - Personal and Vocational Adjustment
- Two graduate courses, each with a primary focus in one of the following areas:
  - Assessment
  - Research Methodology
  - Vocational and Career Development
  - Community Resources
  - Case Management
  - Delivery of Rehabilitation Services
- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major course of study in a social, behavioral or rehabilitative science, education or visual disabilities, and two years of professional experience involving direct services to rehabilitation clients.

- A master's degree from an accredited college or university with major course of study in one of the above areas can substitute for one year of the required experience.

All newly hired vocational rehabilitation counseling staff not meeting CSPD requirements will complete and update their CSPD Education Plan on an annual basis.

Individuals who are hired for positions requiring master's degrees have five years from the time hired to meet standards, allowing date adjustments based on an academic year. Individuals who have master's degrees in areas other than rehabilitation counseling or counseling have two years to complete required courses noted on their CSPD Education Plan, allowing date adjustments based on an academic year.

The CSPD Education Plan includes the following types of information:

• A description of current educational status;

• The courses to be taken during the year;

• The timeframe in which the required education will be completed;

• The institution that the individual will attend; and

• Annual progress reports on course completion.

FDBS tracks the current educational status of personnel as well as their progress in complying with the CSPD requirements. The following table indicates the CRC eligibility status of staff by position.

Figure 10.05

FDBS Personnel Standards by Position

State Fiscal Year 2016-2017

Position Description	Vacancy	Not Eligible	Eligible	Total
Rehabilitation Services District Admin-Blind -SES	1	6	3	10
Rehabilitation Supervisor-Blind - SES	2	8	3	13
Senior Rehabilitation Specialist-Blind	9	35	9	53
Total	**12**	**49**	**15**	**76**

FDBS encourages personnel to obtain certification from the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. Currently, FDBS has 22 personnel who earned the CRC designation as of SFY 2014-2015.

FDBS will provide training for ongoing CEUs, using the vocational rehabilitation basic support grant funding. FDBS's reimbursement policy for certification is addressed in the

Division Policy 12.12, Comprehensive System of Personnel Development as required by federal regulations.

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 section I, Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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

FDBS monitors personnel development needs on an annual basis. Training is provided through the VR basic support grant. FDBS based its core training programs on the areas emphasized in the federal regulations: rehabilitation technology, career guidance and counseling, job development, placement and assessment. Additional training will be provided to ensure that staff have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force. FDBS collaborates with the CareerSource Centers and shares information about its services and the referral process with the Disability Navigators at the CareerSource Centers. FDBS will seek opportunities to coordinate training FAAST. FDBS coordinates training with FAAST by referring FDBS clients to FAAST for assistive technology. FAAST demonstrates, trains, and temporarily loans equipment for clients to test. FAAST provides training to FDBS staff regarding their services to increase referrals.

The training needs assessment is an ongoing process consisting of ensuring compliance of federal and state mandates and; examining individual personnel training requirements related to current job performance, future job requirements, and promotional or career advancement needs.

Based on analysis of training needs compiled from performance reviews, the FDBS Strategic Plan, consumer comments, training evaluations and surveys, training is provided in the following areas:

- Expanding staff knowledge of serving individuals with dual disabilities (where individuals have a primary disability of blindness and a dual disability unrelated to vision);
- Overcoming employment barriers for visually impaired consumers with a criminal history; and

- Providing rehabilitation counseling for individuals with visual impairment and substance abuse issues and/or psychiatric disorders.

It has been determined that counselors benefit from training in supported employment, identifying appropriate candidates, and working through the rehabilitation process with these individuals, and recording accurate information for federal reports. All counselors are provided annual training in career counseling and assessment.

Given that job placement and development are pivotal elements to client success, FDBS mandates all vocational rehabilitation counselors, vocational rehabilitation supervisors, and vocational rehabilitation specialists to participate in three levels of training. The three levels are assessment, job development and placement.

In the first level, training is concentrated on the process of developing jobs which include generation of leads, selection for time management purposes, holding face-to-face meetings with employers to identify needs and closing the deal (actual placement). Vocational rehabilitation staff is presented with a comprehensive manual, including group exercises and the completion of planners, to prepare meetings and work with objections and barriers. This level of training builds a tool for self-assessment of the staff as job developers.

The second level is focused on job placement and development as it relates to clients. Vocational rehabilitation staff is trained to identify the essential elements needed to obtain/maintain a job including motivation, abilities, access to employers and credibility. In this level, staff learn intervention tools and marketing strategies to manage their caseloads as job developers.

The third level is provided to vocational rehabilitation supervisors and district administrators by explaining how to set up placement goals and how to monitor and coach daily activities from their staff, as related to the FDBS business model in job placement and development.

FDBS developed a two-tiered rehabilitation technology training program for all professional and paraprofessional personnel. This training includes a week-long introduction to rehabilitation technology for blind and visually impaired individuals. The second level of training incorporates the use of rehabilitation technology in job development activities. FDBS offers a third level for personnel who completed the second level five or more years ago to ensure personnel possess current knowledge related to technology advances.

All existing rehabilitation specialists, senior rehabilitation specialists, supervisors, and district administrators receive training in both levels. FDBS trains new personnel in both levels and conducts annual training to update existing personnel on new technology issues.

B. ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE

procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

All FDBS personnel members have internet access and are provided with relevant rehabilitation research and information websites. Each FDBS District Office is required to provide a quarterly in-service training for personnel on topics such as blindness rehabilitation, informed choice, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Social Security

work incentives. When funding is available, employees are encouraged to attend various conferences in the field of rehabilitation or blindness.

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.

FDBS employs individuals who communicate in the native languages or other appropriate modes of communication of applicants or eligible individuals. Most FDBS offices in highly populated areas of non-English speaking consumers have personnel who speak the native languages of individuals in the community. FDBS requires language interpreter services (including sign language) be purchased when necessary to communicate with an applicant or eligible individual. FDBS has the capability to print in Braille and large print. Documents such as application for services, Client Rights, guidelines for developing an Individualized Plan for Employment, and informational brochures are available in appropriate formats (i.e. large print, Braille, Spanish) or are communicated by way of an interpreter.

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.

FDBS has a cooperative agreement with the Florida Department of Education's Division of Public Schools to coordinate activities for students who are blind and visually impaired. This is accomplished through the preparation and implementation of guidelines, policies, rules, and regulations that affect the interests of students with visual impairments through joint planning committees and publications, as appropriate. Both divisions promote and provide training for teachers and FDBS personnel who work with students who are blind and visually impaired. FDBS shares information and coordinates other activities with the Division of Public Schools to increase public awareness of visual disabilities and services available to students with visual impairments.

J. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(a)).

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;

FDBS commissioned a three-year comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) to investigate the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with significant visual disabilities. This research study was led by Michele Cappella-McDonald, Ph.D., Interim

Director and Research Professor for the National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision at Mississippi State University. She was assisted by Anne Hierholzer, Mid-west Political Science Association Research Associate.

The Needs Assessment addressed the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which states that each state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) must conduct a comprehensive statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of its residents and in particular, needs for supported employment services, needs of minorities and other unserved/underserved populations, needs of persons served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system, and the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs. This work took place during the period of March 3, 2014 through June 30, 2015 and examined a six-year period of data (October 2008 through September 2013).

The top five rehabilitation needs reported by all consumers were: (1) Low vision aids or devices, (2) Training in assistive technology, (3) Instruction using computer assistive technology, (4) Help exploring career options, and (5) Instruction in cane travel. These were the top five rehabilitation needs for consumers with the Most Significant Disabilities (MSD). Needs in areas related to employment were the greatest. Approximately one-quarter of consumers with the MSD reported a need for a job coach. Only 2.9% of consumers served and closed in FFY 2013 had a supported employment goal on their IPE; those who had a supported employment goal were significantly less likely to obtain competitive employment.

Key informants identified assistive technology, blindness skills training (including independent living skills), and vocational training for job-specific skills as the most important rehabilitation needs of those with the MSD. The most important needs of consumers with MSD identified by staff (in an open-ended question) were better service delivery, better training for these consumers, and increased opportunities for meaningful work. The three items on the staff survey that involved Supported Employment (SE) were rated as moderately important needs, with a larger percentage rating them as moderate rather than critical needs. Providing a broader array of placement services for consumers involved in SE was the highest rated of these needs, with 84.7% rating it as a critical or moderate need.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

Improving services to minorities was one of the key areas identified as a need. In terms of identifying minorities' rehabilitation needs, key informants indicated that better outreach is needed to these groups and that language barriers were a problem. Several key informants commented that some members of minority groups have lower socioeconomic status, resulting in challenges and service needs. Consumers' self-report of their needs is another source of information, and the top three needs were the same for minorities as they were for white consumers: (1) Low vision aids or devices, (2) Training in assistive technology, (3) Instruction using computer assistive technology, (4) Information to help you understand blindness, and (5) Help exploring career options. A much greater percentage of minority consumers reported a need for information about blindness, compared to white consumers, while the percentage reporting a need for the other services were similar.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Comparing the Florida population to the population that received services, the only minority group that appears to be underserved is persons of Hispanic/Latino origin (they represent 23.3% of the population, but only 12.3% of the population who received services). One key informant identified the Hispanic/Latino population as being underserved, and minority groups were identified as an unserved or underserved population by staff (with multiple specific groups mentioned). Staff and some key informants identified rural residents as comprising an unserved/underserved group. Transportation was identified as a major problem/need area for rural consumers. Consumers with multiple disabilities (including deaf-blind) and school-aged children were other groups identified as unserved or underserved by multiple key informants. Some key informants commented that school-aged youth were unserved, but should be receiving services at that age to help with employment outcomes later. The district offices conduct outreach activities to identify under-represented populations monthly. Activities include outreach to vision clinics, optometrists' offices, senior centers, participation in White Cane Day events, health fairs, and low vision expos.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

Key informants reported that the workforce development system (WDS) is not accessible for people who are blind or visually impaired. Staff believed it was important for FDBS to work more closely with other components of the WIS to provide services to consumers (87.7% indicated this was a moderate or critical need for improvement). Although consumers were not asked directly for their opinions about CRPs who provided their services, the FDBS can consider consumer responses on satisfaction with services received and consumer report of needs that remained after their cases were closed. Consumers expressed high levels of satisfaction regarding training received, except for employment-related services. Remaining needs after case closure for typical blindness training areas (e.g., instruction in cane travel, AT, braille) were lower than many other services areas, although the need was still high in some (e.g., 50.7% reported a remaining need for braille instruction).

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

Prior needs assessments did not identify pre-employment transition services; however, this population's needs will be identified in the future.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

Via the staff survey and key informant interviews, a greater number of CRPs were identified as one of the important areas of need. Both groups felt there was room for improvement in the current CRPs. FDBS reviews consumer and agency needs to make modifications to contracts with CRPs. The agency made several changes in 2017 due to WIOA requirements and review of data. Some rural areas of the state may not provide adequate or reasonable access to services for potential clients. FDBS works with existing providers to fill these gaps, explore the need for additional satellite services, additional CRPs and/or provide services via other contracts or purchase orders with qualified entities.

According to consumers who were closed unsuccessfully, the biggest barriers reported were: (a) lack of jobs, (b) lack of transportation to job site, (c) difficulty with travel skills, (d) lack of accommodations, and (e) lack of needed vocational rehabilitation. The most common reasons former consumers who were closed unsuccessfully gave for leaving their rehabilitation programs are (a) case was closed by FDBS, (b) completed their program, (c) didn't need the services, (d) never received services or weren't getting any help from FDBS, (e) poor health or medical reasons, or (f) had a problem with their counselor or FDBS.

Staff were asked to identify barriers to employment for consumers closed unsuccessfully. The most commonly mentioned barriers were (a) lack of transportation, (b) lack of consumer motivation, (c) lack of consumer cooperation, (d) lack of consumer experience, job skills, education, and/or training, and (e) health problems. Other than transportation, the barriers that staff identifies are related to internal issues with the consumer, while the consumers themselves primarily identify external barriers. Some of the barriers identified (by both groups) that could potentially be addressed by FDSB are: education/skill level/ training, travel skills, transportation, and accommodations.

FDBS consumers who are more likely to be closed unsuccessfully are (a) racial minority group members (does not include Hispanic/Latino), (b) people with lower education levels, (c) people with an IEP while in secondary school, (d) people with the most significant disabilities, (e) people who did not receive rehabilitation technology services, and (f) people who receive Social Security Administration benefits. Based upon the results of the 2014 Needs Assessment, FDBS developed strategies to address the identified needs. These strategies are listed in section (l) and (o).

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 .

Prior needs assessments did not identify pre-employment transition services; however, this population's needs will be identified in future planning.

FDBS has an interagency agreement that serves as a transition services model for improved collaboration, communication, coordination, and cooperation among local education agencies and local offices of VR, FDBS, APD, Department of Children and Families, Children's Medical Services, and Mental Health Services.

FDBS has a cooperative agreement with the Florida Department of Education's Division of Public Schools to coordinate activities for students who are blind and visually impaired. This is accomplished through the preparation and implementation of guidelines, policies, rules, and regulations that affect the interests of students with visual impairments through joint planning committees and publications, as appropriate.

The FDBS employs a program consultant as the central point of contact for the School to Work Transition Program. The consultant serves as the liaison for the 67 school districts and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind. The consultant coordinates and plans for effective transition services delivery and is responsible for training internal employees and making presentations about FDBS transition services at statewide conferences to increase

understanding and awareness of the agency's role in assisting eligible students with disabilities. Additionally, this position serves as a representative on the State Secondary Transition Interagency Committee.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES;

FDBS estimates the number of individuals eligible for services in the state is approximately 5,450.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

The estimated number of individuals who will receive services for FFY 2019 is 5,182.

· The average caseload size - 62;

· The number of applications - 1,482;

· The number of Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs) written - 1,357; and

· The number of consumers who continue to require services from one year to the next - 3,309.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

For FFY 2019, the number of individuals who will receive services under the Supported Employment program is approximately 104.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION;

Not applicable.

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

Not applicable.

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 estimated cost per person for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for FFY 2019 is $3,431.63. The cost per person for Supported Employment for FFY 2019 is estimated to range between $1,000 and $9,000. Details regarding supported employment are outlined in section X(n).

FDBS is not under an order of selection; thus, cost of services by priority category is not provided.

L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The designated State unit must:

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED

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.

Yes, the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.

The goals and priorities are based on the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), strategic plan, requirements related to the performance standards and indicators, and on other information about the state agency. (See section 101(a)(15)(C) of the Act.) FDBS implemented and uses the goals described below to ensure blind and visually-impaired Floridians have the tools, support and opportunities to achieve success. These strategies assist FDBS in providing equal access for clients, increasing the number of employers hiring clients, generating FDBS program awareness and strengthening infrastructure. .The goals and strategies were derived from stakeholder input, the DOE strategic plan and results of the CSNA. FDBS discussed goals and strategies with the Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind and incorporated feedback received by the Council.

Four goals address the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs. These goals, strategies, and measures are:

· Highest Client Achievement

· Seamless Articulation and Maximum Access

· Skilled Workforce and Economic Development

· Quality Efficient Services

Goal 1.0 Highest Client Achievement

Objective: Coordinate and secure high-quality training, education, work experiences and partnerships that create opportunities for blind and visually impaired Floridians to obtain and maintain independence, postsecondary education credentials, and successful employment outcomes.

Strategy 1.1: Expand opportunities for students to receive FDBS services and secure opportunities for students and youth with disabilities to practice and improve workplace skills.

Measure: This strategy is measured based on a review and analysis of outcome data.

Strategy 1.2: Ensure clients participating in training and education programs are benefiting from engagement.

Measure: This strategy is measured by evaluating the gains (measurable progress) that clients achieve through training and educational programs.

Strategy 1.3: Expand utilization of online job systems such as DEO's Abilities Work Web Portal and accompanying help desk managed by VR, and the state/federal Talent Acquisition Portal to expose employers to job ready FDBS consumers.

Measure: This strategy is measured by connecting FDBS clients with electronic systems used by employers to seek talented individuals with disabilities.

Strategy 1.4: Encourage and Track industry certifications, apprenticeships and postsecondary outcomes.

Measure: This strategy is measured by the percentage of participants who engage in apprenticeships programs, and those who attain industry certifications, a postsecondary credential or secondary school diploma within one year after exit.

Strategy 1.5: Develop and implement an Employment Skills Training Program at the Residential Rehabilitation Center to better prepare youth and adults who are blind and visually impaired for success in future employment.

Measure: This strategy is measured based upon the number of training sessions provided, the number of people who obtain successful employment and an analysis of outcome data.

Goal 2.0 Seamless Articulation and Maximum Access

Objective: Create a comprehensive service delivery system that fosters accessibility and provides positive experiences for blind and visually impaired Floridians enabling them to matriculate from school/training to work. Improve outreach methods to reach more consumers, advocates, providers, employers and other stakeholders.

Strategy 2.1: Increase the provision of accessibility tools, awareness, and regular follow-up with consumers to ensure equality in educational experiences and vocational opportunities.

Measure: This strategy is measured based on a review and analysis of outcome data.

Strategy 2.2: Implement a comprehensive communications and outreach plan.

Measure: This strategy is measured based on the development of a communication plan, comparative data, and the number of program referrals.

Strategy 2.3: Increase the number of individuals with significant and most significant disabilities receiving services.

Measure: This strategy is measured by reviewing and analyzing outcome data.

Strategy 2.4: Increase outreach services to under-served and un-served population.

Measure: This strategy is measured by comparing baseline demographic client data on the number of individuals served in succeeding program years.

Strategy 2.5: Work with each client to ensure that IEP goals are consistent with and/or are amenable to transportation resources.

Measure: This strategy is measured based on research results.

Goal 3.0 Skilled Workforce and Economic Development

Objective: Assist blind and visually impaired Floridians with obtaining, maintaining and advancing in competitive integrated employment.

Strategy 3.1: Develop and strengthen employer relationships by providing employer training, support, education and resources related to employing individuals with visual impairment and provide support for employers with compliance with Section 503 regulations.

Measure: This strategy is measured by standards established by the USDOL, USDOE and other state measures developed in the division.

Strategy 3.2: Increase successful employment outcomes including self-employment outcomes for transition age youth, adults, and seniors receiving services through FDBS.

Measure: This strategy is measured based on comparative data on the number of successful employment outcomes.

Strategy 3.3: Create successful job outcomes in the BBE

Measure: This strategy is measured based on the number of FDBS clients successfully completing the Bureau of Business Enterprise Program, and the percentage of licensed vendors staying at their first facility for at least 12 months.

Strategy 3.4: Support FDBS clients in becoming self-supporting.

Measure: A review of the median earnings of participants is analyzed during second quarter after exit.

Strategy 3.5: Strengthen statewide collaborative partnerships with core partners (CareerSource Florida, DEO, DCAE, VR, community rehabilitation programs and employers).

Measure: This strategy is measured based upon a review and analysis of outcome data.

Strategy 3.6: Developing mechanisms to maximize job placement effectiveness among FDBS Job Placement Specialists and contracted service providers.

Measure: This strategy is measured by examining the overall increase in job placements in the next SFY year, as well as by totaling the number of placements made by both FDBS and service provider's staff.

Strategy 3.7: Support and track successful employment outcomes for blind Floridians with significant and most significant disabilities for a period of one year.

Measure: This strategy is measured by analyzing the percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment after exit during the second and fourth quarter.

Strategy 3.8: Pilot the Vermont Progressive Employment Model.

Measure: This strategy is measured by the number of employment outcomes generated from the Vermont Model.

Strategy 3.9: Identify an approach to expedite eligibility and service delivery to individuals who are at risk of losing employment.

Measure: This strategy is measured based on outcome data.

Goal 4.0 Quality Efficient Services

Objective: Create an accountable and exemplary division workforce that ensures high quality services.

Strategy 4.1: Increase staff development and continuing education.

Measure: This strategy is measured by assessing the number of employees participating in continuing education opportunities, the amount and types of additional training provided and obtaining employee feedback (surveys).

Strategy 4.2: Align FDBS policies and procedures to address new WIOA requirements.

Measure: This strategy is measured by providing a listing of policies that are, or have been reviewed and revised to reflect WIOA requirements during the plan period.

Strategy 4.3: Increase opportunities for data sharing and improve data validity and integrity.

Measure: This strategy is measured by developing data sharing agreements establishing a mechanism to ensure data validity and integrity.

Strategy 4.4: Decrease audit findings from the Offices of the Inspector General, Auditor General and the Rehabilitation Services Administration through adherence to policies and procedures.

Measure: This strategy is measured based up results of State and Federal Audit Findings.

Strategy 4.5: Develop strong fiscal policies and procedures to promote responsible stewardship of available resources and addresses WIOA requirements.

Measure: This strategy is measured based up results of the Fiscal Encumbrance Report and monthly reconciliations of expenditures and encumbrances along with any specific fiscal audit findings.

Strategy 4.6: Strengthen contract language to ensure increased contractor accountability, improve resource allocations, address WIOA regulations and encourage maximum achievement of consumer independence.

Measure: This strategy is measured by the results of contract performance, the ability to leverage resources.

Strategy 4.7: Strengthen contract monitoring activities, and procedures/protocol to reflect new requirements.

Measure: This strategy is measured based up the results of federal and state audit findings.

Strategy 4.8: Work collaboratively with AWARE Case Management System provider to align FDBS case management system with WIOA requirements

Measure: This strategy is measured by implementation of system upgrades as it relates to WIOA requirements.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

FDBS' goals and priorities are based on the most current Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), strategic plan, requirements related to the performance standards and indicators, and on other information about the state agency.

FDBS utilizes the strategies listed below to ensure blind and visually-impaired Floridians have the tools, support and opportunities to achieve success. These strategies assist FDBS to provide equal access for clients, increase the number of employers hiring clients, generate FDBS program awareness and strengthen infrastructure. FDBS implements strategies that foster success for blind and visually impaired Floridians.

- Expand opportunities for students to receive FDBS services and secure opportunities for students and youth with disabilities to practice and improve workplace skills.
- Ensure that clients participating in training and education programs benefit from engagement.
- Expand utilization of online job systems such as DEO's Abilities Work Web Portal and accompanying help desk managed by VR, and the state/federal Talent Acquisition Portal to expose employers to job ready FDBS consumers.
- Encourage and Track industry certifications, apprenticeships and postsecondary outcomes.
- Develop and implement an Employment Skills Training Program at the Residential Rehabilitation Center to better prepare youth and adults who are blind and visually impaired for success in future employment.
- Increase use of accessibility tools, awareness, and regular follow-up with consumers to ensure equality in educational experiences and vocational opportunities.
- Implement a comprehensive communications and outreach plan.
- Increase the number of individuals with significant and most significant disabilities receiving services.
- Increase outreach services to under-served and un-served population.
- Work collaboratively with the one-stop career center to ensure centers meet accessibility needs of clients both in construction (universal design) and equipment.
- Educate one-stop career centers on the importance of establishing centers in areas that are easily accessible to public transportation.
- Work collaboratively to ensure disability coordinators are cross trained with core partners processes.
- Partner to communicate, strategize and execute agreed upon methods of meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities.

- Identify opportunities to expand services/programs to meet ongoing needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Enter into a local memorandum of understanding with the local board, relating to the operation of the one-stop career center system.
- Participate in the operation of the one-stop career center system consistent with the terms of the memorandum of understanding and legal requirements.
- Provide representation on the state board to the extent provided under WIOA.
- Evaluate and refine state and LWDB makeup to include partners that will lead Florida to a more comprehensive workforce development system. Local boards should reflect representation from all core partners.
- Develop and strengthen employer relationships by providing employer training, support, education and resources related to employing individuals with visual impairment and provide support for employers with compliance with Section 503 regulations.
- Increase successful employment outcomes including self-employment outcomes for transition age youth, adults, and seniors receiving services through FDBS
- Communicate community organizations and civic groups. Ongoing meeting with identified groups to educate and increase awareness of the division, its services and the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. Ongoing education of employers on hiring persons who are blind and visually impaired in presentations to community organizations and civic groups.
- Employment placement specialists present to community organizations and civic groups quarterly. Engage employers who have secured blind and visually impaired employees to participate in the presentations.
- Each district hosts an annual open house for employers and potential employers. Clients who are employed or seeking employment are invited to attend.
- Each district nominates at least one employer for the joint agency statewide exemplary employer event in October. The Director awards plaques to those nominated for statewide exemplary employer.

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

FDBS commissioned a three-year comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) to investigate the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with significant visual disabilities. This research study was led by Michele Cappella-McDonald, Ph.D., Interim Director and Research Professor for the National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision at Mississippi State University. She was assisted by Anne Hierholzer, Mid-west Political Science Association Research Associate.

The Needs Assessment addressed the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which states that each state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) must conduct a comprehensive statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of its residents

and in particular, needs for supported employment services, needs of minorities and other unserved/underserved populations, needs of persons served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system, and the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs. This work took place during the period of March 3, 2014 through June 30, 2015 and examined a six-year period of data (October 2008 through September 2013).

This research was guided by the following six questions:

744. What are the rehabilitation needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired, particularly the vocational rehabilitation service needs of these individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services?

745. What are the vocational rehabilitation services needs of minorities?

746. What are the vocational rehabilitation services needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program?

747. What are the vocational rehabilitation services needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system?

748. What is the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state?

749. What are the biggest barriers to achieving employment for those consumers closed unsuccessfully?

To address the research questions, the following sources of data were utilized for the CSNA:

750. Consumer surveys - The target group will be those persons closed after receiving services from FDBS during a previous one-year period (FFY 2013: October 2012 - September 2013). Consumers closed unsuccessfully will be asked additional questions to address question 6.

751. DBS staff surveys - This survey will include all staff that provide services to consumers.

752. Key informant interviews - Interviews with 5 to 10 people identified by FDBS as key informants.

753. Employer surveys - FDBS will provide email addresses of businesses that they have worked with FDBS during the previous one or two years (OPTIONAL).

754. Existing data sources

755. ACS

756. Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research population projections

757. Bureau of Labor Statistics labor/economic forecasts

758. DBS case service data (RSA-911 data)

759. Consumer satisfaction data collected for FDBS

Study's Results

The large amount of data collected and analyzed for this project was reviewed to identify the most significant needs that emerged from the data. Specifically, there were eight most important needs identified as listed below. FDBS developed strategies to address the identified needs [see section (8)(c)].

760. Employment-related services

761. Develop and strengthen employer relationships

762. Services to minorities

763. Assistive technology services

764. Increased outreach and community visibility

765. Transportation

766. CRPs

767. Regular follow-up with consumers

FDBS plans to conduct a new CSNA in 2018.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

Refer to Appendix I: **Performance Goals for the Core Programs**

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.

Refer to Section A, "Input of State Rehabilitation Council (Blind)" for recommendations and FDBS responses. FDBS received the draft monitoring report from the April 2017 review in March 2018. Initial responses were submitted to RSA.

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.

Not applicable.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER.

Not applicable.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS.

Not applicable.

D. THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER.

Not applicable.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

Not applicable.

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.

Not applicable.

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.

Pursuant to Florida Statute 413, FDBS is mandated to provide services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired of all ages. The FDBS routinely partners with community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) to provide services that enhance the lives of people with vision loss. The extents of services provided through the CRPs are based, in part, on the types of services available through a specific CRP, the needs of the specific community, and the resources available within the FDBS.

FDBS contracts with one community rehabilitation program, the Conklin Center for the Blind, to provide Supported Employment services. FDBS uses a tracking system to ensure funds are spent as it relates to Supported Employment (SE) and Pre-employment Transition Services (PETS). The table below depicts the expenditures allocations as follows: Services to all eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities is allocated to half (50%) of the PETS expenditures (84016). Services to youth with the most significant disabilities between the ages of 14 to 24 (not older than 24) is allocated to half (50%) of the PETS expenditures (84216). A state match of 10% is required for youth with the most significant disabilities (89216).

During SFY 2016-2017, FDBS contracted with one community rehabilitation program and utilized local level authorizations to provide supported employment services. Details of the spending pattern are depicted below:

Figure 10.06

Support Employment Spending Patterns

Community Rehab Provider	Supported Employment Grant (Title VI) (840xx)	Basic Support (820xx)	State Funds(Match) (892xx)	Total
Conklin Center for the Blind	$70,369	$1,379,442	$0	**$1,449,811**
Authorizations (842xx)	$0	$0	$0	**$0**
Authorizations (892xx)	$0	$0	$15,990	**$15,990**
Total	$70,369	$1,379,442	$15,990	**$1,465,801**

In the Supported Employment Programs, FDBS provided services to 39 individuals during the SFY 2016-2017. Of the 39 individuals served, 22 were served by the Conklin Center, with 12 of them coded as Supported Employment, and 8 of them were competitively employed. Furthermore, of the 39 total participants coded as Supported Employment, 17 were served using authorizations of which 17 were coded as supported employment and 11 were closed as competitively employed. Below is the actual breakout:

Figure 10.07

Individuals Served by Supported Employment Programs

Community Rehab Provider	Clients Served	Supported EmploymentPlacements	Supported EmploymentOutcomes
Florida Lions Conklin Center for the Blind	22	12	12
SE Clients Served via Authorization (Case Services)	17	17	11
FY-2014-2015 Vocational Rehabilitation Supported Employment Services Totals:	39	29	23

In SFY 2015-2016, FDBS changed the way the Title VI funds are disbursed. FDBS offers supported employment services via case service dollars and via a contract with the Conklin Center to ensure all clients have access to services. FDBS developed a tracking system to ensure that 50 percent of the Supported Employment funds are being utilized appropriately for Youth with significant disabilities.

2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:

A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

The FDBS provides extended services for youth with most significant disabilities via contracts with Community Rehabilitation Providers. FDBS and our CRPs provide pre-employment services to visually impaired youth under the five pre-employment categories.

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.

FDBS will work to identify grants and joint initiatives to provide extended services and expand supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities.

FDBS has not identified or applied for any grants for this purpose. FDBS works with Goodwill Industries, Agencies for Persons with Disabilities, and county advocacy and rehabilitation centers to expand opportunities for supported employment for all youth, including those with the most significant disabilities.

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.

FDBS utilizes the strategies listed below to ensure blind and visually-impaired Floridians have the tools, support and opportunities to achieve success. These strategies assist FDBS to provide equal access for clients, increase the number of employers hiring clients, generate FDBS program awareness and strengthen infrastructure. FDBS implements strategies that foster success for blind and visually impaired Floridians.

- Expand opportunities for students to receive FDBS services and secure opportunities for students and youth with disabilities to practice and improve workplace skills.
- Ensure that clients participating in training and education programs benefit from engagement.
- Expand utilization of online job systems such as DEO's Abilities Work Web Portal and accompanying help desk managed by VR, and the state/federal Talent Acquisition Portal to expose employers to job ready FDBS consumers.
- Encourage and Track industry certifications, apprenticeships and postsecondary outcomes.

- Develop and implement an Employment Skills Training Program at the Residential Rehabilitation Center to better prepare youth and adults who are blind and visually impaired for success in future employment.
- Increase use of accessibility tools, awareness, and regular follow-up with consumers to ensure equality in educational experiences and vocational opportunities.
- Implement a comprehensive communications and outreach plan.
- Increase the number of individuals with significant and most significant disabilities receiving services.
- Increase outreach services to under-served and un-served population.
- Work collaboratively with the one-stop career center to ensure centers meet accessibility needs of clients both in construction (universal design) and equipment.
- Educate one-stop career centers on the importance of establishing centers in areas that are easily accessible to public transportation.
- Work collaboratively to ensure disability coordinators are cross trained with core partners processes.
- Partner to communicate, strategize and execute agreed upon methods of meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Identify opportunities to expand services/programs to meet ongoing needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Enter into a local memorandum of understanding with the local board, relating to the operation of the one-stop career center system.
- Participate in the operation of the one-stop career center system consistent with the terms of the memorandum of understanding and legal requirements.
- Provide representation on the state board to the extent provided under WIOA.
- Evaluate and refine state and LWDB makeup to include partners that will lead Florida to a more comprehensive workforce development system. Local boards should reflect representation from all core partners.
- Develop and strengthen employer relationships by providing employer training, support, education and resources related to employing individuals with visual impairment and provide support for employers with compliance with Section 503 regulations.
- Increase successful employment outcomes including self-employment outcomes for transition age youth, adults, and seniors receiving services through FDBS
- Communicate community organizations and civic groups. Ongoing meeting with identified groups to educate and increase awareness of the division, its services and the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. Ongoing education of employers on hiring persons who are blind and visually impaired in presentations to community organizations and civic groups.

- Employment placement specialists present to community organizations and civic groups quarterly. Engage employers who have secured blind and visually impaired employees to participate in the presentations.
- Each district hosts an annual open house for employers and potential employers. Clients who are employed or seeking employment are invited to attend.
- Each district nominates at least one employer for the joint agency statewide exemplary employer event in October. The Director awards plaques to those nominated for statewide exemplary employer.

2. HOW A BROAD RANGE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES WILL BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT EACH STAGE OF THE REHABILITATION PROCESS AND ON A STATEWIDE BASIS.

The FDBS provides Rehabilitation Technology services to blind and visually impaired clients statewide - based on need and assessment - through a contractual agreement between FDBS and the Tampa Lighthouse Rehabilitation Engineering Program. The program provides rehabilitation technology assessment and evaluation services for FDBS clients across all stages of the VR process. Rehabilitation technology includes a range of services and devices that supplement and enhance individual functions, such as job redesign or worksite modifications that improve the work environment for individuals with visual impairments.

FDBS also partners with the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (FAAST) as a resource for blind and visually impaired clients to access equipment to help them obtain independence. FAAST services delivers appropriate, cost-effective, state-of-the-art assistive technology services and devices on a statewide basis. FAAST is a not-for-profit corporation for which the Assistive Technology Advisory Council acts as the board of directors, manages the project, and provides administrative and technical support to the council. FAAST administers a low interest loan authority that provides funding to individuals with disabilities who may be unable to qualify for traditional loans and bank financing to purchase assistive technology devices.

Assistive technology includes both devices and services. A device is any item or piece of equipment used to maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a person with a disability. Many high-tech and low-tech devices are available to help people with disabilities in daily living tasks, communication, education, work, and recreation.

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.

The district offices conduct outreach activities to identify under-represented populations on a monthly basis. Activities include outreach to vision clinics, optometrists' offices, senior centers, participation in White Cane Day events, health fairs, and low vision expos. FDBS developed a list of transportation contacts to assist field staff with identifying transportation vendors for clients in need of this resource. The list is updated as needed.

FDBS assesses its business processes and organizational capacity on an ongoing basis to make consistent improvements.

Through effective programs, proven curricula, certified instructors and years of personal, professional experience and collaboration with FDBS, our CRPs work to ensure that individuals of all backgrounds have the tools they need to lead productive, independent lives while pursuing their vocational goals. FDBS is committed to continuing to strengthen and develop statewide collaborative partnerships with new and existing community rehabilitation providers by providing support, strengthening contract language to ensure increased contractor accountability, and improving available resource allocations to CRPs.

The FDBS assesses its services to individuals with most significant disabilities and individuals in unserved or underserved populations and minorities. The FDBS identified the following strategies to better serve this population. District offices submit monthly data reports that are compiled and analyzed by the state office. Improvements to enhance district follow-through are evaluated and implemented on an ongoing basis.

Strategies include:

- Meeting with community organizations and civic groups on a regular basis to educate and increase their awareness of the division, vocational rehabilitation services and the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.
- Employment Placement Specialists (EPS) present to community organizations and civic groups quarterly. The EPS engage employers who have secured blind or visually impaired employees to participate in the presentations.
- Each district holds an annual open house for employers and potential employers. The district invites employed clients and clients seeking employment.
- Each district nominates at least one employer for the joint agency statewide exemplary employer event in October. The nominees receive plaques from the division.
- Utilizing these strategies increased successful employment outcomes statewide. The total number clients obtaining employment increased by 93 from 2016 to 2017.

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).

The FDBS provides services throughout the state, including transition services that increase and improve vocational rehabilitation options for eligible customers. Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Florida Department of Education's Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS) and partnerships with community rehabilitation programs across the state, the FDBS will improve and expand VR services services to clients.

This is a state-level interagency agreement charged with providing transition services to high school students who are progressing to postsecondary education/training, support services, and/or employment. These agencies agree to meet regularly to share information, ideas and current initiatives; collaborate on training and special projects; cooperate in planning and budgeting; and support areas of work that are mutually beneficial.

The purpose of this agreement is to encourage collaboration among the local leadership and staff of the Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and local offices of VR, FDBS, Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), Children's Medical Services, and the Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Office to expand services for clients, within the context of applicable federal and state regulations required of each agency, namely:

- LEAs provide FAPE for students with disabilities, including preparation for transition from school to work or other post-school activities;
- VR and FDBS assist student transition from secondary school to work through postsecondary educational supports and/or employment supports for a successful employment outcome;
- APD strives to "reduce the use of sheltered workshops and other noncompetitive employment day activities and promote opportunities for gainful employment for persons with developmental disabilities who choose to seek such employment" (Chapter 393, Florida Statutes). F.S. 393 states that "to promote independence and productivity, the agency shall provide supports and services, within available resources, to assist clients enrolled in Medicaid waivers who choose to pursue gainful employment." If an individual is eligible for APD waiver services and employment is a needed service, then this service must be provided to meet standards as outlined in rule;
- Children's Medical Services works to ensure youth and young adults with special health care needs are provided with a smooth and successful transition of leaving pediatric or child health care services to receiving services from adult health care providers. Starting at age 12, care coordinators work with parents and children/young adults to prepare them for their future health care needs and services; and
- The Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Office works to provide a system of care, in partnership with families and the community enabling children and adults with mental health problems or emotional disturbances to successfully live in the community, to be self-sufficient or to attain self-sufficiency at adulthood, and to realize their full potential. Mental health supports and services will enable adults and transitioning students to participate in community activities such as employment and other valued community roles.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

FDBS has a long standing contract relationship with their statewide Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) and values the services they provide to our clients. A CRP is

defined as a private, non-profit program that provides rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Our CRPs provide education, independent life skills, job training, and job placement services to our clients who are participants in our vocational rehabilitation program and their families.

FDBS reviews consumer and agency needs to make modifications to contracts with CRPs. The agency expects more changes because of changes required under WIOA and the review of data. There is a recognition that some rural areas of the state leave some potential client populations without adequate or reasonable access to services. FDBS will work with existing providers to fill these gaps, explore the need for additional satellite services, additional CRPs and/or provide services via other contracts or purchase orders with qualified entities. FDBS is committed to strengthening and developing statewide collaborative partnerships with new and existing community rehabilitation programs by providing support, strengthening contract language to ensure increased contractor accountability, and improving available resource allocations to CRPs.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

The FDBS enhanced the AWARE Case Management System to collect and track transition data required by the Rehabilitation Services Administration. The enhancements will enable FDBS to conduct differential analysis and tracking to better evaluate agency performance and identify how to best improve service delivery and outcomes for students with disabilities.

FDBS works in conjunction with the Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind to review, analyze and advise the division on its performance of responsibilities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The division's state plan reflects the RSA regulations with respect to performance indicators.FDBS anticipates that all projects within its State Plan will have a positive impact on program performance. Specific strategies include the following:

2.1: Increase the provision of accessibility tools, awareness, and regular follow-up with consumers to ensure equality in educational experiences and vocational opportunities. FDBS will strengthen its relationship with the Lighthouses to ensure appropriate and client-specific assistive technology is consistent with the needs of all clients and is reflected in the IPE. FDBS monitors the contract and receives client feedback via satisfaction surveys. FDBS values collaboration between staff and consumers, and incorporates follow-up at all levels of the rehabilitation process. At each level, from applicant to closure of case, Rehabilitation Technicians and Specialists, Employment Placement Specialist, and CRP staff (as needed and appropriate) work as a team to remain in contact with the client. Communication between the client and staff throughout the process, strengthens the chance for a positive client outcome.

2.2: Implement a comprehensive communications and outreach plan. FDBS has produced and disseminated several marketing videos highlighting client success stories and the value of FDBS services. FDBS hosted several large-scale regional outreach events - with media coverage - to enhance community awareness and engagement.

2.3: Increase the number of individuals with significant and most significant disabilities receiving services. In January 2016, FDBS implemented an online application to increase accessibility to individuals who may qualify for services. FDBS created multiple initiatives throughout the state to increase referrals, such as the See Different initiative and FDBS 75 Years Celebrations. Several PSAs were shown throughout the state via Comcast.

2.4: Increase outreach services to under-served and un-served population. The district offices conduct outreach activities to identify under-served and un-served populations on a monthly basis. Activities include outreach to vision clinics, optometrists' offices, senior centers, participation in White Cane Day events, health fairs, and low vision expos.

2.5: Expand utilization of online job systems such as DEO's Abilities Work Web Portal and accompanying help desk managed by VR, and the state/federal Talent Acquisition Portal to expose employers to job ready FDBS consumers. FDBS trains rehabilitation specialists and employment placement specialists throughout the state on using TAP as one of the resources to successfully place visually impaired individuals in competitive integrated employment. FDBS tracks utilization of TAP and captures this data in biweekly reports.

2.6: Encourage and Track industry certifications, apprenticeships and postsecondary outcomes. The BBE tracks Continuing Education Units (CEUs), food manager certifications, and vendor licensures. The Employment Placement Specialists are continually notified of information regarding industry certifications, apprenticeships, and postsecondary opportunities via emails and during monthly conference calls. FDBS is represented on the National Employment Team, which captures nationwide statistics and best practices for working with employers.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

The FDBS works collaboratively with the statewide workforce systems. The Agency Director serves on the statewide workforce board, local district administrators collaborate with local boards and FDBS employees visit workforce centers and other venues. The following strategies will increase partnerships with the statewide workforce investment system:

- Work with Florida's one-stop career centers to ensure centers meet accessibility needs of clients both in construction (universal design) and equipment. FDBS works with the career centers to ensure appropriate and client-specific assistive technology is consistent with the needs of all clients.
- Educate one-stop career centers on the importance of establishing centers in areas that are easily accessible to public transportation.
- Work to ensure disability coordinators are cross trained on the processes of core partners. FDBS collaborates with the CareerSource Centers and shares information about its services and the referral process with the Disability Navigators at the CareerSource Centers.
- Communicate, strategize and execute agreed upon methods of meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities. FDBS participates in regularly scheduled conference

calls and meetings. FDBS solicits feedback from core partners regarding contracts and policies.

- Identify opportunities to expand services/programs to meet ongoing needs of individuals with disabilities. FDBS has an online application to increase accessibility to individuals who may qualify for services. FDBS created multiple initiatives throughout the state to increase referrals, such as the See Different initiative and FDBS 75 Years Celebrations. Several PSAs were shown throughout the state via Comcast. The revised version of Policy 2.16 Timeliness of Services, effective October 18, 2017, includes language to prioritize services to individuals at risk of becoming unemployed.
- A memorandum of understanding with the local board, relating to the operation of the one-stop career center system. MOUs are in with each local CareerSource to ensure individuals who are blind and visually impaired fully participate in the workforce system.
- Participate in the operation of the one-stop career center system consistent with the terms of the memorandum of understanding and legal requirements. FDBS provides Employment Placement Specialists with marketing tools/toolkit to use when meeting with CareerSource staff. CareerSource staff receive education regarding FDBS programs/services with the goal of increasing opportunities for clients seeking employment.
- Continue representation on the state board, and gain membership on local boards.
- Continue collaboration with LWDB partners to fully engage the state's employee recruitment, retention, and training services. Recommend career centers use universal design principles in their operations, and maintainthe integrity of systems for unique constituent populations to ensure individuals with disabilities seeking employment are given opportunities to be successful.
- Expanding opportunities for students to receive FDBS services and secure opportunities for students and youth with disabilities to practice and improve workplace skills. Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) were included in the 2017-2018 VR contracts. By adding these services, the FDBS provides eligible and potentially eligible students and youth with disabilities opportunities to participate in work-based learning experiences, apprenticeships, and internships to improve workplace skills.
- Ensuring that clients who participate in training and education programs benefit from engagement. FDBS collaborates with CareerSource, the Division of Public Schools, and institutions of higher education to provide opportunities for training, education, and workplace activities. FDBS has MOUs with CareerSource, ESE and VR.
- Expanding utilization of online job systems such as DEO's web portal, the state/federal Talent Acquisition Portal, and the Florida Jobs Connection to expose employers to job-ready FDBS consumers. FDBS trains rehabilitation specialists and employment placement specialists throughout the state on using TAP as one of the resources to successfully place visually impaired individuals in competitive integrated employment. FDBS tracks utilization of TAP and captures this data in biweekly reports.

- Encouraging and Tracking industry certifications, apprenticeships and post-secondary outcomes. The BBE tracks Continuing Education Units (CEUs), food manager certifications, and vendor licensures. The Employment Placement Specialists are continually notified of information regarding industry certifications, apprenticeships, and post-secondary opportunities via emails and during monthly conference calls. FDBS also has representation on the National Employment Team, which captures nationwide statistics and best practices for working with employers.
- Developing and implementing an Employment Skills Training Program at the FDBS Residential Rehabilitation Center to better prepare blind and visually impaired youth and adults for success in future employment. A Pre-employment Program to increase the employment rate for visually impaired youth and adults began in 2016. Classes are conducted quarterly by staff at the Residential Rehabilitation Center.
- Increasing the provision of accessibility tools, awareness, and regular follow-up with consumers to ensure equality in educational experiences and vocational opportunities. FDBS continues to strengthen its relationship with the Lighthouses to ensure appropriate and client-specific assistive technology is consistent with the needs of all clients and is reflected in the IPE. FDBS monitors the contract and receives client feedback via satisfaction surveys. FDBS values collaboration between staff and consumers, and incorporates follow-up at all levels of the rehabilitation process. At each level, from applicant to closure of case, Rehabilitation Technicians and Specialists, Employment Placement Specialist, and CRP staff (as needed and appropriate) work as a team to remain in contact with the client. Communication between the client and staff throughout the process, strengthens the chance for a positive client outcome.
- Implementing a comprehensive communications and outreach plan. FDBS will develop targeted marketing strategies to reach under-served and unserved populations based on data collected via the needs assessment. Outreach activities are tracked by the district offices monthly and reported quarterly.
- Increasing outreach services to under-served and un-served populations.

•Working with each client to ensure that Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) goals are consistent with and/or are amenable to transportation resources. FDBS created a list of transportation vendors based on feedback from each district office. This list serves as a resource to all districts and is updated as needed. Rehabilitation Specialists discuss client goals and transportation resources available to the individual through FDBS and personal resources (e.g., family and friends) throughout plan implementation.

•Developing and strengthening employer relationships by providing employer training, support, education and resources related to employing individuals with visual impairments in accordance with Section 503 regulations. FDBS provides Employment Placement Specialists with marketing tools/toolkit to use when meeting with potential employers and CareerSource staff. Employers receive education regarding FDBS programs/services with the goal of increasing opportunities for clients seeking employment. Rehabilitation Engineering is provided at the work site to support individuals with visual impairments at no cost to the employer.

•Strengthening statewide collaborative partnerships with core partners. FDBS increased communication with core partners and participates in regularly scheduled conference calls

and meetings. FDBS solicits feedback from core partners regarding contracts and policies. This communication and feedback is valued by both FDBS and core partners.

•Increasing opportunities for data sharing and improving data validity and integrity. Although data sharing continues to be a challenge, (i.e., getting a signed release of information for each client for all agencies), a draft of the data sharing agreement is under review for approval by both DOE and DEO.

•Promoting integrated employment in the community as the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities under the Employment First Initiative. FDBS provides training and education on integrated employment to staff and community providers.

•Maintaining and strengthening contracts with private non-profit organizations to provide four core components: Vocational Rehabilitation, Transition, Supported Employment, and Rehabilitation Engineering. Vocational Rehabilitation, Transition, and Pre-ETS are combined in the 2017-2018 contracts. Contracted providers are monitored via desk audits or onsite based on an established timeframe or at any time if an issue arises. By working with providers, FDBS will increase work-based experiences and provide career exploration in a variety of fields. FDBS coordinates with multiple partners to maximize supported employment services.

•Increasing the number of individuals with significant and most significant disabilities receiving services. In January 2016, FDBS implemented an online application to increase accessibility to individuals who may qualify for services. FDBS created multiple initiatives throughout the state to increase referrals, such as the See Different initiative and FDBS 75 Years Celebrations. In addition, several PSAs were shown throughout the state via Comcast.

•Supporting FDBS clients in becoming self-supporting. FDBS provides services for visually impaired individuals to receive training on orientation and mobility, cooking, and other support (e.g., job placement, supported employment, purchase of adaptive equipment, etc.) to foster independent living goals of clients.

•Identifying an approach to expedite eligibility and service delivery to individuals who are at risk of losing employment. The revised version of Policy 2.16 Timeliness of Services, effective October 18, 2017, includes language to prioritize services to individuals at risk of becoming unemployed.

•Increasing staff development and continuing education. A list of employees who have a CRC is maintained by the state office. The FDBS encourages CRC credentialed staff to participate in trainings, such as FAER, FRA, and WIOA, that provide CEUs to ensure they maintain their credentials. FDBS also encourages employees who do not have a CRC to obtain certification by providing a financial incentive. In addition, FDBS continues to deliver specific training related to enhancing the knowledge, skills and abilities of staff at all levels, and encourages both face-to-face and online learning formats.

•Aligning FDBS policies and procedures to address new WIOA requirements. All policies in the Bureau of Client Services were reviewed and revised as appropriate to include WIOA requirements. Six of these policies are currently effective and the others are under review.

•Providing ongoing Employment Outcomes Professional II (EOP II) Training to vocational rehabilitation staff and community providers. FDBS tested the Vermont Model in a limited

number of districts. EOP II Training is applied in all districts to increase communication with employers and assess needs.

•Providing training and education sponsorship to eligible vocational rehabilitation clients and staff. FDBS supports clients in their obtainment of college degrees by assisting with tuition, meals, and room and board as appropriate.

•Supporting community rehabilitation provider training programs designed for individuals who are blind and visually impaired. MOUs are in place with DVR, ESE, and CareerSource to ensure individuals who are blind and visually impaired fully participate in the workforce.

FDBS is expanding business relationships with employers at the local level to identify and maximize competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for adults and students. Each district is a member of the Chamber of Commerce. Employment Placement Specialists work with employers on their hiring needs and setting up work experiences. This gives individuals with disabilities a chance to receive training and obtain employability skills.

FDBS plans to provide ongoing training to employment staff, increase utilization of the Talent Acquisition Portal among job seekers and employers, increase utilization with the Abilities Work Web Portal at abilitieswork, employflorida.com and its Help Desk, develop new vocational training programs at the residential rehabilitation center; continuation of sponsorship of self-employment opportunities; sponsorship of technology training; sponsorship of academic and vocational training; encourage careers in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics to qualified individuals; and provide consultation and technical assistance to community partners and employers to promote the employment of individuals with disabilities.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

Refer to Section (L)(1).

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

Innovation and expansion funds were used in FFY 2016-2017 to support FRCB. The following table indicates the expenses for the FRCB meetings.

Figure 10.14FDBS collaborates with the Florida State University Survey Research Laboratory on an innovation and expansion project. The Florida State University Research Laboratory conducted a customer satisfaction survey commissioned by FRCB pursuant to Chapter 413.011, Florida Statutes, to gather perspectives of former clients of the FDBS Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program concerning program services, levels of satisfaction, and areas for program improvement. Dr. Minna Jia reported outcome data from the survey at the October 2016 and May 2017 FRCB quarterly meetings. To gauge the overall level of satisfaction with the FDBS program, former clients were asked if they would recommend DBS services to others. During 2016-2017, 94 percent (362 of 386), answered, "Yes." This is consistent with previous years' results. Clients were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the program. During the same period, 86 percent (333 of 337) were either "Satisfied" or "Very

Satisfied" with the program. Results from the continued customer satisfaction survey will contribute to improved employment opportunities for VR clients and service delivery.

FDBS explored innovation and expansion initiatives to foster and improve services. In 2016, FDBS launched a pilot project mirroring the Vermont Progressive Employment Model (VTPE). This model places emphasis on VR business relations and job placement personnel interactions with employers and is predicated on a dual-customer philosophy. The project targeted clients with the following issues:

- **Job jumpers - chronically changing jobs**
- **Unemployed for a long term**
- **Criminal Backgrounds**
- **Multiple cases opened over time**
- **Newly blind**
- **Unmotivated**
- **Lack of work experience**

A total of 19 people obtained employment during the VTPE pilot and 60 clients were assisted in employer engagement. The VTPE pilot ended in September 2016.

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.

FDBS conducted a CSNA that included the question, "What are the biggest barriers to achieving employment for those consumers closed unsuccessfully?"

To address this question, the following sources of data were utilized for the CSNA:

826. **Consumer surveys - The target group will be those persons closed after receiving services from FDBS during a previous one-year period (FFY 2013: October 2012 -September 2013). Consumers closed unsuccessfully will be asked additional questions to address question 6.**

827. **DBS staff surveys - This survey will include all staff that provide services to consumers.**

828. **Key informant interviews - Interviews with 5 to 10 people identified by FDBS as key informants.**

829. **Employer surveys - FDBS will provide email addresses of businesses that they have worked with FDBS during the previous one or two years (OPTIONAL).**

830. **Existing data sources**

- **ACS**
- **Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research population projections**
- **Bureau of Labor Statistics labor/economic forecasts**
- **DBS case service data (RSA-911 data)**

- **Consumer satisfaction data collected for FDBS**

Study Results

The large amount of data collected and analyzed for this project was reviewed to identify the most significant needs that emerged from the data. Specifically, there were eight most important needs identified as listed below. FDBS intends to develop strategies to address the identified needs in section (o).

Employment Related Services

Although employment-related services were not the area consumers reported as having the greatest need, consumers indicated they needed employment related services after their cases were closed. The top 10 services with remaining needs were all related to employment, and more than half of the consumers who reported a need for these services had a remaining need after case closure. Some consumers reported in open-ended responses that they did not receive the help they needed with finding employment, and suggested providing more employment-related assistance as a recommendation to help FDBS improve services. The Employment Placement Specialists participate in EOP II training to improve marketing skills when communicating with employers. The Employment Placement Specialists build long-term relationships with businesses via outreach and rapid engagement with employers to meet their needs.

Develop and Strengthen Employer Relationships

Most staff reported a critical need to improve placement services by developing and strengthening relationships with employers (and other organizations). This was the highest rated need overall, with 57.6% of staff considering it a critical need and 34.3% considering it a moderate need. The most common suggestion by staff to improve employer relationships was to allow staff to be out in the community more, making connections. Several people mentioned the value of attending Chamber of Commerce meetings, and some suggested that FDBS should pay for staff membership or fees to participate in business or community organizations. FDBS provides Employment Placement Specialists with marketing tools/toolkit to use when meeting with potential employers and CareerSource staff. Employers receive education regarding FDBS programs/services with the goal of increasing opportunities for clients seeking employment. Each district is a member of the Chamber of Commerce. FDBS works in partnership with chambers of commerce across the state to support the ongoing development of disability-owned business.

Services to Minorities

Although improving services to consumers with diverse racial or ethnic backgrounds was not rated as a high level of need by staff across the state, staff in some districts did rate this as a critical need. Improving the availability of materials to non-English speaking consumers was rated as a most important need by staff (77.8% rated as critical or moderate). More than one-third of staff identified minority group members as people who were unserved or underserved by FDBS, although the specific minority groups they mentioned varied. The need for better outreach to minority populations

was expressed by several key informants. The district offices conduct outreach activities to identify under-represented populations monthly. Activities include outreach to vision clinics, optometrists' offices, senior centers, participation in White Cane Day events, health fairs, and low vision expos.

Assistive Technology Services

Another recurring theme was the need to improve Assistive Technology services. The top three needs identified by consumers were all related to assistive technology. Providing training in assistive technology, providing or recommending low vision aids, and providing instruction using computer assistive technology. Relatively high levels of needs remained in these areas after receipt of FDBS services.

In open-ended responses, consumers who were closed unsuccessfully identified receipt of AT as something that could have been done differently to help them obtain employment. In the staff survey, 88.9% of staff reported a critical or moderate need for improving AT training. Most key informants identified AT services as a rehabilitation need of consumers. Staff suggestions for improving trainings include standardizing curriculum, staying up-to-date on the most in-demand technology and job skills, and reworking trainings to make them more frequent and/or in-depth. Several staff suggested that individualized AT training be offered and that training should be focused on what the consumer will need to become employed.

FDBS is strengthening its relationship with the Lighthouses to ensure appropriate and client-specific assistive technology is consistent with the needs of all clients and is reflected in the IPE.

Increased Outreach and Community Visibility

The need to increase awareness of FDBS was emphasized in numerous ways throughout the needs assessment and was related to some of the other important needs identified. Some sources indicated that there may be community groups who remain largely unaware of FDBS' existence, with minority groups being a particular concern. Analysis of the population served by FDBS shows that Hispanic/ Latino individuals are currently underrepresented in the FDBS caseload, which may indicate a lack of knowledge in that population regarding available resources. To address this, key informants and FDBS staff alike suggested working with liaisons who can serve as ambassadors for their communities. Key informants and staff saw a need to provide FDBS materials in multiple languages and to employ bilingual staff and/or hire interpreters. Another aspect of outreach that came up repeatedly is the need to improve FDBS' visibility in the business community. Staff members thought job placement efforts would be improved if more employers knew about FDBS and its offerings. FDBS produced and disseminated several marketing videos highlighting client success stories and the value of FDBS services. FDBS hosted several large-scale regional outreach events, with media coverage, to enhance community awareness and engagement.

Transportation

Although information was not available from all data sources, transportation was identified as an important need by several sources. Consumers identified lack of

transportation to work as one of their primary barriers to employment. Several consumers who participated in the 2013-14 satisfaction survey indicated dissatisfaction with transportation as a service received from FDBS. Lack of transportation was the top barrier to employment identified by staff for consumers who are closed unsuccessfully. Key informants considered transportation to be a need for the population, and a challenge to meeting the other needs of consumers. Lack of transportation options, particularly in rural areas, was discussed as a problem by both key informants and staff. FDBS developed a list of transportation contacts to assist field staff with identifying transportation vendors for clients in need of this resource. The list is updated as needed.

Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs)

Although consumers were not asked directly for their opinions about CRPs who provided their services, the FDBS can consider consumer responses on satisfaction with services received and consumer report of needs that remained after their cases were closed. Consumers expressed high levels of satisfaction regarding training received, except for employment-related services. Remaining needs after case closure for typical blindness training areas (e.g., instruction in cane travel, AT, braille) were lower than many other services areas, although the need was still high in some (e.g., 50.7% reported a remaining need for braille instruction).

FDBS reviews consumer and agency needs to make modifications to contracts with CRPs. The agency expects more changes because of changes required under WIOA and the review of data. There is a recognition that some rural areas of the state leave some potential client populations without adequate or reasonable access to services. FDBS will work with existing providers to fill these gaps, explore the need for additional satellite services, additional CRPs and/or provide services via other contracts or purchase orders with qualified entities.

Regular follow-up with consumers

Multiple contributors to the Needs Assessment suggested FDBS could improve the follow-up services it provides to consumers after their cases are closed. As part of the employer survey, employers suggested they would appreciate consistent communication from FDBS, including visits to the workplace after a consumer is been placed. Key informants and staff alike mentioned a need for ongoing consumer support and consistent follow-up, especially for the most significantly disabled population. FDBS values collaboration between staff and consumers, and incorporates follow-up at all levels of the rehabilitation process. At each level, from applicant to closure of case, Rehabilitation Technicians and Specialists, Employment Placement Specialist, and CRP staff (as needed and appropriate) work as a team to remain in contact with the client. Communication between the client and staff throughout the process, strengthens the chance for a positive client outcome.

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.

FDBS modified its state goals and priorities to match the agency's strategic plan to ensure that the goals and strategies are measurable.

Goal 1.0 Create an environment that provides job opportunities for visually impaired and blind Floridians.

Measure: This goal is measured by the increase in the number of statewide employment activities at the local level.

<u>Strategy 1.1</u> Increase successful job outcomes in the BBE Program.

FDBS determined one of the most important measurements of a successful BBE program is the percentage of recently licensed vendors staying at their first facility for at least 12 months. This measure demonstrates training adequately prepared new licensees to start at a facility and stay for at least 12 months. It is a good indicator of the individual's perseverance and on-the-job skills development.

As depicted in the table below, this goal is measured by a comparison with previous years in the number of licensed clients awarded their first facility, regardless of the year licensed, and remained under contract for a minimum of one year.

Figure 10.08

Outcomes in BBE Program

	SFY2009-10	SFY2010-11	SFY2011-12	SFY2012-13	SFY2013-14	SFY2014-15	SFY2016-17
Number of new clients licensed	15	7	14	15	14	13	7
Number of clients awarded their 1st facility, regardless of the year licensed.	14	12	9	14	10	10	6

	SFY2009-10	SFY2010-11	SFY2011-12	SFY2012-13	SFY2013-14	SFY2014-15	SFY2016-17
Number of those which were awarded facilities that were employed in the BBE at least 1 year	8 of 14 (57.14%)	8 of 12 (66.67%)	7 of 9 (77.78%)	13 of 13 (100.00%) *one passed away*	8 of 10 (80%)	*Not availableuntil SFY 2015-16*	*Not availableUntil end of SFY 2017-18*
% of increase from previous year	N/A	9.53%	11.11%	22.22%	(20.00%)	*Not availableuntil SFY 2015-16*	*Not availableUntil end of SFY 2017-18*

Note: Clients who are licensed are not always awarded their first facility during the same state fiscal year.

<u>Strategy 1.2</u> Increase successful job outcomes in the vocational rehabilitation program.

When comparing SFY 2015-2016 to SFY 2016-2017, FDBS increased the number of successful outcomes by nearly 2%, with an additional 14 successful closures.

FDBS strengthened its relationship with Community Rehabilitation Programs and local employment networks in job placement related services. FDBS uses the TAP, an online platform that connects persons with disabilities seeking employment to businesses who are actively hiring. By the end of June 2017, there was a total of 374 clients listed in TAP.

FDBS is one of the partner agencies included in the Interagency Cooperative Agreement effective July 2014, as part of the Employment First Initiative supported by Executive Order 13-284. This Order re-affirms a commitment to employment for Floridians with disabilities. The Interagency Cooperative Agreement has been updated and revisions are under review.

FDBS and its Employment First Partners addressed many goals, including several recommendations by the Governor's Commission on Jobs for Floridians with Disabilities, to advance employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The goals and recommendations achieved include:

- **Developing and implementing the Florida "Abilities Work" Web Portal and Help Desk; which was recommended by the Governor's Commission to assist employers in finding candidates with disabilities who are ready and able to work, and to learn about resources that can support them on the job. FDBS**

works with the Abilities Work staff to increase employer relationships and placements, such as connecting employers referred by the Abilities Work help desk to the division's job ready clients.

- **Developing a multi-agency, long-term communications plan to help the state promote a consistent message of awareness among employers and encourage them to hire persons with disabilities. This collaborative plan advances employer outreach efforts of the FDBS Employment Placement Specialists to increase employment opportunities for clients.**
- **Forming three interagency workgroups, including a grassroots group to receive input from stakeholders at the local level and to address the objectives of the Employment First Collaborative Agreement. FDBS is an active partner in these forums and uses the work to support other related collaborative activities, such as the implementing WIOA).**
- **Creating an Employment First Florida website, logo, collaborative training toolkit, and promotional video to inform community partners and the public of Florida's efforts to improve employment outcomes for persons with disabilities. FDBS Director, Robert Doyle, participated in the video and highlighted how these collaborative efforts support the employment of individuals with visual disabilities. Successful closures increased by approximately 2% since crating the training toolkit.**
- **Establishing four pilot sites in Nassau, Orange, Osceola, and Miami-Dade Counties to help create a similar collaborative framework at the community level, where employment outcomes are achieved. FDBS district offices participated in the pilots along with local partners, such as school districts, service provider organizations, parents and self-advocates. This pilot was successful, as a total of 19 clients were employed and 60 clients were assisted with employer engagement during the project period.**

FDBS remains engaged in the collaborative work through the Employment First Partnership and are advancing the Division's commitment to improving economic prosperity of Floridians through employment for individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

The Abilities Work Help Desk supports the Employment First initiative. FDBS partners with this resource for referrals from businesses interested in hiring individuals who are blind or visually impaired. FDBS maintains contact with the National Employment Team (the NET) and its southeast subcommittee to connect with businesses on a national and regional level. FDBS will continue these partnerships.

To improve employment outcomes, FDBS expanded business relationships with employers at the local level to identify and maximize competitive integrated employment opportunities and career exploration opportunities for adults and students; maintain occupied EPS positions; provide ongoing training to employment staff; increase utilization of the Talent Acquisition Portal among job seekers and employers; increase utilization with the Abilities Work Web Portal and Help Desk; develop new vocational training programs at the residential rehabilitation center;

continuation of sponsorship of self-employment opportunities; sponsorship of technology training; sponsorship of academic and vocational training; encourage careers in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics to qualified individuals; provide consultation and technical assistance to community partners and employers to promote the employment of individuals with disabilities.

FDBS is optimistic it will improve its employment outcomes during the current SFY. FDBS will implement strategies such as collaborating with community rehabilitation programs; networking with national employment partners; expanding utilization of online job systems such as DEO's Abilities Work Web Portal and accompanying help desk managed by VR and the national Talent Acquisition Portal; participating in the Employment First Initiative; networking with local level employers, providing ongoing training to employment staff; developing new vocational training programs at the residential rehabilitation center; collaboratively identifying and training eligible Floridians to manage state-owned BBE Programs, sponsoring of appropriate self-employment opportunities; providing technology training; academic and vocational training; and increasing the number of clients with a higher level education; and increasing outreach to employers to maximize work experience opportunities for clients.

Division of Blind Services Employer Recognition and Outreach

The Division of Blind Services (DBS) recognizes businesses that provide an increased number of employment opportunities to FDBS clients. Each district holds an annual open house for employers and potential employers. Clients who are employed or seeking employment are invited to attend. Each district nominates at least one employer for the joint agency statewide exemplary employer event in October. The Director gives plaques to those awarded as statewide exemplary employers. This is an annual process.

Strategy 1.3 Develop and Implement an Employment Skills Training Program at the Rehabilitation Center.

A team of professional staff determined the Pre-Employment Program Model, developed by Dr. Karen Wolffe best meets the needs of the division's clients ages 14 to adulthood. The purpose of this program is to increase the number of blind and visually impaired individuals preparing to enter competitive, integrated employment. This is achieved through highly comprehensive and coordinated vocational rehabilitation services provided at the Florida Rehabilitation Center. These services include, but are not limited to, pre-employment training, career counseling, job readiness training, work experience opportunities, job shadowing, advocacy, self-awareness, and exposure to post employment. The program is unique in establishing an action plan and follow-up for each client that involves the client, home-base counselors and Rehabilitation Center Staff.

FDBS has a contract with Dr. Wolffe. Dr. Wolffe conducted an initial assessment and training with staff at the Florida Rehabilitation Center. As a result, the Pre-Employment Program was implemented at the Florida Rehabilitation Center in the summer of 2016. This program is a contributing factor to the workforce system's employment outcomes.

Goal 2.0 Create a service delivery system that provides comprehensive services to visually impaired and blind Floridians.

<u>Measure:</u> This goal is measured based upon a comparison of the number of clients and their demographics served in the current and previous years.

<u>Strategy 2.1</u> Increase the number of individuals receiving services. There was a decrease of 190 in the number of clients served by FDBS in SFY 2016-2017 (5,202 last year compared to 5,012 this year). This decrease is attributed to improved eligibility assessments conducted upfront, and lack of awareness of services. FDBS seeks opportunities to increase its outreach efforts to potential clients through better partnerships with medical offices, educational agencies, CareerSource Florida, and other community service providers. Below is the actual break-out of the number of clients served relative to service categories and race/ethnicity in FFY 2016-2017.

Figure 10.09

Clients Served by Service Category

Service Categories	Clients Served (SFY 2016-2017
No program (application status)	568
College students	569
None (*regular FDBS- vocational rehabilitation clients)	3710
Supported employment	100
Transition	65
Total	**5012**

Figure 10.10

Number of Clients Served in Race Ethnicity Categories

Race Ethnicity Categories	Clients Served (SFY 2016-2017
African-American	2030
Alaskan Native	0
Asian	87
Caucasian	3160

Race Ethnicity Categories	Clients Served (SFY 2016-2017
Hispanic or Latino	1156
Multiracial	54
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	9
Not available	0
Total	**6496**

Note: The number of clients served under both the service and race ethnicity categories does not match due to the number of unassigned clients in application status.

<u>Strategy 2.2</u> Increase services in unserved and underserved populations.

Each district identifies the unique underserved populations in their area. Each month, the identified unserved and underserved populations are targeted to increase services to these populations. Outreach is conducted in the following areas: community churches, schools, urban leagues, law enforcement agencies, Lions and Rotary Clubs, Career Source Centers, American Red Cross, Children's Home Society, United Way, Immokalee Interagency Council, health and job fairs, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Christian Migrant Association, and a host of employers. The district administrators maintain a log of activities relating to underserved populations. Outreach activities are included in the monthly report submitted to the Program Administrator, who maintains a log for statewide analysis and record keeping purposes. The chart below depicts an increase in the number of open clients served in all minority categories except Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

Figure 10.11

Change in Number of Clients Served in Minority Groups

Minority Group	SFY 2014	SFY 2015	SFY 2016	Difference from previous year
African-American	1,136	1,453	1829	+376
Hispanic	635	877	1156	+279
Asian	58	70	87	+17
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders	14	13	9	-4

Goal 3.0 Create an environment that fosters an exemplary division workforce.

Measure: This goal is measured by employee satisfaction surveys and staff development training surveys.

Strategy 3.1 Increase staff development and continuing education.

FDBS provided the following trainings: a) three regional trainings involving case management and role of the counselor, b) technical assistance and continuing education webinar training titled Innovative Strategies for Serving Youth in Transition, c) vocational rehabilitation statewide training involving policy, rehabilitation process and conflict resolution, d) eye medical webinar training, e) technology training, f) new vocational rehabilitation counselor training, g) Rhode Island Quality Assurance Summit, h) new employee training, i) supervisory training, j) Employment Outcomes Professionals II training and; k) Talent Acquisition Portal and Train the Trainer training. FDBS provides ongoing training to personnel at all levels for staff development and continuing education.

Figure 10.12

FDBS Training Offered FFY 2016-2017

Date	Training Description
February 2016	New Employee Training
February 2016	Administrative Staff Meeting
March 2016	Accessibility Training-Adobe
April 2016	Annual VR Training
May 2016	New Employee Training
May 2016	MOU Training DVR/DBS Webinar
May 2016	MOU Training DVR/DBS Webinar
August 2016	New Employee Training
November 2016	New Employee Training
November 2016	New Employee Training
November 2016	Personnel Liaison Training
January 2017	WINTAC
February 2017	Administrative Staff Meeting
February 2017	New Employee Training
April 2017	WINTAC (WIOA Vision)
April 2017	WINTAC (Transition Services)

Date	Training Description
May 2017	WINTAC (Career Pathway)
May 2017	WINTAC (Common Performance Measures)
May 2017	Personnel Training
August 2017	Policy Training
August 2017	New Employee Training
October 2017	CRP Contract
October 2017	Pre-ETS
October 2017	Statewide VR
October 2017	FASB Training (Transition)
October 2017	CRP Training (Transition)
October 2017	Rehab Council and Administration (DA, Sup.)
November 2017	New Employee Training

Strategy 3.2 Improve Employee Satisfaction.

In 2014, the division conducted two employee satisfaction surveys at the Florida Rehabilitation Center and the Talking Book Library in Daytona Beach, Florida. A new employee satisfaction survey is under development. The targeted completion date is mid to late 2018. The results from this survey will be provided once all data has been reviewed.

Goal 4.0 Create a well-managed and accountable organization that ensures high quality.

Measure: This goal is measured based upon federal and state program and fiscal audit findings.

Strategy 4.1 Develop and implement a comprehensive quality assurance program to foster a decrease in audit findings from the Offices of the Inspector General, Auditor General and the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

FDBS has a quality assurance protocol specific to program services. The activities include desk and district on-site reviews. The Bureau of Client Services conducted two on-site reviews in January and March 2016, and desk reviews for all districts in March and April 2017 in preparation for RSA monitoring.

DBS' implementation of monthly case reviews, on-site reviews and training supports the division in continuing to achieve a compliance rate of 96%, exceeding its standard compliance rate of 90%. Details of the findings from the case reviews are shared with staff and additional training opportunities are provided as requested. This process decreases audit findings and allows additional training in areas of

quality assurance related to authorizations. The division monitors compliance during quarterly case reviews and provides vocational rehabilitation staff with ongoing feedback and training.

Strategy 4.2 Develop strong fiscal policy and procedures that promote responsible stewardship of available resources.

FDBS has a case service allocation protocol which determines district allocations and ensures dollars are spent appropriately. To address appropriate allocation disbursements, FDBS evaluates historical expenditure data (e.g., number of clients served, services provided, contractual agreements in regions, business enterprise program expenditures self-employment opportunities, and social change).

FDBS has implemented additional fiscal management procedures. FDBS uses a system that gives local district administrators discretion to review and approve expenditures below $3,000. During this review, authorizations under consideration include after the fact, made in advance of the service, and cancelled/reassigned due to changes in coding of the authorization.

Supported Employment Goals

FDBS provides services to customers with the most severe disabilities, which improves supported employment outcomes. This is accomplished through its partnership with community rehabilitation programs. FDBS contracts with one community rehabilitation program to provide statewide residential supported employment services. FDBS works with other Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) serving the blind to ensure services are available in each district of the state. Where CRPs are unable to serve individuals, FDBS and CRPs partner to work with other CRPs and ensure FDBS clients qualifying for Supported Employment services receive quality services through multiple agencies.

Standards and Indicators

Below is a table of Federal Standards and Indicators, and FDBS performance on those standards. A brief discussion of FDBS performance standards and indicators is noted in the tables below.

Figure 10.13

Performance Standards and Indicators

Standard	SFY 2016-2017	SFY 2014-2015	Difference	Met
1.1 Number of closed cases with an employment outcome	**851**	**761**	**90**	**Met**

Standard	SFY 2016-2017	SFY 2014-2015	Difference	Met
1.2 Of the closed cases that received services, the percentage with an employment outcome	**57.93%**	**59.27%**	**-2.31%**	**Not Met**
1.3 Of the closed cases with an employment outcome, the percentage that has a wage greater than or equal to the minimum wage	**97.65%**	**98.29%**	**-.65%**	**Met**
1.4 Of the closed cases with an employment outcome, the percentage that has a wage greater than or equal to the minimum wage and have significant disabilities	**97.65%**	**100%**	**-2.41%**	**Met**
1.5 Ratio of average state wage to the average wage of closed cases with employment outcome that have wages greater than or equal to minimum wage	**.66%**	**0.68%**	**-3.03%**	**Met**
1.6 Difference between the percentage of closed cases with employment outcomes that havea wage greater than or equal to the minimum wage that are self-support at application and the percentage of closed cases with employment outcomes that have a wage greater than or equal to the minimum wage that are self-support at closure	**40.67%**	**45.25%**	**-11.26%**	**Met**
2.1 Ratio of minority service rate to non-minority service rate	**.96**	**0.91**	**5.21**	**Met**

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

FDBS did not meet Standard 1.2. According to the Rehabilitation Services Administration, factors attributing to not meeting the 1.2 standard are as follows:

- **Changes in the make-up of the agency's caseload**
- **Counselor/consumer contact**
- **Appropriateness of employment plans**
- **Quality of job development**

FDBS has specifically identified the following factors as further contributing to the outcome and not meeting Standard 1.2:

- **Clients refusing services or not needing further services;**
- **Inability to locate or contact clients;**

- **Clients' relocation out of state;**
- **Staff vacancies;**
- **Amount of time it takes to train new employment placement staff;**
- **Employer resistance to hiring individuals with disabilities;**
- **Increase in the number of individuals pursuing postsecondary training instead of employment; and**
- **Competing between securing employment and maintaining Social Security benefits.**

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 FDBS has a contractual agreement with the Florida Lion's Conklin Center for the Blind to identify and provide supported employment and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. FDBS partners with other state agencies and organizations in implementing Employment First, a national effort to ensure individuals with disabilities are offered employment on a preferred basis. Employment First is consistent with the FDBS belief that individuals with disabilities, even the most significant disabilities, can achieve meaningful employment when provided with appropriate supports.

Four goals address the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs. These goals and strategies are:

Goal 1.0 Highest Client Achievement

<u>Strategy 1.1:</u> Expand opportunities for students to receive FDBS services and secure opportunities for students and youth with disabilities to practice and improve workplace skills.

<u>Strategy 1.2:</u> Ensure clients participating in training and education programs are benefiting from engagement.

<u>Strategy 1.3:</u> Expand utilization of online job systems such as DEO's Abilities Work Web Portal and accompanying help desk managed by VR, and the state/federal Talent Acquisition Portal to expose employers to job ready FDBS consumers.

<u>Strategy 1.4:</u> Encourage and Track industry certifications, apprenticeships and postsecondary outcomes.

<u>Strategy 1.5:</u> Develop and implement an Employment Skills Training Program at the Residential Rehabilitation Center to better prepare youth and adults who are blind and visually impaired for success in future employment.

Goal 2.0 Seamless Articulation and Maximum Access

Strategy 2.1: Increase the provision of accessibility tools, awareness, and regular follow-up with consumers to ensure equality in educational experiences and vocational opportunities.

Strategy 2.2: Implement a comprehensive communications and outreach plan.

Strategy 2.3: Increase the number of individuals with significant and most significant disabilities receiving services.

Strategy 2.4: Increase outreach services to under-served and un-served population.

Strategy 2.5: Work with each client to ensure that IEP goals are consistent with and/or are amenable to transportation resources.

Goal 3.0 Skilled Workforce and Economic Development

Strategy 3.1: Develop and strengthen employer relationships by providing employer training, support, education and resources related to employing individuals with visual impairment and provide support for employers with compliance with Section 503 regulations.

Strategy 3.2: Increase successful employment outcomes including self-employment outcomes for transition age youth, adults, and seniors receiving services through FDBS.

Strategy 3.3: Create successful job outcomes in the BBE

Strategy 3.4: Support FDBS clients in becoming self-supporting.

Strategy 3.5: Strengthen statewide collaborative partnerships with core partners (CareerSource Florida, DEO, DCAE, VR, community rehabilitation programs and employers).

Strategy 3.6: Developing mechanisms to maximize job placement effectiveness among FDBS Job Placement Specialists and contracted service providers.

Strategy 3.7: Support and track successful employment outcomes for blind Floridians with significant and most significant disabilities for a period of one year.

Strategy 3.8: Pilot the Vermont Progressive Employment Model.

Strategy 3.9: Identify an approach to expedite eligibility and service delivery to individuals who are at risk of losing employment.

Goal 4.0 Quality Efficient Services

Strategy 4.1: Increase staff development and continuing education.

Strategy 4.2: Align FDBS policies and procedures to address new WIOA requirements.

Strategy 4.3: Increase opportunities for data sharing and improve data validity and integrity.

Strategy 4.4: **Decrease audit findings from the Offices of the Inspector General, Auditor General and the Rehabilitation Services Administration through adherence to policies and procedures.**

Strategy 4.5: **Develop strong fiscal policies and procedures to promote responsible stewardship of available resources and addresses WIOA requirements.**

Strategy 4.6: **Strengthen contract language to ensure increased contractor accountability, improve resource allocations, address WIOA regulations and encourage maximum achievement of consumer independence.**

Strategy 4.7: **Strengthen contract monitoring activities, and procedures/protocol to reflect new requirements.**

Strategy 4.8: **Work collaboratively with AWARE Case Management System provider to align FDBS case management system with WIOA requirements**

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

There were no barriers to achievement of this goal.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

Refer to Appendix I: Performance Goals for the Core Programs.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED.

Innovation and expansion funds were used in FFY 2016-2017 to support FRCB. The following table indicates the expenses for the FRCB meetings that occurred during FFY 2016-2017.

Figure 10.14Summary of FRCB Accomplishments and Activities for calendar year 2016-2017:

The Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind(FRCB) welcomed four newly appointed members and one reappointed member at the quarterly business meeting held on February 7, 2018.

- **Maintained its mission and focus on strategic planning that is closely aligned with the priorities of the FDBS.**
- **Provided input in DBS policy revisions.**
- **Elected a new Chairperson, First Vice Chairperson and Second Vice Chairperson at the first quarterly meeting in February 2017.**
- **Elected new members to serve on the Evaluation and Planning Committees.**
- **Strengthened its working relationship with other councils within the state as required under Section 105 of the Rehab Act.**

- **Served as an effective vehicle for cultivating meaningful partnerships between the FDBS and other stakeholders.**
- **Increased attention on performance goals and objectives of FDBS.**
- **Held four quarterly meetings in Daytona Beach, Tampa, Pensacola, and Orlando.**
- **Conducted four public forums at each of its quarterly business meetings.**
- **Maintained an active role in the NCSRC by attending the 2016 Fall Training Session in Seattle, Washington and the 2017 Spring Training in Bethesda, Maryland.**
- **Collaborated with the Florida State University (FSU) Survey Research Laboratory to conduct the Client Satisfaction Survey.**
- **The Client Satisfaction Subcommittee successfully completed their evaluation and revision of the 2014-2015 Survey. The new survey questions were tested and Dr. Minna Jia presented a report at the May 2017 meeting in Pensacola. The rollout of the new survey began July 1, 2017, while interim reports will be available, complete data will be compiled for an annual report that is anticipated to be released in the fall of 2018.**

Quarterly Meeting Agenda Items:

- **Welcome, Introductions and Pledge of Allegiance**
- **Adoption of Agenda**
- **Director's Report: Division of Blind Services Updates**
- **District Administrator's Report**
- **Employer Recognition**
- **Local Community Rehabilitation Program Reports**
- **Client Satisfaction Survey Data Updates**
- **Division of Blind Services State Plan Updates**
- **Vocational Rehabilitation Goals Updates**
- **New Committee Appointments**
- **Bureau of Business Enterprise Update**
- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014**
- **FDBS Budget Report and Legislative Updates**
- **Blind Services Foundation Update**
- **Updates on Outreach to Underserved/Unserved**
- **Strategic Plan Discussions**

Agenda Items conducted by FDBS:

- **Director's report (each meeting)**
- **Report from the local district administrator (each meeting)**
- **Update on the Blind Services Foundation**
- **Council reviewed and gave input on the following FDBS policies.**

- **Policy 2.02 Informed Choice**
- **Policy 2.16 Timeliness of Services**
- **Policy 2.35 Competitive Integrated Employment**
- **Policy 2.37 Transition Services**
- **Policy 6.07 Purchase of Access and Rehabilitation Technology**
- **Policy 6.11 Comparable Benefits**

- **FDBS budget report and legislative updates**
- **Discussion of the state plan for council input**
- **Discussion of the needs assessment for council input**
- **Discussion of the strategic plan**
- **Update on outreach to underserved/unserved**
- **Discussion of Transportation**

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.

FDBS offers supported employment services via one contracted vendor and by issuing authorizations, to ensure continued services for all clients.

Quality

FDBS is committed to providing quality supported employment (SE) services to people with the most significant disabilities. FDBS supports the individual in making employment choices consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and interests.

FDBS vocational rehabilitation counselors help individuals pursue the goals detailed in the individualized plan for employment (IPE) by using supported employment resources to the individual's best advantage. VR actively involves clients and families as appropriate in assessment, planning, and decision making throughout the service delivery process. FDBS evaluates the effectiveness of its job placement services and makes improvements as needed.

FDBS provides ongoing training for staff and assesses policies and processes to ensure efficient services. FDBS has a quality assurance team. This team conducts quality assurance reviews consisting of onsite and desk reviews. The focus areas of the reviews include adherence to state policies, compliance of federal regulations, case documentation, IPE signatures, timeliness of certificate of eligibility, activities tied to the IPE, and authorizations approvals. This team stays current on all federal

and state regulations and attends the Annual Quality Assurance Summit for ongoing professional staff development.

Scope

The scope of supported employment services is comprised of an intensive array of services for blind and visually impaired individuals who require complex services. These services are identified under Title 1, the coordination of extended ongoing support services, and the development of natural supports. FDBS contracts with the Florida Conklin Center for supported employment services. The Conklin Center and FDBS maintain a long-standing partnership and are committed to working collaboratively to serve the blind and visually impaired population. Supported Employment services are individually designed around the needs and desires of the customer and may include:

- **Initial placement and stabilization in the workplace**
- **Job Coaching**
- **Assistive Technology**
- **Specialized Job Training**
- **Social Skill Training**
- **Money Management**
- **Formal and informal work site related expectations (e.g., time and attendance, dress, communication)**

Extent

FDBS expands supported employment services by educating community members, providers, and relevant stakeholders on the availability of services.

The amount of supported employment services provided is determined by a statewide needs assessment; analysis of performance data; and data provided by agency partners (e.g., DCAE, VR, CareerSource Florida network partners, Department of Children and Families, APD, and the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Program).

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

Transition occurs a minimum of 90 days after "stabilization." A successful supported employment outcome closure for a person successfully rehabilitated, occurs when the following criteria are met: (a) 90 days following stabilization and 60 days from transition to closure (to assure ongoing supports are successful following transition); or (b) a minimum of 150 days of continuous employment following stabilization.

CERTIFICATIONS

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate **Florida Department of Education**

Name of designated State agency **Florida Division of Blind Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: Pam Stewart

Title of Authorized Representative: Commissioner of Education

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. The designated State agency or designated State unit (as appropriate) listed above 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*, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act. Yes**

2. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the designated State agency listed above agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan; Yes**

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* , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;** Yes**

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; Yes**

5. The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement. Yes**

6. All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law. Yes**

7. The Authorized Representative listed above 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; Yes**

8. The Authorized Representative listed above has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services; Yes**

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. Yes**

FOOTNOTES

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Certification 1 Footnotes

*** Public Law 113-128.**

**** Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.**

Certification 2 Footnotes

*** All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.**

**** No funds under title 1 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.**

***** 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 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.**

Certification 3 Footnotes

*** No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.**

**** Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in *** under Certification 2 footnotes**

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE CERTIFICATIONS FROM THE STATE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING — VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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.

Applicant's Organization **Florida Department of Education Division of Blind Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Pam Stewart**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Commissioner of Education**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to MAT_OCTAE@ed.gov

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING — SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

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.

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Applicant's Organization **Florida Department of Education Division of Blind Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Pam Stewart**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Commissioner of Education**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

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:

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. ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN:

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:

A. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

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 (B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council

C. CONSULTATIONS REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(16)(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

D. THE FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION BY THE STATE, OR IF THE STATE SO ELECTS, BY THE STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES, TO PROVIDE THE AMOUNT OF THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF THE COST OF CARRYING OUT THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(3).

E. THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds **No**

F. THE SHARED FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION OF JOINT PROGRAMS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs: **No**

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? See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. **No**

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.

I. ALL REQUIRED METHODS OF ADMINISTRATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(6) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

J. THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(7) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

K. THE COMPILATION AND SUBMISSION TO THE COMMISSIONER OF STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS, ESTIMATES, STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES, STRATEGIES, AND PROGRESS REPORTS, AS APPROPRIATE, AND AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(15), 105(C)(2), AND 606(B)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

L. THE RESERVATION AND USE OF A PORTION OF THE FUNDS ALLOTTED TO THE STATE UNDER SECTION 110 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, PARTICULARLY INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

M. THE SUBMISSION OF REPORTS AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(10) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES:

The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

A. COMPLY WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 101(A)(5)(D) AND (20) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. IMPOSE NO DURATION OF RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT AS PART OF DETERMINING AN INDIVIDUAL'S ELIGIBILITY FOR VR SERVICES OR THAT EXCLUDES FROM SERVICES UNDER THE PLAN ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO IS PRESENT

IN THE STATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(12) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

C. PROVIDE THE FULL RANGE OF SERVICES LISTED IN SECTION 103(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AS APPROPRIATE, TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT?

Agency will provide the full range of services described above **Yes**

D. DETERMINE WHETHER COMPARABLE SERVICES AND BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE INDIVIDUAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

E. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

F. COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE PROVISIONS OF INFORMED CHOICE FOR ALL APPLICANTS AND ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(D) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

G. PROVIDE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES TO AMERICAN INDIANS WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING IN THE STATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(13) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

H. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF SEMIANNUAL OR ANNUAL 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.

I. MEET THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTIONS 101(A)(17) AND 103(B)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT IF THE STATE ELECTS TO CONSTRUCT, UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, FACILITIES FOR COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

J. WITH RESPECT TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THE STATE,

DCCCXCVIII. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT,

A. STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ASSESSMENTS; AND

B. STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE STATE, TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON A STATEWIDE BASIS; AND

DCCCXCIX. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO PROVIDE PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES (SECTIONS 101(A)(15) AND 101(A)(25)).

5. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION FOR THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT TITLE VI SUPPLEMENT:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE 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.

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.

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:

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.

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:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AS DEFINED IN SECTION 7(39) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT:

CM. 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

CMI. 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.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE ASSURANCES FROM THE STATE

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 includes 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.* If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" in Sections II and III of that document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program (available on www.regulations.gov for public comment). The requirements that a State must address for any of the partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan are provided in this separate supplemental document. The Departments are not seeking comments on these program-specific requirements, which exist under separate OMB control numbers and do not represent requirements under WIOA. For further details on this overall collection, access the Federal eRulemaking Portal at http://www.regulations.gov by selecting Docket ID number ETA-2015-0006.

*** 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 and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 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.**

APPENDIX 1. PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS

Each State submitting a Unified or Combined Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the 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 adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for each of the two years of the plan. States will only have one year of data available under the performance accountability system in Section 116 of the WIOA; therefore, the Departments will continue to use the transition authority under WIOA sec. 503(a) to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators in the first plan submission. A "baseline" indicator is one for which States will not propose an expected level of performance in the plan submission and will not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance. "Baseline" indicators will not be used in the end of the year performance calculations and will not be used to determine failure to achieve adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The selection of primary indicators for the designation as a baseline indicator is made based on the likelihood of a state having adequate data on which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance and such a designation will vary across core programs.

States are expected to collect and report on all indicators, including those that that have been designated as "baseline". The actual performance data reported by States for indicators designated as "baseline" in the first two years of the Unified or Combined Plan will serve as baseline data in future years.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for each indicator, except for those indicators that are listed as "baseline" indicators below.

For this Plan, the Departments will work with States during the negotiation process to establish the negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs.

Baseline Indicators for the First Two Years of the Plan

Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth):

- **Measurable Skill Gains**
- **Effectiveness in Serving Employers**

Title II programs (Adult Education):

- **Employment in the 2nd quarter**
- **Employment in the 4th quarter**
- **Median Earnings**
- **Credential Attainment**
- **Effectiveness in Serving Employers**

Title III programs (Wagner-Peyser):

- **Effectiveness in Serving Employers**

Title IV programs (Vocational Rehabilitation):

- **Employment in the 2nd quarter**
- **Employment in the 4th quarter**
- **Median Earnings**
- **Credential Attainment**
- **Measurable Skill Gains**
- **Effectiveness in Serving Employers**

States may identify additional indicators in the State 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.

TABLE 1. EMPLOYMENT (SECOND QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	85.00	85.00	85.00	85.20
Dislocated Workers	83.00	83.00	83.00	83.00
Youth	76.00	75.00	76.00	75.50
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	62.00	62.00	62.00	62.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 1

Performance goals for PY 2018 and PY 2019 have been negotiated and are updated.

TABLE 2. EMPLOYMENT (FOURTH QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	85.00	82.50	85.00	83.00
Dislocated Workers	79.00	79.00	79.00	79.00
Youth	69.00	69.00	69.00	69.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	64.00	64.00	64.00	64.20
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 2

Performance goals for PY 2018 and PY 2019 are negotiated and updated.

TABLE 3. MEDIAN EARNINGS (SECOND QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	6,850.00	6,850.00	6,850.00	6,850.00

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Dislocated Workers	6,850.00	6,850.00	6,850.00	6,850.00
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	4,850.00	4,850.00	4,850.00	4,850.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 3

Median Earnings for Plan Year 2018 and Plan Year 2019 are negotiated and updated.

TABLE 4. CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT RATE

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	62.00	62.00	62.00	65.00
Dislocated Workers	68.00	68.00	68.00	68.00
Youth	78.00	75.20	78.00	75.50

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 4

Credential Attainment Rates for Plan Year 2018 and Plan Year 2019 are negotiated and updated.

TABLE 5. MEASUREABLE SKILL GAINS

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	0.00	Baseline	0.00	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	0.00	Baseline	0.00	Baseline
Youth	0.00	Baseline	0.00	Baseline
Adult Education	41.00	41.00	42.00	42.00
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Vocational Rehabilitation	0.00	Baseline	0.00	Baseline

User remarks on Table 5

Measurable skills gains are baseline.

TABLE 6. EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

Measure	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Line 1 (enter the measure information in the comments below)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Line 2	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Line 3	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Line 4	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Line 5	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Line 6	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 6

Effectiveness in serving employers is baseline.

TABLE 7. ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

Measure	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level

User remarks on Table 7

APPENDIX 2. OTHER STATE ATTACHMENTS (OPTIONAL)