WIOA STATE PLAN FOR THE STATE OF LOUISIANA 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.

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. No

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. Yes

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.) Yes

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))) Yes

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))) No

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

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

Unemployment Insurance Programs (Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law) No

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

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.

a) ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Louisiana is a major energy producing state. In 2017 Quarter 3, the Mining industry accounted for just over 5.3 percent of Louisiana's $2.1 billion Gross Domestic Product (GDP), more than double the percentage of Mining-related GDP nationally.

Mining and Logging employment dropped steeply throughout 2015 and 2016, but has averaged roughly 35,000 jobs throughout 2017, despite over-the-year employment losses in the first ten months. Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) forecasts anticipate continued decline through 2018 and minimal change - a loss of 75 jobs - through 2024.

Despite the flagging Mining industry, Louisiana's long term outlook is encouraging. The state expects a 7.1 percent rise in employment - over 146,000 new jobs - through 2024.

The Health Care and Social Assistance industry - a backbone of the state's economy accounting for 7.5 percent of total real GDP in 2017 Quarter 3 - is the largest contributor to long term growth, accounting for nearly 30 percent of total forecasted growth through 2024.

Health Care and Social Assistance has grown over 11 percent since January 2012, and the industry has posted over-the-year gains every month since August 2006. Health Care and Social Assistance accounted for 13.6 percent of Louisiana's total employment in December 2017, and the industry is further highlighted in Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations below.

Despite the rocky past few years, Louisiana's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate has continued to decline, reaching 4.6 percent in December 2017. Labor force participation declined through 2016, before making a small comeback in 2017 and ending the year at 58.7 percent.

Louisiana is home to nine Metropolitan Statistical Areas, with Hammond as the most recent addition. Three of the Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) were moderately to severely impacted by the decline in oil prices. Several MSAs saw some stagnation in employment, while one saw meteoric increases. Below are the employment highlights of the nine MSAs and the eight regions encompassing them.

- The New Orleans region - Louisiana's largest by employment - anticipates growth above the state average through 2018, although at 6.2 percent its long term growth is just below that expected by the state. Six of 22 industries in the region anticipate double digit growth through 2024. Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment in the MSA, which covers the same parishes as the region, has remained somewhat stymied over the past three years, although the not seasonally adjusted (NSA) unemployment rate has steadily declined over the same time period.
- The Baton Rouge region, which includes both the Baton Rouge and Hammond MSAs, has a positive outlook, with both short and long term employment projections predicting growth outstripping that of the state. The Health Care and Social Assistance industry is poised to add the most jobs, with over 38,000 new jobs expected through 2024. Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment has been on the rise in the MSA, despite a temporary 7,400 decline in August 2016 after the Baton Rouge flooding. The NSA unemployment rate in the MSA has experienced steady decline over the past three years.
- Both the three-parish Houma region and two-parish Houma MSA reflect the negative repercussions of declining oil prices. Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment in the MSA has declined 15.6 percent since January 2015, although the losses have slowed considerably in 2017. The Houma region is one of two regions anticipating negative growth through 2018. Optimistically, employment is expected to rise 6.6 percent through 2024, and the unemployment rate has dropped considerably since mid-2016; as of December 2017 the rate was 4.1 percent.
- Lafayette is the second region hard-hit by the drop in oil prices: short term growth in the region is projected to be -2.2 percent. The long term outlook is stronger, with 7.3 percent employment growth anticipated through 2024. Much like Houma, seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment in the MSA declined considerable through mid-2016; the MSA lost nearly 11 percent of jobs between January 2015 and December 2017. However, employment appears to have stabilized at just fewer than 200,000 jobs over the past 18 months; the NSA unemployment rate has been on the decline during that same time period.
- The Lake Charles region leads the state in employment growth; a staggering 6.5 percent growth is expected through 2018, and 8.1 percent through 2024. Transportation and

Warehousing is responsible for much of the long-term growth, while Construction drives much of the short-term growth. Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment in the MSA has been on the rise over the past three years, with 13.3 percent more jobs in December 2017 than in January 2015. The unemployment rate mirrors the MSA's boom; at 3.2 percent Lake Charles had the lowest rate of all the MSAs in December 2017.

- Despite a declining unemployment rate, the Alexandria MSA has also shown a modest 1.8 percent decline in seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment over the past three years. The region posts and unexceptional short and long term forecast, with both coming in just below state average. Despite that, the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services industry anticipates over 35 percent employment growth through 2024, and another four industries project double digit employment growth through the same time period.
- Shreveport was the third area noticeably affected by oil prices, although it was not nearly as hard hit as either Houma or Lake Charles. The MSA has seen a 3.9 percent decline in seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment over the past three years, although the NSA unemployment rate has slowly declined over the same time period. Short term growth is projected to be just below the state average, while long term growth is just over state average. Health Care and Social Assistance expects to add the most jobs through 2024, at over 6,300, or 15.1 percent growth.
- The Monroe MSA has tracked slow but steady growth over the past three years, with seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment rising 1.7 percent. The unemployment rate has nearly halved over that same time period, falling from 8 percent in January 2015 to 4.1 percent in December 2017. The Monroe region projects above average growth through 2018, with Health Care and Social Assistance expected to add 862 jobs. Long term growth is projected at 6.6 percent, below state average but not the smallest growth in the state.
- The Hammond MSA is Louisiana's newest and smallest MSA. Composed of just Tangipahoa Parish, it is part of the Baton Rouge region. It is also the only MSA for which seasonally adjusted employment data is not available. The MSA has experienced a steady climb in not seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment, adding 2,600 jobs over the past three years. The unemployment rate, in keeping with state trend, has also fallen, although at 4.4 percent it was second highest in the state in December 2017.

All nine MSAs and eight regions are making strides to put the state on target to reach its projected employment of just over 2 million jobs through 2018. The continually declining unemployment rate in all MSAs is another positive sign that the state is slowly regaining the ground lost to falling oil prices.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission's Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE) Platform, and the Louisiana Occupational Information System (LOIS), are the state's Virtual Labor Market Information Web Portal. This interactive site provides users with access to the latest Louisiana labor force, wages, population, industry employment, training schools, training programs, report for completion rates, projections, demographics, nonfarm employment, employer database, unemployment claimants, industry staffing patterns, licensed occupations, demand occupations, and career products. The LMI tables and charts and figures that follow provide projections for Louisiana's long term industry growth.

Sources: The preceding section cited data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Current Employment Statistics Program, the Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program, and LWC Short Term and Long Term Industry Projections.

i. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS[1]

Louisiana's short term and long term employment projections suggest that the annual average workforce demand will increase at 1.2 percent, the same rate as the national annual average workforce demand. **Table 1** shows short term and long term growth for the state and its eight regions. The Lake Charles region anticipates the most growth in the short term, while the Baton Rouge region predicts the most through 2024.

Table 1: Short Term and Long Term Industry Growth by Region

RLMA*	Region	2015 Employment	2018 Forecast	Short Term Growth	2024 Forecast	Long Term Growth
0	Statewide	2,058,832	2,097,983	1.9%	2,205,120	7.1%
1	New Orleans	589,295	604,064	2.5%	625,705	6.2%
2	Baton Rouge	471,733	488,743	3.6%	510,520	8.2%
3	Houma	105,430	101,903	-3.3%	112,349	6.6%
4	Lafayette	285,800	279,572	-2.2%	306,524	7.3%
5	Lake Charles	133,933	142,674	6.5%	144,833	8.1%
6	Alexandria	112,224	113,437	1.1%	119,040	6.1%
7	Shreveport	242,133	246,512	1.8%	260,182	7.5%
8	Monroe	117,906	120,793	2.4%	125,709	6.6%

*Regional Labor Market Area

Table 2 highlights the ten fastest growing industry subsectors in Louisiana through 2018. While Leather and Allied Product Manufacturing has the highest rate, Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction is expected to add the most jobs.

Table 2: Short Term Growth Rate in Top Louisiana Industries

Industry	NAICS* Code	2015 Employment	2018 Forecast	Employment Growth	Percent Growth
Leather and allied product manufacturing	316	94	106	12	12.8%
Beverage and tobacco product manufacturing	312	2,271	2,461	190	8.4%
Construction of buildings	236	22,660	24,554	1,894	8.4%

Industry	NAICS* Code	2015 Employment	2018 Forecast	Employment Growth	Percent Growth
Heavy and civil engineering construction	237	49,379	53,411	4,032	8.2%
Nonstore retailers	454	2,131	2,305	174	8.2%
Couriers and messengers	492	5,491	5,910	419	7.6%
Social assistance	624	43,836	46,944	3,108	7.1%
Furniture and related product manufacturing	337	1,165	1,242	77	6.6%
Ambulatory health care services	621	97,014	103,244	6,230	6.4%
Building material and garden supply stores	444	19,633	20,840	1,207	6.2%

*North American Industry Classification System

In **Table 3**, various subsectors of the healthcare and transportation industries dominate the top growing subsectors in Louisiana. Healthcare and Social Assistance enjoys projected double digit growth in all eight regions across the state, and Professional and Technical Services projects the same in seven of the eight regions.

Industry	NAICS Code	2015 Employment	2024 Forecast	Employment Growth	Percent Growth
Leather and allied product manufacturing	316	94	114	20	21.3%
Social assistance	624	43,836	52,920	9,084	20.7%
Ambulatory health care services	621	97,014	116,557	19,543	20.1%
Performing arts and spectator sports	711	4,708	5,561	853	18.1%
Other information services	519	436	505	69	15.8%
Couriers and messengers	492	5,491	6,349	858	15.6%
Building material and garden supply stores	444	19,633	22,421	2,788	14.2%
Nonstore retailers	454	2,131	2,414	283	13.3%
Professional and technical services	541	89,168	100,873	11,705	13.1%
Warehousing and storage	493	7,544	8,504	960	12.7%

High demand occupations are those with three, four, or five star rankings as determined by the Louisiana Workforce Commission. LWC's star ratings system takes into account wages, job openings, employment, and projected growth for over six hundred occupations, both statewide and regionally. Table 4 shows some of the highest rated occupations sorted by employment.

Table 4: Top 20 High-Demand Occupations by Employment

Star Rating	Occupational Title	2015 Estimate	2024 Projected	Annual Total Openings	2016 Annual Average Wage
««««««	Registered Nurses	42,310	47,860	1,850	$63,370
««««««	General and Operations Managers	30,900	33,340	1,050	$111,119
««««««	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	24,050	25,470	650	$58,793
««««««	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	23,770	25,200	690	$48,101
««««««	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	20,780	22,380	490	$48,663
««««««	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	17,330	18,080	610	$47,810
««««««	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	13,560	14,380	410	$49,567
««««««	Electricians	13,560	14,150	470	$50,810
««««««	Accountants and Auditors	12,270	13,310	440	$64,406
«««««	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	29,000	30,900	970	$35,944
«««««	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	27,200	29,050	810	$37,241
«««««	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	25,350	26,950	610	$40,903
«««««	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	21,680	23,920	860	$38,074
«««««	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	24,230	22,580	240	$36,132
«««««	Carpenters	18,050	18,580	610	$38,993

Star Rating	Occupational Title	2015 Estimate	2024 Projected	Annual Total Openings	2016 Annual Average Wage
««««	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	34,880	35,650	450	$30,518
««««	Construction Laborers	22,950	23,940	490	$31,349
««««	Customer Service Representatives	20,230	22,590	760	$30,578
««««	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	16,970	19,420	780	$29,897
««««	Security Guards	17,830	19,300	410	$27,023

1. **EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS**[2]

Figure 1: 2024 Industry Projections for Louisiana, Two-Digit NAICS

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_01.jpg

Figure 1 provides projections on what industries are expected to experience the greatest growth by 2024. The highest growth occupation according to these projections will be the medical field. The aging of the baby boom generation will necessitate more people working to care for this segment of the population. Specifically, these projections show the Health Care and Social Assistance Industry growing by 41,446 through 2024. Table 5 echoes these results.

Table 5: 2024 Industry Projections for Louisiana, Highest Forecasted Growth Jobs

Industry Sector	Employment Growth	Percent Growth
Health Care and Social Assistance	41,446	14.5%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	11,705	13.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	23,522	11.9%
Administrative and Waste Services	10,587	10.5%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	2,937	9.7%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,040	8.6%

Industry Sector	Employment Growth	Percent Growth
Retail Trade	16,246	7.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,141	6.8%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	9,703	6.1%
Educational Services	9,950	6.0%

Table 6: 2024 Occupational Projections for Louisiana, Highest Forecasted Growth Jobs

Star Rating	Occupation Code	Occupation Title	Growth Rate
««««««	15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	92.1%
««««««	15-1133	Software Developers, Systems Software	90.4%
««««««	15-1134	Web Developers	65.3%
««««««	15-1131	Computer Programmers	51.4%
««««««	15-1141	Database Administrators	46.9%
«««««	27-3091	Interpreters and Translators	31.8%
«««««	49-9092	Commercial Divers	29.9%
«««««	51-9081	Dental Laboratory Technicians	25.6%
««««	25-3021	Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	15.5%
««««	31-9092	Medical Assistants	15.4%

Figure 2: Projected Employment through 2024 in the Health Care and Social Assistance Industry

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_02.jpg

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

Figure 3: Total Nonfarm Employment, Seasonally Adjusted, LA (January 2015- December 2017)

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_03.jpg

Source: Current Employment Statistics (CES) Program.

Figure 4: Total Employment for Selected Sectors, Seasonally Adjusted, LA (2017)

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_04.jpg

Source: Current Employment Statistics (CES) Program.

Figure 5: Over the Year Change in Total Nonfarm and Private Sector Jobs Seasonally Adjusted (SA), LA

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_05.jpg

Source: Nonfarm, Private, and Government Employment Data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program

Figure 5 shows the over-the-year change in total nonfarm jobs in Louisiana. The state saw a slump in nonfarm jobs from mid-2015 but has been on the rise since April 2017. Another trend evident in Figure 5 is the decline in the number of jobs in the public sector. The difference between these data series represents the over-the-year change in all government employment in Louisiana. More clearly, Figure 6 demonstrates the year-over-year change in the number of total government employees (federal, state, and local) over the last four years.

Figure 6: Year over Year Change in Total Government Jobs (SA)http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_06.jpg

Source: Nonfarm, Private, and Government Employment Data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program

Figure 7: United States and Louisiana Employed to Unemployed Ratio

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_07.jpg

Source: Employment and Unemployment data produced by the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Program

While the labor force participation rate in Louisiana is below the national level, it mimics the overall trends found nationally. Similarly Louisiana's employed to unemployed ratio—which compares the rate at which people are finding jobs to the rate at which they are being separated—reflects the national trend but at a higher level (Figure 9). While the US reached its pre-recession level of 19 percent in January 2016, Louisiana's employment to unemployment ratio remains just below the 22.3 percent enjoyed in January 2008, although it breached 20 percent in November 2017.

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_07-RF.jpg

Figure 8: Initial Weekly UI Claims, January 2015 to January 2018

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_08.jpg

Source: Weekly Unemployment Claims produced by Louisiana Workforce Commission.

Figure 8 above illustrates the number of weekly initial unemployment insurance claims from January 2015 to January 2018. The green linear trend line marks the modest decline in weekly claims over the past three years. A significant jump in claims is visible in August 2016, likely a result of the Baton Rouge area flooding. Along with the graph on the following page, illustrating continued claims, the general trend in unemployment insurance claims suggests improving labor market conditions in Louisiana.

Figure 9:Continued Weekly UI Claims, January 2015 to January 2018

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_09.jpg

Source: Weekly Unemployment Claims produced by Louisiana Workforce Commission.

Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) Model

Changes to the U.S. economy—including the contraction of entire industries as a result of changes in technology and overseas competition—have led to increases in the length of unemployment. Unemployed workers are now less likely to be rehired by their previous employers and are at a greater risk of long-term unemployment than in the past. As a result, the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) system was established nationwide following the 1993 enactment of PL 103-152. Profiling is designed to identify UI claimants who are most likely to exhaust their regular benefits, so that they may receive reemployment services that will help them find a job more quickly.

Louisiana Workforce Commission's Labor Market Information developed a model for profiling all new claimants for regular UI benefits. The WPRS system strengthens the link between Unemployment insurance and Employment Services for those most likely to exhaust benefits. The worker profiling model for Louisiana helps us achieve the objectives of reducing the weeks of UI

benefits, reducing UI benefits per beneficiary, increasing earnings per beneficiary, and providing a management tool for targeting resources and aiding staff in understanding the customers they serve.

(ii) LABOR MARKET TRENDS

Figure 10: National and State Labor Force Participation Rate, January 2013-December 2017

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_10.jpg

Source: Labor Force data produced by the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Program.

The labor force participation rate is a measure of how well labor force growth has kept pace with population growth. Both nationally and in Louisiana, participation rates have experienced a slight decline in recent years. It is widely expected that this will continue in future periods as the baby boom population leaves the labor force and enters retirement.

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_10-RF.jpg

Figure 11: Participation Rate and Unemployment Rate in Louisiana (January 2013-December 2017)

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_11.jpg

Source: Labor Force data produced by the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Program.

Figure 12: Participation Rate and Unemployment Rate in U.S. (January 2013- December 2017)http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_12.jpg

Source: Labor Force data produced by the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Program.

Figures 11 and **12** above show the unemployment rate and labor force participation rate from January 2013 to December 2017. No recessions have occurred in this time period, although oil prices saw a strong decline that began in mid-2014. It is encouraging that in recent months Louisiana has experienced both a decline in the unemployment rate and growth in the labor force participation rate.

Table 12: Employment Status of the Civilian Non-Institutional Population, Annual Averages, Louisiana (June 2016-May 2017)

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_12.jpg

The Current Population Survey (CPS) provides estimates of the composition of the Civilian Non-Institutional Labor Force. The labor force is all individuals over the age of 16 that are employed or unemployed and actively seeking a job. The chart above provides some information on how different ethnic groups and genders are represented in Louisiana's workforce. From this information, the proportion of each race in the labor force is approximately equal to the proportion of the race of the population. By gender, it is clear that males comprise a significantly larger proportion of the labor force than the total population.

Table 13: Civilians Not in the Labor Force by Sex and Age, Annual Averages, Louisiana (June 2016-May 2017)

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_13.jpg

Figure 13: Statewide Household Income Distribution, 2016

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_13.jpg

Purple poverty line represents a household of four making less than $23,850/year.

Source: Current Population Survey (CPS) conducted by the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program.

(iii) EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

Table 14: Educational Attainment of the Population Aged 18 to 24 Years

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_14.jpg

Tables 14 and 15 highlight the educational achievements of Louisiana's population. **Table 14** looks at a younger cohort, aged 18 to 24, who may still be in postsecondary education. Their relative age likely accounts for the low percentage of Bachelor's degree or higher completers, and the high percentage of 'some college or associate's degree' completers.

Table 15 studies a slightly older population more likely to have left the educational system. Louisiana's women lead the charge in education, with over 50 percent of high school diplomas, Associate's degrees, Bachelor's degrees, and Master's degrees held by women. Of the nearly 500,000 Louisianans who did not graduate high school, 53.7 percent are men.

Table 15: Educational Attainment of the Population Aged 25 Years and Over

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_15.jpg

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_16.jpg*Disabilities are not mutually exclusive

Source: 2016 ACS 1-Year Survey, Table B18120

Over 384,000 Louisianans aged 16 to 64, or 13.7 percent of the state's population, live with one or more disabilities. Residents with disabilities account for 15.1 percent of the unemployed and only 6.4 percent of the employed population; 31.2 percent of those not in the labor force also have at least one disability.

Table 16 highlights the rates at which various disability characteristics appear in the employed, unemployed, and not in the labor force populations. Disability characteristics are not mutually exclusive, meaning one individual may have multiple difficulties, accounting for the high percentages.

Table 17: Labor Force Status of Veterans Aged 18 to 64

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_17.jpg

Table 17 breaks out the labor force status of Louisiana veterans aged 18 to 64. Veterans in Louisiana have a fairly high labor force participation rate, with over 70 percent of those aged 18 to 64 part of the labor force. Veterans account for 5.2 percent of Louisiana's population and a proportional 5.3 percent of Louisiana's labor force; only 4.8 percent of those not in the labor force are veterans.

Table 18 compares incarceration rates statewide and nationally. Louisiana has the highest incarceration rate in the nation, with 762 of every 100,000 residents behind bars in 2016. 99.9 percent of those incarcerated have sentences in excess of one year.[1]

Table 18: 2016 Year End Population Jurisdiction Population Rates (Per 100,000 U.S. Residents)

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_18.jpg

In 2016 the state had 16,404 releases and 15,968 total admissions to the prison system. 65 percent of the admissions were new court commitments, and 34.4 percent were parole violators. 91.8 percent of the releases were conditional; another 6.7 percent of releases were unconditional. Another 0.8 percent of releases were attributable to death and 0.6 were AWOL/escape, according to the Bureau of Justice

(iv) SKILL GAPS

Table 19: Public Postsecondary Education Program Completers by Degree Level with Projected Annual Openings

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_19.jpg

Source: Annual Projected Openings from LWC's Long Term Occupational Projections. Louisiana Board of Regents Degrees and Certificates Awarded by Degree, Degree Level, Gender, Race, and Citizenship.

Table 19 shows the number of completers from Louisiana's public postsecondary education programs by degree level for academic years 2012 through 2016. The academic years are labeled by the year in which they begin, so 2016 is the school year beginning in June 2016 and ending in May 2017.

The completer data are compared to the number of annual openings from LWC's long-term projections, which provide an approximation of what skill levels may show gaps in the future. 'Some Postsecondary, No Degree' awards show the largest gap, with half as many graduates in 2016 as annual projected openings through 2024. Bachelor's degrees show another large skills mismatch, with nearly 19,000 graduates in 2016-2017, and only 8,540 annual projected openings.

Below is further breakdown of degrees awarded by occupational category. The same comparison is drawn between 2016 graduates and annual projected job openings through 2024. Construction occupations that do not require post-secondary education are excluded from the Annual Projected Openings to provide better comparison for Construction occupation post-secondary completers.

Table 20:Public Postsecondary Education Program Completers by Occupational Group with Projected Annual Openings

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_20.jpg

Louisiana has 113 occupations with high demand (3, 4, or 5 stars) and high base year employment (employment greater than or equal to 2,500). **Table 21** shows the star ratings, ten year growth, and education levels required of each occupation.

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_21.pdf

Source: LWC's Long Term Occupational Projections

Figure 14 shows the top ten most frequently appearing knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with these 113 occupations. These represent the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed by the workforce through 2024.

Figure 14: Key Knowledge Areas of Top Occupations

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_14.jpg

Source: O*net Online Summary Report, www.onetonline.org

Figure 15: Key Skills of Top Occupations

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_15.jpg

Source: O*net Online Summary Report, www.onetonline.org

Figure 16: Key Abilities of Top Occupations

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Figure_16.jpg

Source: O*net Online Summary Report, www.onetonline.org

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[1] Bureau of Justice Statistics Corrections Statistical Analysis Tool

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.

Workforce Development Activities

Four years ago, the State launched an initiative to balance the emphasis on services between employers (creating job opportunities in demand occupations) and job seekers (recruiting and/or training a highly qualified workforce). This initiative was strategic in nature and is operated out of the State's Business and Career Solutions Centers, with the purpose of increasing the "value" of services that the State provides both to employers and job seekers. Integral to this system is an understanding of and allowance for needed services to individuals with "significant barriers to employment" and the requirement for "priority of service" under the appropriate laws, regulations, and statutes.

Each One-Stop Center that is also a Comprehensive One-Stop Center (includes the presence of all partners) offers an extensive array of services which include for job seekers:

- Outreach, common intake and assessment, orientation to services, informational services, and referral to other services as necessary based on assessment.
- Initial and Comprehensive assessment of skills, aptitudes, interests and abilities, both in a self-service and staff assisted service context, based on the specific needs of the job seeker.
- Career Counseling, job search and placement assistance.
- Provision of Labor Market Information by location, region, and national areas - job vacancy listings, information on skills relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings and skill requirements for those occupations.
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible training providers. Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services such as child care and transportation.

For employers, Comprehensive One-Stop Centers offer:

- Efficient and effective screening and referral of qualified job candidates.
- Active outreach and assistance in developing effective recruiting job orders.
- Assisting with searching the State's "talent bank".
- Job fairs and recruitment events.
- Connection with community service organizations and tax credit opportunities.
- Training for Incumbent Workers.
- Connections to Registered Apprenticeship programs.
- Provision of information regarding the availability of On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Customized Training, including referral of employers to sources of funding for worker training.
- Coordination with economic development and other programs that assist business.
- Assistance with layoff aversion programs and services.

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth

LWC has formally eliminated the sequence of service provision in Title I programs through development of a new service delivery model. The new model connects all partners to

clients at any entry point where assessment occurs. The process is further driven by co-enrollment across all active Partner Programs. The former sequence of service provision required participants to receive career services prior to training services.

LWC, under WIOA codification, and through its policy guidance, clarifies to all partners that participants are not required to pass through multiple layers of services before entering into training. The state service delivery model has effectively combined core and intensive services into career services, giving all partner staff in One-Stop Centers the flexibility to provide access to training based on assessed need. The redefined service model:

- Provides more flexible training delivery options to meet the needs of low-income individuals.
- Allows Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to contract directly with colleges or eligible training providers to supply training for high-demand occupations and/or industry sectors.
- Expands reliance beyond Individual Training Accounts and increases flexibility to help local boards use WIOA funds to a better scale.
- LWDBs continue to develop and refine innovative and effective models for obtaining industry-recognized credentials, including:
- Integrated education and training approaches; career pathways, industry or sector partnerships, including those pertaining to Registered Apprenticeship programs and opportunities.
- Cohort-based approaches.
- Evidence-based approaches that reflect best practices including Registered Apprenticeship programs.
- Development of interim credentials for longer-term Registered Apprenticeship programs, which Louisiana can do as an "SAA State" (State Apprenticeship Agency).

In addition, LWDBs may use a portion of local funds to fund pay-for-performance contracts as a form of training delivery under Title I, with continuous evaluation of how target populations are chosen, to fairly serve individuals who face barriers to employment and economic success.

LWDBs may consider the full cost of participating in training services, including expenses related to dependent care, transportation and other essential needs for individuals who need additional assistance.

Louisiana uses a broad range of training programs as part of its workforce development strategy. These programs involve collaborating with local boards, companies and education/training providers to improve training.

LWC requires:

- Local boards and/or One-Stop operators to specifically report on expenditures for career and training services and on the number of participants who received career and training services. This requirement is specifically designed to make planning and funding decisions more transparent, and to provide better opportunities for public oversight.

- Eligible training providers to report results for all of their students for common measures for each program of study, not just participants whose training costs were paid for through the use of WIOA funds, in order to improve transparency of results for programs and for disadvantaged persons.

Adult

The Louisiana Workforce Commission recognizes that for many low-skilled and disadvantaged youth and adults, improved economic opportunity depends on their ability to access education and training necessary to prepare them for college and career success. Evaluation of job training programs for adults finds that postsecondary education, in particular a degree or industry-recognized credential related to in-demand jobs, is the primary determinant of lifetime earnings. Education and training provides opportunities for increasing a family's financial resources, helps parents stay employed and establishes a solid foundation for the next generation (youth). Incorporating Registered Apprenticeship into service design and delivery is one way LWC expects LWDBs to address the middle skill jobs that account for over half of Louisiana's labor market as noted in an earlier section, and it likewise addresses the need to focus on in-demand occupations and recognized credentials. One way to accomplish this is by having Center staff involved and engaged in screening and assessment for current registered programs.

LWC operates its Adult Training Program to identify workers who currently need or will need higher levels of education to fare better in the labor market to reduce the incidence and duration of unemployment while supporting higher earnings and job stability. Louisiana honors the Title I Priority of Service requirement by leveraging all available funding streams and partnerships, regardless of state or local funding availability, in providing priority access to higher-intensity career services and training to:

- Public assistance recipients.
- Other low-income individuals.
- Individuals who are deficient in basic skills.

  In contrast to WIA, where LWDBs policies on priority of service varied widely, LWC in its implementation of WIOA requires LWDBs to:

- Report the number of individuals with barriers to employment served by each core program, with specific breakdowns by subpopulation.
- Report on the number of individuals with barriers to employment that are served by the Adult and Dislocated Worker program, with specific breakdowns by subpopulation, race, ethnicity, gender, and age.

Dislocated Worker

Layoffs are always challenging for workers and employers. LWC provides Rapid Response Services designed to help employers proceed in an orderly and legal way by guiding them through the process. LWC works with LWDBs and other partners (training and supportive-service providers) to help both.

Direct services to workers facing a plant shutdown or large-scale lay-off, are focused on preparing them to find suitable new employment, and get them back to work as

quickly as possible by helping them overcome such difficult barriers to employment as:

- Transferring specialized skills to other occupations or industries.
- A decline in the market demand for certain skills.
- Age or length of work experience.
- Need for formal training or education.
- Lack of jobs with earnings at a level comparable to their previous positions.

Dislocated worker services are custom-tailored to meet an individual worker's specific needs. Working one-on-one with a case manager, workers are guided through the process of developing an Individualized Employment Plan that includes as a minimum:

- Career planning and counseling.
- Job search and placement.
- Approved training, which include Registered Apprenticeship programs.
- Other needed support services.

Youth

Louisiana does not have a defined service delivery model for WIOA Youth Services. Each LWDB has the autonomy to develop their local youth service model. However, these models must support the implementation of Career Pathways that support postsecondary education, and address the needs of low-income in school youth as well as out of school youth, and support pre-apprenticeship to Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. LWC requires each LWDB to competitively procure and provide all fourteen of the program service elements. LWC has committed to assisting the LWDB's through the One Stop partners, to develop and provide age and developmentally appropriate models for out of school youth.

LWC will work with local areas to ensure they:

- Will not require out-of-school youth in high-risk categories to prove low-income status to receive services.
- Will provide services to individuals who have dropped out of high school, have not attended school for at least one calendar quarter of the most recent school year, or are subject to the juvenile or adult justice systems under the out-of-school youth program.
- Will target and provide services to homeless individuals, runaways, current or former foster care youth and individuals who or are pregnant or parenting.
- Will provide services to youth who are not attending school, hold a secondary credential, and are either basic-skills deficient or an English language learner.

- Will consider youth living in a high-poverty area to meet the low-income criterion for youth activities funding and services.

The state will monitor and guide local boards such that at least 75 percent of available statewide funds and 75 percent of funds available to local areas are spent on workforce investment services for out-of-school youth.

Adult Education

In 2010, The Louisiana Legislature finalized the transference of responsibility of Louisiana's adult education delivery system from Department of Education (DOE) to Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS). This effort was not simply about moving a program's administration from one agency to another. It was about reconsidering completely the goals, outcomes, and direction of adult basic education in Louisiana. LCTCS developed a new policy framework whose primary focus is putting Louisiana adults to work by providing high quality basic skills instruction, in addition to wrap- around student services that lead to a seamless transition to postsecondary enrollment, technical skill training, credentialing and sustainable employment.

The LCTCS, Moving Adult Education Forward: A Pro Forma Business Plan was a milestone in re-defining the vision for adult education, focusing on new performance goals—including high school equivalency diplomas, postsecondary enrollments, postsecondary completers, and placement in sustainable employment at family-supporting wages. As a symbol of the new vision the Louisiana Adult Education Program was renamed, "WorkReadyU." Since the 2010 renewed set of expectations and vastly different philosophy in Louisiana with regards to adult education, adult education programs have progressively adjusted educational service and delivery and are well-positioned to provide/deliver/coordinate the required activities under Title II-WIOA.

Adult Education connects into the One-Stop system through the intake and assessment process to identify adults with limited basic skills, and then to use innovative instructional models as necessary to prepare adult learners for postsecondary education within the context of serving learners at the lowest skill levels. The LCTCS Adult Education and Family Literacy Program (WorkReadyU), administers and provides program performance oversight to eligible local entities that provide of adult education services. These services include academic instruction and education services that increase the individual's ability to:

- read, write, and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- transition to postsecondary education and training; and
- obtain employment.

The LCTCS is currently in the process of providing all 15 of Louisiana's Comprehensive One-Stop Centers with a technological linkage that will provide customers with more accessibility to Adult Education services and information.

Wagner-Peyser

Louisiana already meets a major requirement of WIOA - the co-location of Wagner-Peyser Employment Services in Louisiana's Comprehensive One-Stop Centers as well as some affiliate one-stop centers. The intent is to ensure that unemployment insurance claimants receive the same services as all other job-seekers, including job training, labor exchange, career counseling and labor market intelligence. The UI claimant/job- seeker will also receive eligibility assessments and referrals to an array of education resources and training through the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) provides access to services in all Comprehensive One-Stop centers and in affiliate locations as necessary to assure effective service to individuals with disabilities through participant's skills training which enhances participant ability to obtain employment in their desired field, in particular "high demand jobs". LRS consistently exceeds 70% successful placement in high demand jobs.

The LRS Program Coordinator for rehabilitation technology provides consultation to Comprehensive One-Stop Center staff and affiliate locations to improve knowledge regarding assistive technology and address other accessibility issues. In addition, the agency's Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS) serve as LRS liaisons for all Comprehensive One-Stop centers and affiliate locations within their region, providing public awareness and services to consumers such as building job-seeking skills and employment development. The State is committed to the success of individuals with disabilities and leads the collaboration effort across all Partner Programs.

LRS continues to renew and revise existing local cooperative agreements, as applicable, with the 70 school districts and 146 charter schools in Louisiana. LRS collaborates with Department of Education (DOE), the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), Work Incentive Planning Program, the Office of Community Services, and the Office of Youth Development in an effort to network, share information and utilize comparable benefits to enhance Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services to transitioning students. The primary focus of LRS' collaboration is to identify and address barriers (e.g. policies, eligibility process, resource allocation), assure effective service provision through support of local interagency core teams, provide cross-agency training, outreach, engage in capacity building of young adults and family outreach efforts, provide continued support of innovative models and practices related to transition and provide information and technical assistance.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is committed to providing cash assistance and supportive services to needy families meeting specific financial criteria and to provide services necessary to accomplish the goals and purposes of Section 401 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 601) in order to:

• Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.

• End dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

• Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancy.

• Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

In January 2014, the Department of Children and Family Services partnered with the LWC to help Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients develop high demand job skills and move toward self- sufficiency. This partnership builds and expands on the previous partnership between DCFS and LWC, and Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWDBs) and One -Stop operators to deliver workforce services to TANF families engaged in the Strategies to Empower People (STEP) program and the SNAP Louisiana Job Employment Training (LaJET) program.

STEP

The goal of the Strategies to Empower People (STEP) Program is to provide opportunities for work-eligible families of FITAP to receive job training, employment and supportive services to enable them to become self-sufficient. STEP is the result of personal Responsibility and Universal Engagement Act of 2003 passed by the Louisiana Legislature.

All work-eligible Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP) applicants/recipients of the FITAP must participate in the STEP Program. Work-eligible recipients are defined as FITAP adults under age 60 and FITAP teen heads of household, excluding those FITAP adults and teen heads of household who are disabled or caring for a member who is disabled.

LaJET

The LaJET Program is the cooperative employment and training services initiative of three entities, the Local Parish Offices of DCFS, State SNAP Office, and Louisiana workforce Commission.

The LaJET program previously only targeted SNAP recipients classified as a mandatory work registrants living in four metropolitan statistical areas. The expanded partnership supports the registration of all working-age SNAP recipients to enroll with LWC and providing access to job postings, job trainings and all other services of LWC.

To this end the Department of Children and Family Services has committed to entering into agreements with public agencies, non-profit organizations or for-profit organizations to provide intervention services including crisis intervention, counseling, mentoring, support services and prenatal care information, in addition to information and referrals regarding healthy childbirth, adoption and parenting to help ensure healthy and full-term pregnancies as an alternative to abortion. Local

boards and One-stop operators shall facilitate and operate as appropriate under the specifics of these agreements.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

The state continues to administer the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, which is available to workers who lose their jobs or experience reduced hours or income as a result of increased foreign trade activity. Local boards in areas where TAA petitions exist will actively reach out to affected workers to provide TAA-funded training with the same goals as provided under the dislocated worker program.

Trade services are considered an integral part of the One-Stop Center's service delivery and may involve any and all partners based on the particular needs of individual clients. As such, trade- affected workers may be eligible for:

- Training services.
- Job-search allowances.
- Relocation allowances.
- Re-employment services.
- Funded training.
- On-the-job training,

Like the dislocated worker program, TAA-funded training helps trade-impacted workers obtain the skills necessary to gain suitable employment. TAA will pay tuition, course fees, books and required supplies and equipment, transportation and other items or services deemed necessary for completion of an approved occupational skills training program, including Registered Apprenticeship programs.

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)

Louisiana provides employment, training and placement services to all veterans through a network of Comprehensive and some affiliated One-Stop Career Centers, with support through The LWC's I.T. Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE) Platform. JVSG provides services to veterans and eligible persons according to need, and significant barriers to employment. LWC Jobs for Veterans State Grant-funded activities are co-located within the state's One-Stop Centers. JVSG staff referred to as Local veteran Employment Representative (LVER) and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist are essential parts of and fully integrated into the workforce development network

Unemployment Insurance Programs- Louisiana Incumbent Worker Training Programs (IWTP)

The Louisiana Employment Security Administration Fund, is also, known as the Incumbent Worker Training Account. Amounts from this account are pledged and dedicated exclusively to fund training for businesses operating in Louisiana that incur a state unemployment insurance tax liability. The purpose of this program is to upgrade job skills through training on preventing job loss caused by obsolete skills, technological change, or national or global competition; retaining jobs; and creating jobs in labor demand occupations. The IWTP is a

partnership between the LWC, business and industry, and training providers. The IWTP is designed to benefit business and industry by assisting in the skill development of existing employees and thereby increasing employee productivity and the growth of the company. These improvements are expected to result in the creation of new jobs, the retention of jobs that otherwise may have been eliminated, and an increase in wages for trained workers.

The Louisiana Incumbent Worker Training Account funds are dedicated to support the following types of training:

• Customized Training - Designed to meet the special need and skill requirements of business and industry. Customized training programs may include specialized curriculums, instructional materials, training delivery methods, and training locations. Customized training may also include standardized courses.

• Small Business Employee Training - This type of training is individual standardized (off-the-shelf) training and is available to businesses having fifty or fewer employees.

• Pre-employment Training - This type of training is provided for non-incumbent workers for expanding businesses. This training may include screening, skills assessment, testing, remediation, and occupational and technical training.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

Currently the Louisiana Senior Community Service Employment Program is operated by both the state and national non-profit organizations. The program serves low-income persons who are 55 years of age and older who have poor employment prospects by placing them in part-time community service positions and by assisting them to transition to unsubsidized employment. Collectively these programs serve 700 program participants annually. This does not include individuals who are seeking employment and are not eligible for program services. The organizations operating in Louisiana are: Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs, Baton Rouge; Jefferson Council on Aging Inc., Metairie; National Association of Hispanic Elderly, Statewide; Capital Area Agency on Aging, Baton Rouge; and St. James Area on Aging, Vacherie.

Louisiana is committed to bringing together diverse stakeholders (including local boards and One-Stop operators) to develop and expand employment and training opportunities for the state's senior citizens. The goal of the planning process is to design a long-term strategic view of the senior citizen employment opportunities, inclusive of SCSEP and to measurable strategies to achieve the defined goals.

Job Corps

Job Corps has three sites in Louisiana: a training center in Carville, a technical school in Shreveport and a learning center in New Orleans. Under WIOA, Job Corps is linked to the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II), the State Vocational and Rehabilitation Programs.

The state is committed to partnering with Job Corps to assist eligible youth to connect to the labor force by providing them with:

- Intensive social, academic, career and technical education and service-learning opportunities.

- Obtaining secondary school diplomas or recognized post-secondary credentials leading to successful careers in in-demand industry sectors or occupations.
- Achieving economic self-sufficiency and opportunities for advancement, or enrollment in post-secondary education, including an apprenticeship program.
- Becoming responsible citizens.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

Louisiana is committed to providing resources and fostering partnerships in low-income communities that enable low-income individuals to achieve self-sufficiency enhance family stability and revitalize their community. This commitment is the charge of CSBG unit of the Office of Workforce Development, within the LWC. As partner in the Louisiana Combined Plan, the CSBG unit and Louisiana's forty-two (42) Community Action Agencies (CAAs) carry out locally designed programs providing a range of services and activities that have measurable impacts on the causes and effects of poverty, and support self-sufficiency. The CSBG Community Action programs assists low income populations with transportation, clothing, health services, food, shelter, job preparedness, education and housing assistance. As partners in the Louisiana workforce system continuum of services, CAA services target vulnerable populations and other least job-ready customers by focusing on reduction of the barriers to employment.

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.

Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth) Title III (Wagner-Peyser)

STRENGTHS LWC has developed policy, vision, certification criteria and contracts to assist LWDBs in complying with WIOA's expectations. LWC requires development of a regional plan by respective LWDBs including performance targets. In the past two years, LWC has created a strong foundation on which to build true partnerships through implementation of the new basic service delivery model and the Continuous Improvement Process as support strategies to LWDA operations. This plan has ensured the existence of at least one comprehensive One Stop Center in each LWDA, and will encourage LWDBs to operate "additional affiliate One-Stop Centers with any subset of partners, or specialized centers", as allowed under WIOA. The plan drives the realignment of funding streams to improve accountability across core programs, support career pathways and sector strategies, and create continuous opportunities to measure performance and identify areas for improvement, resulting in an effective and efficient operation.

WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES Louisiana Workforce Development Area (LWDA) leadership across the state has experienced, in many instances, challenges developing viable regional workforce partnerships with economic development and educational entities. Vast improvement has been seen in this area over the 18 months, which should allow the development of regional plans that align with the Governor's vision on workforce and the sharing of resources and ideas for regional implementation, as scarcity of resources, and the true need to partner are becoming drivers. Budgetary realities and restrictions, combined with the refocus and expansion of services under WIOA, require the Office of Workforce Development (OWD) in particular (and LWC in a

broader sense) to take a comprehensive look at how it provides support to service partners. Although all 15 of Louisiana Workforce Development Areas have at least one Comprehensive Center where all core and additional WIOA partners have signed memorandums of understanding (MOUs) containing infrastructure agreements, the challenge is to continue developing an integrated system that is inclusive of all partners. This will only work if the LWDAs "buy in" and become more strategic and effective in managing formula-fund dollars. This is an opportunity to guide LWDBs toward a more proactive, strategic, and engaged approach.

Title II (Adult Education)

STRENGTHS Adult Education has adopted and implemented the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for Adult Education. Standard alignment with K-12 partners provides rigorous standards that specify what learners should know at each level. Provide professional development activities/training that aligns CCRS with evidenced-based practices. Developed and mandated teacher certification course to improve teacher quality and understanding of WIOA requirements. Data driven teacher quality evaluation process.

WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES Streamline assessment mandates and reporting results for students. Adult Education has the capability to provide assessment services throughout the workforce training system for One-Stop Centers, including services to Out-of-School Youth (OSY) under WIOA, as well as post-secondary educational institutions, TANF and SNAP programs. Employer engagement and involvement on program design and curriculum to ensure valid education/training meet regional labor market demands. Develop procedure to evaluate programs and activities to ensure continuous improvement and expansion. Must ensure ABE teachers evaluations include analysis of education services provided to WIOA OSY to ensure WIOA Common Measures are understood and met, or exceeded.

Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation Services)

STRENGTHS As a result of LRS, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program being within LWC's organizational structure in Louisiana, integration of vocational rehabilitation into the local One-Stop infrastructure has already begun, with some local areas having counselors working within the One-Stops. An array of services is provided by each component of the One-Stop, including LRS/VR. LRS has Employment Development Specialists available in three regions. These individuals are specialized in working with individuals with disabilities, including job placement.

WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES Expand the integration of vocational rehabilitation services within One-Stop Centers. Proactively address physical and programmatic accessibility; space and logistics, including funding/cost allocation agreements. Integrate VR into the one-stop service delivery model. Eliminate duplication of effort/services where possible. Cross-train staff, and clarify services available. This includes those responsible for providing said services. To enhance employer outreach and collaboration with one-stop efforts in employer engagement.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

STRENGTHS Department of Children and Family Services currently has partnership to provide Employment and Training Services to TANF recipients state wide through its Strategies to Empower People (STEP) Initiative. TANF recipients (STEP) are connected to local Business and Career Solutions Centers (BCSCs), statewide, and are often co-enrolled under WIOA Youth and/or Adult Programs.

OPPORTUNITIES State needs to consider increasing the amount of TANF funding dedicated to work-related activities in an effort to increase overall capacity of STEP and other E&T programs and services to eligible participants. Referral opportunities through improved partnership with Adult Education and other programs that will be housed in comprehensive one-stop centers in each local area.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program

STRENGTHS The Trade unit has redesigned and implemented new forms to capture data specific to federal requirements, which has improved the quality of the initial interview and intake process. The Trade unit has restructured its filing system according to the outline of the federal requirements which has streamlined the case management function; improved the organization and flow of the quarterly monitoring review, and minimized the opportunity for findings and disallowed costs. The Trade unit has changed its manual Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) claim filing process to a new automated system, which has tremendously improved customer service and decreased the changes for human error and has increased timely processing.

WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES The trade unit has the opportunity to become a best practice state over a period of time with the implementation of the new forms, which will yield better results from state and federal monitoring reviews. Retention and quarterly training for TAA staff is essential to ensure continuous improvement and expansion of the Trade program. The Trade Unit must continue to work with the Geosol as issues arrive with new automated claims process in order to ensure that the system is efficient and effective in servicing its adversely trade affected customers.

Jobs For Veterans State Grant (JVSG)

STRENGTHS Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist are providing individualized career services to 99% of the Veterans they provide services to. Despite serving only veterans with Significant Barriers, DVOPs have achieved an Entered Employment Rate (EER) of 66%. Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) are integrated in to the Business Services Teams within their assigned workforce regions. LVERs conduct employer outreach with and as a part of regional business services teams.

OPPORTUNITIES Incorporate the service delivery strategy utilized by DVOPs in to the One-Stop Centers statewide. Currently the EER for all Veterans receiving services statewide is 51%. Large opportunity for improvement. LVERs could be more involved in employer engagement centered on assisting employers to develop and start registered apprenticeship programs and On-the-job training programs. These efforts could provide more opportunities for Veterans to learn while they work.

Senior Community Service Employment Program

STRENGTHS Several reputable NPOs within the state currently providing employment and training programs for seniors 55 and older. Governor's Office has an existing Office of Elderly Affairs that supports services to elderly citizens.

OPPORTUNITIES Developing partnerships with LWDAs in local areas where NPOs exist to create a referral system; Opportunity to increase the number of NPOs in the state to provide elderly employment and training services in local workforce development areas and workforce regions.

Leveraging WIOA and other federal and non-federal funding to expand services supports by Governor's Office of Elderly Services.

Community Service Block Grant (CSBG)

STRENGTHS Local CAAs have the autonomy to develop strategies and activities that support the needs of low income individuals to secure, and retain employment. CAAs administer Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and often other local, state and federal resources that may assist job- seekers or workforce training participants to remain self-sufficient.

OPPORTUNITIES A large percentage of Louisiana CAAs are not engaged partners in their local or regional workforce planning activities, often causing duplication of services. CAAs must take this opportunity to increase their involvement with LWDBs in developing One-Stop Center partnerships, in particular the development of effective cross referrals, and co-enrollment. The ensuing expansion of services under WIOA will require the LWDB and CAA to take a more comprehensive look at how partner resources are aligned and utilized in providing supportive services to job-seekers.

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

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

b) STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

The Louisiana Combined State Plan Partners have defined "capacity" in three categories of service: efficiency, connectivity, and funding. LWC has a solid foundation in efficiently providing employer and job-seeker services. The implementation and operation of a continuous process improvement strategy shows promise in continuing to create efficiencies in these processes.

With the addition of new partners now contributing to Comprehensive One-Stop Center Infrastructure costs, there remains more opportunities for stronger coordination and consistency between Partner Programs, through the use of a Common Intake Process and Co-enrollment strategy that will improve efficiencies across the board for all partners. This "any door" approach will enable any job seeker to enter the system with a consistent approach, which will result in seamless transition among Partner Programs and Supportive Services providers. LWC is also engaged in developing a data management system that will make data sharing more instantaneous and homogenous to all partners.

The addition of new partners to the One-Stop Centers should provide opportunities to alleviate the problem of One-Stop centers being supported primarily by Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Adult funds, where ever the dwindling resources are forcing service choices to be made based on cost, and not on job-seeker need, or employer demand. LWC will guide LWDAs in leveraging additional Partner Program funding in order to overcome this shortfall.

The capacity of the State's education and training services varies from region to region and is based on the needs of individuals and funding availability by the LWDA. The State has adopted a Career Pathway approach to address efficiency issues related to how timely and responsive it is in developing plans and entering job-seekers into training. This will allow employers and job-seekers to focus on a stepped approach to earning education and training.

The State is determined to meet the need of "market connection" by identifying and providing "working learners", with greater flexibility and broader opportunities in education and training in order to overcome limited funding. The State's goal is to develop capacity to assist job-seekers, who find training and education at odds with making a "family sustaining wage." This can be accomplished through closely managed and leveraged resources.

LWC is quickly building capacity in Business Services through the use of "Industry Sector Coordinators" who focus on specific industries (chemical, medical, etc.). The Industry Sector Coordinators connect with Workforce Development Boards and Program Partners who are enrolling, assessing, and providing career and individualized services to job-seekers in order to meet anticipate and meet labor market demands in a timely manner.

LWC's Apprenticeship Division is working statewide to improve the capacity of the workforce system relative to incorporating Registered Apprenticeship in service design and delivery, as well as to support the emphasis on career pathways. The engagement of State apprenticeship staff with the Office of Apprenticeship in Dallas has also been robust, and we expect that partnership to continue. As noted earlier in this plan, LWC believes Registered Apprenticeship is a model that strikes "…the critical balance between serving individuals and employers in a manner that will produce strategies that in the long run are good for both."

LWC's service platform is proven, and is a solid foundation on which to broaden its use. However, there are still challenges with the state's larger communities and metropolitan areas. These are difficult to serve consistently, due to the varying size of firms and industry concentrations.

Because of the complexity in adopting new laws, in the context of waning budgets and moving industry targets, the State and its LWDAs face a series of strategic challenges to the workforce system both in services to job seekers and employers. Together, these challenges are high, but the opportunities to address these challenges are even greater. The State continues to make headway in building a coalition of Partner Programs, researching and designing support structures, and shall effective address the next stage of The State's workforce development system through strategic realignment, simplified navigation and an integrated approach to serving all its customers.

LWC's Office of Workforce Development has realigned staffing and its operational strategy to provide effective guidance and support to Local Workforce Areas identified in the plan, and in support of regional business engagement strategies. One partner, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, has identified human resources as its greatest challenge in meeting the requirements of WIOA. This is due, largely, to current vacancies and attrition. However, the greatest challenge Louisiana faced was the state's budget deficit at a reported $70 million deficit thru June 30, 2016, and an estimated $700M-1 billion dollars deficit through June 30, 2017. Of greatest concern was that the inevitable cuts in services and belt tightening would negatively impact those individuals to whom WIOA targets; out of school youth, individuals receiving public assistance, the unemployed, basic skills deficient, and those with significant barriers to employment. The State's service delivery models are a solid foundation for striking the critical balance between serving individuals and employers in a manner that will produce strategies that in the long run are good for both.

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.

On January 11, 2016, Gov. John Bel Edwards assumed leadership of the state of Louisiana. In his inaugural speech, he highlighted the numerous challenges the state faces, beginning with a $1.9 billion budget shortfall. He spoke to citizens of his vision, inspired by General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, of how we will meet the mounting challenges ahead, "to build courage when courage seems to fail, to regain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith, to create hope when hope becomes forlorn."

Gov. Edwards further stated that every challenging task will be examined in a three-step process: (1) gathering all the information about the job at hand (intelligence); (2) choosing a strategy - seeking out all viable options to successfully address the challenge, and selecting those that best fit our mission and goals; and (3) deciding on the tactics and determining how we are going to get done.

In summation, Gov. Edwards charged the people of Louisiana to achieve our shared mission of "Putting Louisiana First" and to make it possible for all Louisiana citizens to be healthy and prosperous.

The Louisiana WIOA Combined State Plan was developed and is being modified with the governor's strategic leadership and is being submitted in compliance with WIOA requirements as a work in progress.

The Louisiana Workforce Investment Council (WIC), the state's workforce board, supports development of an employer-led, demand-driven workforce development system based on occupational forecasts in which training, education and services for job-seekers prepare Louisiana residents for high-wage, high-demand career opportunities in Louisiana.

Louisiana's stakeholders envision a workforce system that will provide pathways for all Louisianans, including individuals who are receiving public assistance, the unemployed or underemployed, those who are deficient in basic skills, as well as persons with disabilities, including disabled veterans, and others who have significant barriers to employment. All will have access to education, training and the supportive services needed to prepare for and secure high-demand occupations that pay family-sustaining wages.

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.

_____

* 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.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1: Establish Career Pathways as a model for skill, credential and degree attainment for Louisiana citizens to secure jobs that provide opportunities for economic independence and family stability. This goal will be accomplished by executing the following objectives:

1. Workforce development system partners will develop a shared vision and strategy for industry sector-based career pathways for youth and adults. Career pathways must be diverse, with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including low-skilled adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, to have realistic access to pathways.

2. Engage employers and integrate sector strategy principles to ensure multiple employers, business associations and organized labor are partners in creating demand-driven career pathways.

3. Increase the identification, prioritization and leverage of workforce system partner resources to provide supportive services and reduce barriers for low-skilled youth and adults.

4. Strengthen the alignment of Jump Start, WorkReady U and other viable initiatives as entry and exit points in the career pathways model for in- and out-of-school youth.

5. Expand utilization of registered apprenticeship by industry sector employers to train workers and meet occupational demands.

6. Support and grow learning opportunities for job-seekers and workers by improving processes for transfer credits through postsecondary, apprenticeships and college coursework.

Goal 2: Expand career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and the expansion of bridge programs.

1.Expand and incentivize the utilization of evidenced-based workforce strategies that support targeted populations (e.g., the long-term unemployed, individuals with disabilities,

veterans, out-of-school youth) into sector-based career pathway initiatives to achieve similar outcomes relative to other populations.

2. Create new pathways for success by preparing very low-skill adults to take advantage of sector-based bridge programs that link foundation skills and adult basic education.

3. Enhance and expand the delivery of integrated re-entry and employment strategies to reduce recidivism among Louisiana's returning citizens and meet the skill and workforce needs of business and industry.

4. Promote the efficient alignment and utilization of supportive resources for populations facing multiple barriers to employment at the regional and local service delivery levels.

1. Foster the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to meet occupational demands as supported by regional labor market

information.

2. Increase the use of labor market and educational data and technology, in coordination with local data, to inform and guide strategic workforce development decisions.

3. Develop focused, regional workforce initiatives that blend partner resources (co-. investment) to educate and train workers for jobs within the workforce region.

4. Increase the alignment and efficacy of formula, discretionary and competitive workforce funding in efforts to support regional and local workforce initiatives.

5. Promote meaningful, portable industry credentials supported throughout the workforce delivery system that align to workforce demand.

6. Institute a system of accountability for the workforce development system that supports and promotes the evaluation of the effectiveness of state and local workforce development boards in meeting the workforce demands of business and workforce.

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.)

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

Proposed performance levels are in Appendix 1 and are subject to modification pending final agreement with the Secretary of Labor in conjunction with the Secretary of Education and approved by United States Department of Labor (USDOL).

In addition to the common performance measures described in Section 116(b)(2)(A), LWC will continue to track business-focused metrics as USDOL's identifies standardized indicators for measuring effectiveness in serving employers. These additional measures are tracked at a statewide level rather than by LWDA and utilized for internal analytical purposes only.

PRIMARY DATA SOURCE

The primary source of information for this measure is data recorded in the Management Information Systems (MIS) system of the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), HiRE. Services to employers are automatically recorded by HiRE and manually entered into HiRE by One-Stop Center staff. The HiRE system has the capability to have service codes added to indicate business market penetration activity.

Employer Penetration Rate (Percentage of employers using services out of all employers in the State.)

This approach tracks the percentage of employers who are using the core program services out of all employers represented in an area or State served by the public workforce system. One-Stop Centers will keep track of the number of establishments served within a program year, and States will collect that data and compare it to the aggregate number of employers in a given State and Parish(s).

PRIMARY DATA SOURCE

The primary source of information for this measure is data recorded in the MIS system of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, HiRE. Services to employers are automatically recorded by HiRE and manually entered into HiRE by One-Stop Center staff. The HiRE system has the capability to record service codes to indicate business market penetration activity.

Repeat Business Customers (Percentage of repeat employers using services within the previous three years)

This approach tracks the percentage of employers who receive services that use core program services more than once. This approach is useful in determining whether employers who receive services from the core programs are satisfied with those services and become repeat customers. This approach also assesses the workforce system's ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with employers over extended periods of time.

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.

4. ASSESSMENT

The State operates a standard format "Metrics Review Process" this includes a Monthly Review of Metrics (MRM) and a Quarterly Review of Metrics (QRM). The MRM focuses primarily on what is considered "real time" or managerial metrics which are designed to identify and address deficiencies that may be emerging, or may become anticipated at a time when the Continuous Improvement Process can make "real time correction" and begin the development of a "corrective action plan" when that development is called for.

In addition to a more immediate assessment of operations, the MRM focuses on identification and sharing of emerging best practices and contains a component of objective review for programs in development or new programs that have not stabilized. The QRM is less "tactical" and more "strategic" in both time and scope. In particular the QRM focuses

more on evolving Partner Program relationship, cross program activities, and achieved outcomes against set performance measures. Like the MRM, the QRM results become drivers in the Continuous Improvement Process.

Note the following samples of drivers from both the QRM and MRM. These include, but are not limited to:

• Employer Market Penetration

- Number of New Employers Engaged
- Number of Employers Returning as a Result of Outreach
- Business Market Penetration Rate, in Particular Business Sectors

• Specific Services to Employers

- Total Number of Placements in Demand Occupations
- Total Number of Placements in On the Job Training (and Demand Occupations)
- Time Reduction to Refer Candidates Who are Hired
- Referral to Hire Ratio for Job Seekers who receive Core/Individualized Services

• Relevance to Employers

- Number of Demand Occupation Jobs Recruited and Staff Referred
- Number of Weeks Dislocated Workers Receive Benefits.

• Number of Job Seekers Put to Work

- Qualitative Review of Case Management Processes in Particular Comprehensive Assessments and Individualized Employment Plans
- Success Rate of Gained Employment for Participants from all Partner Programs, in Particular those with Significant Barriers to Employment as indicated in WIOA Priority Populations.

• Number of Program Partner Participants who Enter Education or Training

- Metric Points Along this Process Include Percentage of Number Referred, Number Entered, Number of Completions, and Number Employed, of those Eligible for Training or Education Services.

These Samples and all drivers apply across all programs that touch an Employer or Job Seeker (Participant). The QRM and MRM ultimately produce the foundation (through graphical study and depiction) to support the statistical methods used for analyzing and controlling the variations in our processes and thus continuously improving these processes.

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).

The mission of the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) is to put people to work by continuously improving our demand-driven system that responds quickly to the immediate and long-term needs of employers. The core focus is to fill job vacancies by connecting skilled and credentialed job seekers to employers in demand occupations. This section describes the strategies that Louisiana will implement to achieve the governor's vision and goals of improving employer engagement, cultivating regional labor market intelligence to drive services, targeting workforce recruitment to meet employer demand, integrating all workforce development services, improving training and technical assistance to Workforce Development Boards and One-Stop Center staff, while reducing administrative costs.

To achieve these goals, LWC will capitalize on the shared vision of state and local workforce development boards' leadership for transformational change by implementing a growing body of promising structural, service delivery and accountability innovations that build on existing strengths, challenge assumptions and create a systemic approach to transform the workforce system into a demand-driven system. A core element of this transformational approach is the commitment of the combined partners to the comprehensive implementation of career pathways.

Louisiana Career Pathways

Through the WIOA planning process, the state's education and workforce partners developed a vision and framework for Louisiana Career Pathways. The following describes their approach in creating a vision and framework for the implementation of a Career Pathway strategy that aligns with in demand occupations.

Vision: Louisiana Career Pathways are designed to improve lives and the economy. Through integrated career pathways, all Louisianans will have the opportunity to access progressive levels of education and training leading to high-value, high-demand careers. The career pathways approach meets learners where they are, by spanning high school, adult education, post-secondary and beyond, leading to sustainable employment. This includes pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship.

Louisiana Career Pathways connect education and training programs and support services that enable individuals to secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector, and to advance, over time, to successively higher levels of education and employment in that sector. Each step on the Career Pathway is designed explicitly to prepare workers and students for the next level of employment and education.

The Louisiana Career Pathways Framework

Minimally, all Louisiana Career Pathways must:

- Be designed in partnership with business and industry as well as regional economic development entities (in order to meet both current and future sector needs).
- Have multiple entry points, including for those with limited basic skills and those with prior educational and work experiences
- Incorporate multiple exit points (off-ramps, stop-out points) connected to the attainment of industry-recognized stackable credentials and/or academic credentials.
- First stop-out point must be aligned with a viable career opportunity.
- Exit points must be embedded in a longer pathway that ultimately leads to high-wage, high-demand careers.
- Pathways include opportunities, where appropriate, for acceleration, contextualization, work-based learning and co- or dual-enrollment.
- Pathways include Registered Apprenticeship programs and opportunities to obtain a recognized post-secondary credential in the form of a Completion Certificate or an Associate's Degree for those pursuing further opportunity and credentialing through a community college member of the Registered Apprenticeship College Consortium (RACC).
- Include a logical progression/sequence of courses that are applicable to the target credential.
- Could define this as blocks of courses tied to defined entry/exit points.
- Course sequence provides a clear plan for what students take and when.
- Integrate student (participant) supports, including academic supports, non-academic/general support, transitional support, up-front career exploration and ongoing career development as well as job-placement assistance.
- Provide the opportunity to earn college credit.
- Can include noncredit programs leading to industry-based credentials, but need consistent state policy on how to award college credit for industry-based credentials.
- Noncredit pathways are aligned with credit pathways so that students can continue into credit-bearing pathways with transcript credit and without repeating coursework.
- Explore the Registered Apprenticeship College Consortium and support community college membership throughout Louisiana to enable journey workers to get on a fast-track for an Associate's Degree by incorporating their Registered Apprenticeship program participation.

The Louisiana Workforce Investment Council, , and members of the WIOA Planning Team recognize the need for an education and training system that addresses the state's economic and workforce challenges. The Planning Team will continue to provide leadership in developing Career Pathway initiatives with a focus on targeted populations with significant

barriers to employment (e.g., individuals receiving public assistance, long term unemployed, basic skills deficient adults and youth).

Business Engagement

The Business Engagement Initiative is focused on garnering and utilizing input from businesses to build a package of services and strategies to meet business needs today and into the future. There will be special effort to foster relationships with small businesses and targeted industry sectors in order to develop a custom package of services for these customers. Business Engagement will increase overall business utilization and value received from the workforce system, reduce employer costs to recruit and hire qualified workers and decrease the time required to fill vacancies.

Regional Business Service Structure

Regional business service strategies will transform Louisiana's workforce development service delivery, creating a positive long-term economic impact. This regional approach is appropriate for the following reasons:

- A sector (also termed "industry cluster") builds strategic partnerships among businesses, training providers, community organizations and other key stakeholders in a labor market region to bolster the region's economic competitiveness and promote systemic change.
- A sector approach is more responsive to labor demand than traditional job-matching and training services because it is problem-oriented versus program-oriented, addresses needs interdependently and works to understand the specific needs of businesses within a particular sector.

Reasons a regional approach is preferred include:

- This approach allows Business Services to provide a coordinated plan ensuring adequate service delivery to employers who maintain locations in a wider geographic area than the previous, basically parish-oriented model.
- Expanded areas of delivery capture more job-seekers for employers to choose from.
- Economically less-developed areas are able to recruit, train and retain workers
- Business Engagement initiatives meet the skill, recruitment and retention needs of employers and the training, employment and career advancement needs of workers. They address the needs of employers by focusing intensively on the workforce needs of a specific industry sector over a sustained period, often concentrating on a specific occupation or set of occupations within that industry.
- Creating formal career paths to good jobs, reducing barriers to employment and sustaining or increasing middle-class jobs.
- Regional economic competitiveness is bolstered by engaging economic development experts in workforce issues and aligning education, economic and workforce development planning.
- A broader array of key stakeholders is engaged through partnerships organized by workforce intermediaries. This promotes systemic change that achieves ongoing benefits for industry, workers and the community.

Louisiana Workforce Commission's regional sector strategies help promote and support the development of regional sector initiatives.

Regional Business Service Team Framework

Implementation of a regional industry sector-based approach is a partnership of the LWC, local Workforce Development Boards, core programs and other partners in each region to create and develop the regional business services team structure. A Regional Business Service Team (RBST) within each region consists of the following programs:

- Wagner-Peyser.
- Veterans/LVER.
- Adult/Dislocated Worker Youth Program.
- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services/RED.
- Incumbent Worker Training Program (state).
- Rapid Response Team.
- WorkReadyU (Adult Education)
- Other stakeholders that engage employers.

This supports and aligns One-Stop Center (B&CSC) business services to small business and industries within each region.

Sector Strategies and Career Pathways

To create sector strategies, local Workforce Development Boards and chief elected officials in each region will collaborate in a regional planning process, establish a regional service strategy and develop sector initiatives for in-demand sectors or occupations in the region. Along with a sector strategy, the LWDBs in the regions, with representatives from secondary and post-secondary education programs, shall lead efforts in the regional/local area to develop career pathways by aligning employment, training, education, and supportive services. Engaging industry will lead to the development of career pathways, growing the pipeline of qualified job candidates to fill existing skill gaps in targeted industries. Two existing within the education system are Workaday and Jump Start.

WorkReadyU supports the mission of educating Louisiana's adult population and moving them beyond a high school equivalency diploma through credit-earning coursework for postsecondary certificates, degrees and family-supporting jobs. Louisiana colleges and WorkReadyU providers have implemented career pathways in the following industries:

- Health sciences.
- Information technology.
- Skilled crafts.
- Manufacturing.
- Business office technology.

• Transportation.

• Industrial technology.

Jump Start is a new paradigm for career and technical education (CTE), allowing high school students to attain an industry-promulgated, industry-valued credential in order to graduate high school. Louisiana's Jump Start program aligns Louisiana's K-12th grade CTE strategies with the state's economic development strategies. Jump Start regional teams, consisting of school districts, colleges, businesses and workforce/economic development experts; collaborate to provide career courses and workplace experiences to high school students. Students have the opportunity to earn industry-valued, industry-promulgated credentials in career fields most likely to lead to high-wage jobs, while preparing them to continue their post-secondary education (in 2- and 4- year colleges) and career development.

LWC will provide additional guidance to LWDBs regarding Career Pathways development as part of its ongoing technical assistance and guidance.

Successful regional sector strategies will share the the following common principles:

- Serve the dual purpose of aligning education, training and support services to the needs of employers in an industry sector, while ensuring that those services are accessible to a range of workers.
- Require a strong intermediary organization that sustains energy, coordinates dialogue and brokers relationships among service providers and employers in carrying out the partnership's agenda.
- Be employer-driven, wherein employers recognize their self-interest in and need for the partnership.
- Promote systemic change benefiting workers of all wage and skill levels, the industry and the community at large.
- Include the workforce system as a central player in any number of roles, such as the neutral intermediary body, the manager of operations and funding, and/or the source of labor market information.

The implementation of a regional sector strategy does not follow a cookie-cutter approach, but does reflect the common principles outlined above. Regions create and implement the best overall approach for their local economy with the following core steps in mind:

- Development of a leadership team.
- Identification of a data team that uses traditional and real-time labor market data to identify the top three targeted industry sectors in the region.
- Identification of a neutral, third-party facilitator to assist with creating the process.
- Development of regional sector strategy vision and goals.
- Development of a sector-based strategic plan.
- Identification of performance measures for the strategy.
- Development of a plan to sustain the sector strategy over time.

The ultimate goal is for sector partnerships to successfully identify workers with skills that employers need to compete and expand, as well as for workers to receive relevant training that leads to increased job stability and advancement opportunities. Business needs change

rapidly, therefore it is critical that this effort be driven by regional business and is based on continuous, sustained engagement with regional businesses.

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).

Development of the Louisiana WIOA Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)is fundament to alignment of Louisiana Combined State Plan partner programs, required and optional partners programs, and other resources. The MOU will (1) articulate the coordinated vision, goals and objectives for the Louisiana Workforce system and the combined State Plan; (2) establish agreement at the state level for service delivery systems, co-enrollment and define framework of key strategies and other key function of WIOA core partners; (3) provide guidance for partnerships at the regional and local areas. The WIOA Lead Team has begun to development the MOU framework, and recognizes that the fidelity of the state leadership to the collaborative process will have significant impact on regional and local implementation.

LWC shall create and provide opportunities and leadership to encourage and facilitate regional collaborative efforts by workforce system leaders LWDBs and WIOA required partner programs to align workforce policies and services with regional economies and supportive service delivery strategies. LWC shall lead in the analysis of regional labor markets, establishment of regional service strategies, development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region and coordination of services. These efforts are expected to enhance capacity and performance of the integrated workforce system.

LWC has developed policy, vision, certification criteria and contracts to assist LWDBs in complying with WIOA's expectations. LWC requires development of a regional plan by respective local boards which must include performance targets.

It is the intent of LWC to provide guidance, and support to local leadership, while allowing local and regional leadership, the flexibility to develop and implement innovative workforce strategies and solutions necessary to meet the needs of employers, job seekers and the emerging workforce.

LWC shall monitor and support LWDBs efforts in the strategic integration of workforce programs, services and initiatives in order to operate in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible, while remaining flexible, adaptable, market-based and customer-focused. LWC has adopted, and is committed to, a Continuous Improvement Process approach in refining the structure and alignment of programs under WIOA with additional resources to support achievement of state vision and goals.

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).

The WIC implements its function by:

1. Meeting the requirements of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, 29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq. in order to receive funds relevant to workforce activities authorized by the law.
2. Advising the governor on the needs of the state's employers and the state's workforce along with strategies for its continued improvement.
3. Working with industry, government, and citizens to aid in the creation of the strategic combined state plan and outcomes that will coordinate and integrate a workforce development delivery system to assure the greatest cooperation possible between public and private entities, and
4. Directing the Occupational Forecasting Conference in determining such official information that is necessary for planning and budgeting with respect to workforce development.

All meetings of the council are open and subject to the provisions of La R.S. 42:11 et seq. Records of all proceedings at regular and special meetings of the council are kept and are open to public inspection.

The council meets no less than four times each calendar year. A quorum of the council is determined to be a majority of the members serving. In order for the council to take official action, affirmative approval of a majority of members serving is required. If any council member, in the discharge of a duty or responsibility of his/her office or position, would be required to vote on a matter which vote would be a violation of La R.S. 42:1112 or 1113(B), (s)he shall recuse him/herself from voting. Additionally, the council receives periodic reports from the various local Workforce Development Boards for the purposes of evaluation and oversight.

At least once every two years the Occupational Forecast Conference (OFC) presents for consideration the Long- and Short-Term Industry projections or updates. At least once every two years the Occupational Forecast Conference presents for approval the Long- and

Short-Term Occupational projections or updates. These projections and updates are used for the determination of demand jobs and allocation of in-demand skills.

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.

a) CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE STRATEGY

During the past several years, the U.S. Department of Labor has reduced both administrative and programmatic funds available to state workforce agencies in both WP and WIA (now WIOA). At the same, time funding availability has been diminishing, the cost and complexity of providing service delivery, programmatic management and support, and fiscal and performance reporting have increased. This makes it essential that LWC and local boards work together to reduce overhead costs and streamline (economize) services.

The state integrated One-Stop Center operations under the Workforce Investment Act several years ago. Within the past two years, stand-alone Wagner-Peyser offices have been eliminated. Each of Louisiana's fifteen Workforce Development areas has established at least one Comprehensive Center that has been certified by its respective board as meeting the criteria to be branded as an American Job Center. Smaller offices operated by local boards and/or One-Stop operators (contractors) where all Program Partners are not present, shall be designated and operated as "Affiliate" One-Stop centers and may have any subset of partners, but shall not be operated as Wagner Peyser stand-alone Employment Services offices.

Under the plan, local boards will have the flexibility to include additional partners in One-Stop Centers, in particular and specifically identified by the law:

• Employment and training programs administered by the Social Security Administration, including the Ticket to Work and the Self-Sufficiency Program.

• Employment and training programs carried out by the Small Business Administration.

• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) employment and training programs.

• Other programs authorized under the National and Community Service Act of 1990.

• In addition to these specified additional partners the law and plan allows boards to include other partners as part of the one-stop delivery system -- local employers and community-based, faith-based, and/or non-profit organizations, as well as employment, education and training programs provided by public libraries or the private sector.

Although support for One-Stop Center operations will change, this plan does not call for any "rebranding" of centers regarding their status as "comprehensive" or "affiliate." This plan is designed to support a refined focus on employment, training, adult education and vocational rehabilitation programs designed to provide workers and their families an opportunity for economic prosperity.

The new infrastructure combined with the recently redesigned service delivery model will strengthen existing workforce development and adult education programs in four ways that can benefit adults and youth with barriers to economic success by:

• Increasing the focus on serving the most vulnerable workers (with limited skills, lack of work experience, and other barriers to economic success) through more focused profiling and assessment processes.

• Expanding education and training options to help participants access good jobs to start/advance their careers.

• Providing targeted, managed and appropriate levels of supportive services to disadvantaged and unemployed adults and youth while they receive training and effective employment-based activities.

• Supporting the alignment of planning and accountability policies across core programs to support more unified approaches to serving employers and job-seekers (in particular those who are low-income, low-skilled individuals).

This plan creates an opportunity for chief elected officials (CEOs), boards and local communities to rethink reshape and expand workforce systems, policies and practices in a way that conforms to local needs while maintaining fiscal prudence and viability. The plan also drives the realignment of funding streams to improve accountability across core programs, support career pathways and sector strategies and create continuous opportunities to measure performance and to identify areas for improvement. Operating in the most effective and efficient way by:

Identifying inefficiencies and targeting improvements that will bring costs in line with reasonable standards.

• Measuring local and regional performance so that decision-makers better understand the unit cost of a service, the productivity of staff, results achieved with programs and efficient use of assets.

• Reducing waste (in particular waste created by redundancies in support and oversight), wasted motion, personnel costs, excess paperwork, wasted supplies, excess equipment, etc.

• Maintaining, understanding and managing in real-time with the goal of efficiencies in the actual cost of services at the local and regional level.

• Establishing measures of effectiveness that ensure every dollar spent is delivering the best possible value, then operating a continuous, accurate, real-time effectiveness evaluation of local and regional results, rather than a reactive approach when problems arise.

• Developing (through research and anecdotal studies) reasonable workloads to support a staffing model supported by all partners that establishes a standard and objective framework for responding to position requests.

• Setting benchmarks as a process of comparing performance and practices locally, regionally and statewide at both the par and top performer levels with the goal of providing objective external standard of performance and uncovering more efficient and effective ways of delivering services.

• Setting standards for the cost of services, efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and asset use for local, regional and state comparison to trend cost efficiencies as improving, declining or falling.

• Using reporting, measuring and benchmarking as a foundation for goal setting and to shine a light on efficiencies and effectiveness on how funds are being used.

In addition to the core programs, other programs required to provide access to services in each of Louisiana's fifteen Comprehensive One-Stop Centers are:

• Career and Technical Education (Perkins).

• Community Services Block Grants Employment and Training Programs

• 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 takes special action to make TANF an optional partner).

• Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs.

• Unemployment Compensation Programs.

• Youth Build.

• Adult Education

• Job Corps

For the purposes of operations under this plan regarding services provided in a Comprehensive One- Stop Center, each member of the partnership shall agree to core hours, core services, individualized services, supportive services, data sharing and the sharing of costs for business operations. Each of the fifteen local areas will define its operating and cost sharing plans through Memorandums of Understanding that include infrastructure funding agreements.

This plan commits the state to providing support for one Comprehensive One-Stop Center in each local area. Regionally, boards may choose how they use the resources provided under this plan and other support agreements. However, use of these resources shall not be contrary to the provisions and requirements of the U.S. Department of Labor or state laws, regulations and statutes.

Key elements of the service relationship covered in this plan include implementation, performance, finances and operations. All of these characteristic key elements and expectations can be directly related to service-delivery at a One-Stop Center regarding negotiated performance outcomes and managerial metrics.

• **Implementation**: As a minimum, the following details required in WIOA must be crafted into a cost allocation and operation agreement for each of these Comprehensive One-Stop Centers and although they will be specific to the individual LWDA, they must contain detail on the following as a minimum:

o Who will be physically present in the center - full or part time.

o When not physically present will center staff be required to supply support, i.e. provide customer guidance when using an online tool, etc.?

o What services will be offered, and how do those services support a Career Pathway?

o Defined interface with partner programs to provide seamless services.

o Method of supervision and guidance provided to staff.

o Defined administrative or other supports required to be successful.

o Infrastructure costs.

o Operational delivery, how services are delivered, by whom and when.

• **Performance:** Services shall be provided as required under the relevant funding streams and partnerships identified/negotiated under the statutes, laws and regulations which, in detail, identify expectations, outcomes and outputs by the parties from the arrangements.

• **Finances and other resources:** Resource-pooling arrangements, fee structures, cost variances, adjustments, transparency and arrangements of settlements shall be detailed and agreed to by all parties.

• **Operations:** The state will provide WP-funded staff to support a single Comprehensive One- Stop Center for each WDB. The state recommendation is that LWDA boards utilize this staff to support a centralized recruitment and placement effort, and for a centralized business engagement process. Boards may operate other locations within their LWDA as "affiliate" sites and may from time to time have WP-assigned staff at these locations based on need.

The state shall allocate Wagner-Peyser-funded staff by formula based on the level of effort necessary to support labor exchange services in an LWDA or region. Some local areas are overstaffed while others are understaffed with Wagner-Peyser personnel. These mismatches are the result of long-term localized planning for staff support rather than regional and statewide planning. The state intends to change staffing levels through attrition and replacement, supplement with short-term career specialists funded by limited fund sources where appropriate to the source requirement, and relocation and reassignment.

Elements of the Local Delivery Structure

• Board members and staff operate under prior consistent state law. As such, members and staff are primarily private-sector employers with some representing local education agencies, labor organizations, community-based organizations, economic development councils and One-Stop partners such as adult education and literacy (AEL) and vocational rehabilitation (VR). Each board develops a strategic and operational plan, with local plans subject to review by TWIC and approval by the governor. Boards designate one-stop partners, identify providers of training services, and monitor system performance against performance accountability measures.

• Board staff conducts the board's day-to-day administrative operations. Boards operate with a high degree of local flexibility for service delivery design and partner with local training and educational institutions to ensure employment and training opportunities meet area employment needs.

• One-Stop Centers provide a variety of online, in-house and on-site services, including employer services, job search resources, labor market information and referrals for customized training. In addition to traditional brick-and-mortar offices, mobile workforce units are a moving extension of the Workforce Solutions Office, offering on-site, rapid response assistance to area employers and communities.

• Business Service Units (BSUs) address the ever-increasing need for skilled workers in high-demand fields by offering job search assistance, skills training and other workforce development services. Supported by state and federal funds, most basic services are provided free of charge to employers registered with the state and federal government. Some boards also provide certain services, including workshops and seminars, at nominal fees. BSUs within an integrated workforce system offer a unique opportunity to ensure that all workforce services are structured to ensure that the business needs are considered when delivering services to job seekers and consumers.

Boards shall develop new local plans under WIOA to align local goals and objectives set forth in the

state's Combined State Plan and also describe collaboration strategies with system partners.

To address limited financial resources yet still meet the needs of Louisiana' employers, boards must:

• Leverage additional funding sources.

• Develop, analyze and share labor market information and regional economic studies.

• Engage in planning and service delivery across workforce areas and/or with other workforce and community partners.

• Incorporate new delivery strategies and adapt existing ones, such as the use of mobile units and new technologies that make service more accessible.

• Strive for integrated, effective service delivery by sharing, modifying and replicating effective training models and processes.

Events and projects provide the opportunity for boards and system stakeholders to collaborate, innovate and streamline services to improve workforce service delivery.

Continuous improvement efforts by the boards are facilitated and encouraged through activities such as:

• Sharing best practices and other information at LWC's annual conference, workforce forums and regional and local meetings.

• Maintaining user-friendly, online resources for topics including:

o Integrated workforce processes.

o Performance measures.

o Program-specific monitoring toolkits, through the ongoing work of OWD monitoring effort.

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.

In recent years, state agencies, business/industry and other partners in Louisiana have engaged processes to align employment, training, education and human services to respond to the needs of employers and job-seekers. These efforts attempt to ensure that the alignment of activities between core programs and partners continues and expands to required partners and One-Stop partners to improve coordination of employment and training activities and avoid duplication of services to customers. Below are some examples of imaginative and coordinated efforts already in action:

I. Engaging Out-of-School Youth (OSY) through LWDA/High School Partnerships

LWC and its local workforce areas have instituted an innovative approach to engaging out-of-school youth throughout the state to enroll in WIOA Youth Programs. Nearly 50 percent of the state's high school students either drop out of or are expelled from high school before graduation. Understanding the importance of keeping school-age youth engaged in constructive educational experiences, thereby reducing the risk of truancy, crime and violence, LWC's Office of Workforce Development worked with several local areas to approach public schools and school boards about the possibility of partnering to offer assistance to youth at risk of exiting high school before graduation. The results are cooperative endeavor agreements signed by LWDB chairs and directors, public school superintendents and local school board to ensure a "soft handoff" occurs the moment these students are removed from the school's enrollment. The youth is given a referral to the area One Stop where they are screened for eligibility before being formally enrolled. Once an ISS is completed, these OSY are provided one or more of the 14 elements available to OSY under WIOA. This method will be evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the approach and has already been shared with other states as a promising innovative strategy during the USDOL/NASWA WIOA Convening in Washington, D.C. in January 2016.

II. Louisiana Jump Start Initiative - Employer Engagement- Department of Education

The Louisiana Department of Education, (K-12), has launched an initiative that offers Career Technical Education (CTE) to high school students in grades 10 through 12. This initiative, known as Jump Start, provides classroom training and work experience in demand occupations in Louisiana through unpaid internships provided industry partners. Participating students are able to obtain high school credit hours, college course credits and industry certifications, all leading to high school diplomas. In some instances, students are able to graduate high school with associate degrees, beginning their professional careers in technical fields immediately after completing high school with a dual degree. Essential to the program's success is employer engagement. Employers within targeted industries must be willing to engage high school students through internship opportunities, providing students with on-the-job training and career mentors. As a result, K-12 has engaged industry leaders to promote and support Jump Start. This effort has required many hours of face-to-face meetings, conference calls and engagement of business, local leaders, state legislators and the executive branch of government in order to resolve legal and bureaucratic obstacles preventing program success. At the heart of the problem is the fact that this has created unnecessary duplication of efforts to engage business leaders through the formation of 10 regional Jump Start teams statewide. These teams are comprised of education (K-12, community and technical colleges), private business, economic development organizations, local One-Stop operators, public sector leaders and others. This is a clear duplication of effort in that local Workforce Development Boards are comprised of the same organizations, and, in many instances, the same people represent these organizations on both Jump Start teams and local boards. While government employees may be accustomed to conducting business in this manner, it has become increasingly frustrating to business owners, and the fear of losing their enthusiasm and commitment has become apparent. Precious time is wasted having the same discussion, in different forums, with the same people. The need to do something to resolve the issue, and do it quickly, is required. The state's K-12 leadership and LWC's Office of Workforce Development have partnered to streamline the process of business engagement by promoting the alignment of regional Jump Start teams and Workforce Development Boards through the local boards and their standing committees on youth. It is through these standing committees that Jump Start programs will be supported, and issues requiring attention outside of K-12's normal business and management structure will be addressed and resolved. Meetings with each local board have begun, with more to follow in the coming weeks. Those boards that have met on this issue have expressed support and understanding of the need to move forward with this approach. Many provocative questions regarding Jump Start have been raised by board members and captured by the Louisiana Department of Education consultant and OWD leadership. The interest in making this career pathways initiative for in-school youth the best in the country has taken off, and LWDB members understand their roles in making it happen. Local and regional workforce plans will be evaluated to ensure those plans align with the state's plan to support this process. This process is just one solution to promote business engagement as it relates to opportunities for youth and adults in need of training and work experience, but will serve a model of how the public sector must work more closely, eliminate redundancy and work together to provide excellent, result-oriented customer service (e.g., business, job-seekers, future workforce) and improve the business climate.

III. Registered Apprenticeship-LWC

A key strategy identified in the Louisiana Combined Plan goals and objectives is the expansion of the use of Registered Apprenticeship programs as viable talent development opportunities. Registered Apprenticeship programs have demonstrated that employers who invest in training experience lower employee turnover, increased employee productivity, better employee problem-solving skills and improved employee relations. The employer and employee must be equally committed to the program's success. LWC Registered Apprenticeship Program supports connecting job seekers to high paying jobs. The building and construction trade programs have been and continue to be the backbone of registered apprenticeship in this state and across the country, LWC is working to develop new non-traditional programs in industries such as health care, advanced manufacturing, and information technology. The LWC Apprenticeship Division continues to encourage new and currently existing programs to take advantage of partnership opportunities with our workforce system. The Apprenticeship Division has played an active role in discussions regarding Eligible Training Provider List policies and procedures as they apply to registered apprenticeship under the new WIOA regulations. Previously, many local workforce boards were reluctant to support registered apprenticeship with workforce funding for a multitude of reasons, including concerns regarding perceived performance implications. With the new provisions in WIOA, that clearly support the expansion and incorporation of registered apprenticeship as an evidence-based approach to workforce development, Louisiana sees this as an opportunity to create a new statewide vision that supports substantive partnerships between LWDBs and registered apprenticeship program sponsors. Aligning registered apprenticeship opportunities with WIOA service design and delivery in a holistic and comprehensive manner will require focused effort, education, and policy support from LWC. In this regard, LWC Apprenticeship Division staff are working with the Office of Apprenticeship in the Dallas Regional Office. Another key in the advancement of opportunities for existing Registered Apprenticeship programs is the alignment of the Incumbent Worker Training Provider (IWTP) with registered apprenticeship. Historically, apprenticeship programs have not utilized IWTP funds to support or expand their apprenticeship programs. This has been a shortcoming of the apprenticeship system, as all of the programs do customized training and qualify for the IWTP program. In 2017, more synergies between the two programs were seen as one existing apprenticeship program got awarded a grant, and two existing ITWP training providers started apprenticeship programs. The LWC Apprenticeship Division staff will continue to work with the LWC IWTP staff to better align the two programs.

IV. HUD/Public Housing

As with the aforementioned strategies to engage out-of-school youth through partnerships with high schools, efforts to work with public housing authorities funded with Department of Housing and Urban Development dollars have begun and will continue throughout the life of this state plan. The goal is to partner and share resources to provide education and employment services to out-of-school youth and adults living in public housing. Public housing authorities received funding from HUD for the main purpose of creating strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable housing for all. As part of their mission, housing authorities are required to use portions of the funding, subject to its availability, to provide services to residents of public housing in an effort to move them from dependency on public assistance to self-sufficiency. These limited HUD dollars can be leveraged with resources available through partners of this Combined State Plan to increase

services to public housing residents who are eligible to receive services through one or more of the partners herein. This alignment will also decrease the likelihood of duplication of services, as well as other potential waste, fraud and abuse.

V. Re-Entry-Department of Corrections LWC and its local workforce partners have aligned with the Louisiana Department of Corrections on several re-entry initiatives across the state. Participants are convicted of crimes in criminal court and sentenced to serve time in the re-entry program. This alternative sentencing structure is designed to work with men and women while they are incarcerated in an effort to provide job skills in demand occupations, reducing the chances of recidivism among participants and complying with the terms and conditions of sentencing. Minimally, engagement in the re-entry program ensures the following:

- Inmate receives workforce services prior to release.
- Inmate must secure employment prior to release.
- Peer mentors are assigned to each inmate.
- Peer mentor must verify the inmate's readiness for release.

OWD is 100% dedicated to The Louisiana Prisoner Reentry Initiative (LA-PRI) which an emphases on the top five of twelve of the largest urban parishes with the highest recidivism rates (Orleans, Jefferson, East Baton Rouge, Caddo and St. Tammany) this initiative and has specifically assigned specialized staff toward this initiative, working with the Department of Corrections at two of the primary maximum-security state penitentiaries: Angola State Penitentiary and the Louisiana Corrections Institute for Women (LWIW)-St. Gabriel.

VI. Community Service Block Grant

The Community Service Block Grant unit, as component of the LWC, Office of Workforce Development, will provide leadership and, technical assistance to the local Community Action Agencies (CAAs) to support the collaboration and coordination of employment and training activities with their local and regional WDBs. CAAs in each region will be included in the Louisiana Career Pathways model for low-income vulnerable populations focusing on the reduction of barriers to employment. The CSBG unit will assist by providing best practices models and support innovative strategies that align services to ensure that customers receive the best available employment and training services to achieve employment and self-sufficiency goals.

VII. Job Corps LWC is supporting a strengthening of the relationship between the three Louisiana Job Corps programs and the local and regional WDBs. The New Orleans Job Corps, is the only non- residential Job Corp site in the state, their students commute each day. Local One-Stop Centers are currently working to strengthen their partnerships with the three Job Corps programs to co-enroll Job Corps students in WIOA Youth Programs. Under WIOA, students attending Job Corps are considered out-of-school youth. In light of the 75 percent out-of-school youth expenditure requirement, this is a great partnership to engage and enroll out-of-school youth, develop an ISS on each youth, offer one or more of the 14 program elements available to them under WIOA that are necessary based on their documented needs, and not provided by Job Corps.

This partnership will also allow local WIOA youth programs the ability to refer youth to Job Corps, so the ability to develop, or improve, a cross-referral process is promising. Local areas will be expected to address their respective strategies in their local plans.

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.

WIOA reaffirms the role of the customer-focused one-stop delivery system, a cornerstone of the public workforce investment system, and enhances and increases coordination among several key employment, education and training programs. WIOA presents an extraordinary opportunity for the workforce system to accelerate its transformational efforts and demonstrate its ability to improve job and career options for our citizens through an integrated, job-driven public workforce system that links diverse talent to our nation's businesses. It supports the development of strong, vibrant regional economies where businesses thrive and people want to live and work.

Through policy, LWC has refined the state's response to the U.S. Labor Department mandate that the workforce development system become a seamless, integrated system. Prior to implementation, One-Stop Center operations used a rigid customer flow and team model. This new policy establishes a revision and refocusing effort to drive clients to the "right door" because of the state's need to respond to a decrease in funding and environmental as well as socio-economic changes.

Goals are as follows:

• Change the lock-step process and team approach in providing job-seeker and employer services to a more flexible process (or roadmap) that allows quick response to changes in the labor market and workforce needs. • Add flexibility to the delivery of training services by simplifying the process for identifying qualified candidates. • Create a process that recognizes the ever-changing funding environment associated with federal mandates and grants, so that it provides necessary flexibility to respond to specific grant and funding mandates of U.S. Department of Labor programs regarding unemployment insurance benefits (UI), workforce participation, veteran's services and National Emergency Grants. • Support the state's redesign of its business engagement Process in a way that optimizes agency response to in-demand industry needs in hiring, retaining, training and advancement of workers. • Anticipate the ongoing need for creating contingency plans to support economic growth in targeted industry sectors, and developing improved relationships with local and state economic development entities with the goal of pre-empting shortfalls in a skilled workforce. • Address the need to reintegrate specific UI recipient related functions into the job-seeker process in order to shorten the return-to-work time for individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits.

The policy also recognized and responded to the need for training dislocated workers in a way that enhances subsequent job retention and links this effort to meeting the emerging needs of employers for specifically skilled workers.

Through the WIOA Combined planning process the partners are continually working to develop a redefined model for the One Stop Centers.. This model will provide the foundation for establishing operations that support the key principles found in t WIOA law and support expanding partnerships and services. The redesign and refinement provides an unprecedented opportunity to modernize Louisiana's workforce system and achieve key hallmarks of a customer centered workforce system, where the needs of employers and job-seekers drive workforce solutions, where One-Stop Centers and partners provide excellent customer service to job-seekers and employers, where the workforce system pursues continuous improvement through evaluation and data-driven policy and where the workforce system supports strong regional economies.

The foundation for success is efficient and effective coordination of programs, services and governance, based on common assessment process, career service methodology, case management and job development systems. Leadership at all levels must think expansively, moving forward to produce the best customer-focused comprehensive delivery system. For this process to realize its potential, it will be necessary to continue moving beyond some current categorical configurations and institutional interest in order to truly unify training, education and employment programs into a single, customer-friendly system tailored to the community it serves. Although each local board is responsible for its own service delivery, the state has established minimum standards for a demand-driven integrated service delivery process in order to establish consistency across the state.

This revision of the service delivery process was undertaken as a result of social and economic pressures driving the need for a more effective "demand-driven" operation. However, the revision does not restrict local leadership in developing processes, procedures and techniques based on local needs. Rather, it encourages this development and provides a standardized foundation to support individual development.

The original service delivery model was intended to be focused on the customer in the context of being demand-driven. As was written: "To ensure that job-seekers get to 'the right service the first time,' OWD's service redesign model provides a standardized framework for how customers enter the system, how they are assessed for service need, how they access services, including job placement and how offices are designed and staffed to meet the needs of job-seekers and employers."

Unfortunately, over time, the system has evolved to focus on the process rather than the customer. Further, the balance of customer focus has become far too heavy on the job-seeker and too light on the employer. This "process evolution" combined with a reduction in resources (personnel and financial) is inhibiting state and LWDA leadership ability to quickly and effectively respond to compliance and performance demands and be flexible in operating a true outcome-based demand delivery system.

This revision is based on continuous process improvement (CPI). This moves the partnership away from the "compartmentalization" process of the original design and allows for the following in a real-time context: benchmarking (metric driven change), anticipating and meeting changing customer needs, local control of the process to reduce

cycle time and idle resources and incorporate lessons learned through marrying quality assurance (monitoring) directly to training.

The new design removes the requirement for the lock step "team approach" of membership, career development and recruitment and placement. While this concept was effective from a process-focused approach, forcing every customer through these steps whether needed or not, is not customer demand driven and is very inefficient. So, while it is important that all offices will "standardize job-seeker basic career services and enrollment processes," the way in which these are delivered must be flexible. The inefficiencies of this process steal time from the partnership's ability to serve its other customer, the employer and often frustrate the job-seeker.

The new process for all job-seekers regardless of their reason for entering our services is a roadmap designed for speed and flexibility. It provides for continuous assessment, career services and follow-up. This supports the original design concept of "efficiently determining customer needs, routing customers to the appropriate service, tracking customer activity through the process and targeting and recording outcomes." Each step in this process has an associated metric draw for continuous improvement.

Continued Guidelines and Required Actions: All job-seeking customers visiting a physical One-Stop Center location who receive staff-assisted services are included in the common measures performance calculations.

Because all One-Stop Center services, staff, facility and activities are funded in-part by both WP and WIOA, sequence of services and assessments shall determine the timing for co-enrollment of job- seekers who receive staff-assisted service in a One-Stop Center, or affiliate, into both WIOA Title I and the WP program for reporting and performance measures.

Any job-seeker served in any One-Stop (or affiliate) should be counted as a participant in WIOA, regardless of the presence of WIOA-funded staff onsite. Conversely, all WIOA participants should be counted as WP participants, regardless of the presence of WP funded staff at the enrolling service location.

Determining eligibility under dislocated worker, adult and youth status are separate issues from this guidance and are addressed in a separate policy.

Staff shall select and provide services to employers and job-seekers with the intent of developing a high-quality outcome. For this reason, the performance accountability system is based on the quality of services and not the number of services provided.

Service Delivery Process: Assessment, Career Services, and Follow-up for Job-Seekers:

Rather than being divided into three distinct workspaces, local leadership must design space usage to most efficiently and effectively move customers through the process. This may involve some team areas for specific tasks, but should not "silo" staff such that a "lack of work" can exist.

The old term and concept of "intake process" shall be replaced with "assessment process." While further discussion of assessment in this policy and in its operation will be divided into "initial assessment" and "comprehensive assessment," assessment is an ongoing process in the context of service delivery.

Assessment may include the use of tools and processes that shall be modified by local leadership to be most effective based on the demographic of their specific location, customer base, staffing levels, program availability and access to supportive services.

One-Stop staff shall provide services without regard for their status as state or LWDB employees. Minimally, job-seeker services must include initial registration, WP and (when applicable) WIOA enrollment, with the appropriate staff-assisted first service.

Career services shall include both basic career and individualized career services as appropriate based on job-seeker and employer need, and the most recently directed criteria associated with compliance and performance under any applicable U.S. Department of Labor grant. These services may include, but are not limited to, assisted job search activities, evaluation of skills, interests, preferences, career counseling training options, matching skills to current job openings, individualized career services, case management and follow-up.

The Three Tracks for a Job-Seeker

In the revised service delivery process, there are three tracks that any job-seeker may take. These are defined as workforce-ready in a demand occupation, workforce ready not in a demand occupation and case management.

It is important to note that one of these tracks will apply to all job-seekers regardless of their reason for entering our staff-assisted service, and that during the course of service assessments and re-evaluation the job-seeker may move from one track to another.

Entry may begin as a self-service electronic registration (in or out of a One-Stop Center), an outreach contact (regardless of reason for outreach), an automatic registration created by an application for UI benefits and the subsequent required service points requiring a visit to a One-Stop Center, a staff-assisted registration and enrollment for a job-seeker who is a "walk in" to a One-Stop Center or an individual who is registered by any means while receiving Rapid Response services.

Job-seekers who are also UI claimants

Required service entry for UI beneficiaries are based on worker profiling through LWC's statistical profiling model. A UI claimant most lkely to exhaust benefits should be considered not workforce ready.

Louisiana Workforce Commission's Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program is a grant-funded program designed to specifically assist UI recipients identified as "most likely" to exhaust benefits and assist them to quickly return to the workforce. RESEA services include orientation to the One-Stop Center (OSC)/American Job Center (AJC) services, eligibility assessment, provision of LMI, the development and/or update of an individual re-employment plan, and referral to existing WP and WIOA services.

Selected RESEA participants must report to the OSC/AJC at specified service points as a requirement of continued eligibility to receive UI benefits (following the most current U.S. Department of Labor and state guidance for grant specific requirements).

Any job-seeker who is also a profiled UI recipient entering a one-stop center for service shall initially receive an orientation (e.g. provision of labor market information and career

information, information on assessment tools and orientation to services available through the OSC/AJC and partner organization). Orientation is optional but is encouraged for all non-UI recipient job-seekers as well.

As these job seekers transition from RESEA program-specific services, they will be targeted to be assessed, placed in an appropriate track as outlined below and provided services in accordance with that track, including assessment for enrollment in more robust WIOA individualized career services and placement in a more service-intensive track. Individuals not appropriate for enrollment in WIOA will continue to receive staff-assisted or self-directed WP employment services.

Workforce Ready, in a Demand Occupation:

Job-seekers who are not UI recipients may arrive at the One-Stop Center for a variety of other reasons (they may be unemployed by choice, through no fault of their own or seeking a career change, for example). If the initial assessment indicates they have no significant barriers to employment and are workforce ready in a demand occupation, (as defined above), they will be places on the workforce ready in a demand occupation track.

Those job-seekers who are UI recipients and are determined to be least likely to exhaust their UI benefits shall be placed in either of the workforce ready in a demand occupation track or the workforce ready not in a demand occupation track.

When an initial assessment indicates no significant barriers to employment, and that the job-seeker has skills, credentials, certification, education, soft skills, previous experience or a combination of these factors that qualifies them in a demand occupation, they shall be sent to career specialists performing placement services or other career specialists designated by local management for job referral.

Career specialists engaged in placement services shall review the job-seeker's skills comparing them to specific demand occupation job vacancies, match those skills to job vacancies and make a staff referral. The career specialist who made the referral, or who is case-managing the job- seeker, should plan for a formalized follow-up process, such as a 30-, 60-, 90-day cycle, developed locally with documented reassessment.

Follow-up does not necessarily require a contact call. Alerts and electronic messaging available in HiRE may be utilized.

Workforce Ready, Not in a Demand Occupation:

When the initial assessment indicates a job-seeker is workforce ready (using the criteria above), but not in a demand occupation (including UI recipients determined to be least likely to exhaust their UI benefits), that job-seeker shall be referred to self-service and offered assistance as needed with informational services. As defined in Informational Services, these services will include guiding the job-seeker to labor market information including jobs in demand, wage rates, education requirements, work search tools, skills and interest-matching assessments.

Career specialists should plan for robust and effective follow-up, reassessing as necessary. This is critical because continued failure to achieve employment may indicate the existence of a barrier to employment that was not identified earlier in the assessment process.

Should follow-up for any job-seeker on the workforce ready track show continued unemployment, more individualized career services may be indicated. These job seekers shall be moved to the Case Management Track.

Case Management Track:

Job-seekers who have large gaps in their work history, limited, obsolete or unknown skills, limited education, inadequate credentials, lack soft skills, have significant barriers to employment or a combination of any of these factors as well as any job-seeker determined most likely to exhaust all their UI benefits shall be considered not workforce ready.

Job-seekers who are not workforce ready shall be provided individualized career services, consisting of a minimum of a comprehensive assessment and development of an individualized employment plan (IEP) in the context of case management.

Comprehensive assessment is vital to collecting information on job-seeker barriers to employment, employment goals, knowledge skills and abilities, and proficiency in occupational knowledge. This assessment shall be done as a client-centered approach to evaluating the needs of a participant without regard to services or training program availability. The purpose is not to match the job- seeker to what is available, rather to determine job-seeker needs.

This assessment is best defined operatively as an intensive interviewing process, which includes behavioral observations and may also require the use of structured assessment tools. Other information gathered may include detailed work history, family support available, social services affiliations, offender status and a detailed education history.

Comprehensive assessment must be documented via case note(s), with regard for privacy and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) rules. It is the responsibility of local management to ensure staff is cognizant of HIPAA rules.

The comprehensive assessment is the foundation for development of an IEP, and no IEP shall be created without completing a comprehensive assessment. In many cases the comprehensive assessment will then be an ongoing process that may result in changes to the goals and objectives of the IEP.

The IEP is developed with a job-seeker to identify or create employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives and the right combination of services to assist in achieving goals and objectives. In short — “Where am I now?” “Where do I want to go?” “How will I get there?”

The IEP must include goals and objectives that are SMART (specific, measureable, attainable, realistic and time bound). A case note must accompany the IEP and must justify the plan based on the identified barrier(s) to employment.

Case management requires a regular follow-up and review or revision of the IEP until such time as the job-seeker becomes workforce ready or enters a training program. In either case, follow-up is critical, using a 30-day cycle until the job-seeker attains employment or completes training.

All IEP’s must be recorded in HiRE. The preferred method is by using the HiRE Wizard. In order to comply with this requirement when IEPs are created as hard copy only, those IEPs

must be scanned into the HiRE system not later than close of business the following business day.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Successful implementation of the revised service delivery process depends on development of true partnerships and honest collaboration at all levels and among all stakeholders. This means developing effective partnerships within local communities, including but not limited to business and industry associations, businesses, organized labor, community-based organizations, educational institutions and other partners. Establishment and effective operation of an ongoing and aggressive training program for both state merit and Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)-funded staff is also critical to success.

Point of Service Leadership:

Local Workforce Development Boards through their leadership and supervisory structure, (e.g. WDB directors, local area coordinators, site managers, except as defined in this policy), shall have full functional supervision over all state merit staff operating as a career specialist in a One-Stop Center.

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.

Louisiana‘s core program partners along with One-Stop partner programs in each of the 8 regions coordinate activities and resources through local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), focusing on delivering regional business services and creating a positive long-term economic impact in the regions. The coordinated activities and resources are designed to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs. This regional approach is appropriate for the following reasons:

• It builds strategic partnerships among businesses, training providers, community organizations and other key stakeholders in a labor market region that is designed to bolster the region’s economic competitiveness and promote systemic change to achieve ongoing benefits.

• This approach is more responsive to labor demand than solely traditional job-matching and training services because it is problem-oriented (versus program-oriented), addresses needs interdependently (versus independently) and works to understand the collective needs of business.

The Regional Business Service Team (RBST) determines the skills, recruitment and retention needs of employers, as well as the training, employment and career advancement needs of job-seekers and workers. This meeting of the needs of businesses in the region has the potential to strengthen a region’s overall economic vitality by:

• Addressing the needs of employers through an intense focus on the workforce needs within specific industry sectors and businesses over a sustained period, often concentrating on a specific occupation or set of occupations within that industry.

• Addressing the needs of workers by creating formal career paths to good jobs, reducing barriers to employment and sustaining or increasing middle-class jobs.

• Bolstering regional economic competitiveness by engaging economic development experts in workforce issues while aligning education, economic and workforce development planning.

• Engaging a broader array of key stakeholders through partnerships.

• Promoting systemic change that achieves ongoing benefits for the industry, workers and community.

Regional Business Service Team

The Regional Business Service Team is a partnership between core program partners and mandatory/optional One-Stop partner programs with local Workforce Development Boards that convene and provide guidance to the team. The Regional Business Service Team within each region consists of the following programs:

• Wagner-Peyser.

• Veterans.

• Adult/Dislocated Worker Youth Program.

• Louisiana Rehabilitation Services.

• Incumbent Worker Training Program.

• Rapid Response.

• WorkReadyU (Adult Education)

• Other stakeholders that engage employers in the region.

The RBST meets as necessary, in order to collaborate and coordinate their focus on employers' needs in the region. The RBST supports and aligns One-Stop Center (B&CSC) business services within each region. Below is a list of business services in the region the team provides to the employer community:

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• Develop and facilitate industry or sector partnerships.

• Customized screenings and referrals of qualified participants in employer base training services to employers (e.g. on-the-job, customized and internship etc.).

• Customized services to employers, employer associations or other such organizations on employment-related issues.

• Customized recruitment/hiring events, job fairs, workshops and related services for employers (e.g., targeted hiring, new business openings, seasonal hiring and safety training).

• Human resource consultation services, such as writing/reviewing job descriptions and employee handbooks, developing performance evaluation and personnel policies and creating orientation sessions for new workers.

• Teaching job interview techniques for efficiency and compliance.

• Analyzing employee turnover, explaining labor laws to help employers comply with wage/hour and safety/health regulations.

• Providing customized labor market information for specific employers, sectors, industries or clusters.

• Increasing coordination with stakeholders to support and develop pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities.

• Providing assistance or referral for assistance in the development of registered apprenticeships.

• Creating job order listings and applicant referrals through HiRE. Providing access to Business and Career Solution Centers to develop innovative workforce investment strategies to meet the needs of the region's employers.

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 Louisiana Workforce Investment Council (WIC) membership consists of the state leadership of all of the state's educational institutions, including the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, the Board of Regents of Higher Education and the superintendent of education (K-12). Additionally, the Executive Directors of the Louisiana Workforce Commission and Louisiana Economic Development serve together on the WIC. The WIC provides advisory leadership, guidance and support for the innovation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program initiatives.

As stated in Section II (C), Louisiana has developed a shared definition and framework for Career Pathways as the model for the alignment of education, training and work-based learning (apprenticeships, internships) and support services that enable individuals and students to be better prepared to achieve economic independence and family stability. The WIOA partners are embarking on a new concept to organize resources (staff, supports, etc.) around target job-seeker populations and business development using a "pathway" model that will encourage separate agencies to wrap resources, staff and supports around the customer base.

As referenced in Section II (C) Regional Business and Sector Strategies, the educational partners, particularly the Louisiana Community and Technical College System institutions, are key partners in the regional and sector strategies, providing workforce skill training and

integrated work-based training to meet regional employer and economic development needs. State partners will work with local and regional workforce development boards and partners to define and build pathways appropriate to the region.

Championed by the WIC, with the support of LMI and Occupational Forecasting Conference, the Louisiana Workforce Commission's Star Jobs ratings system was developed. The Star Jobs ratings system provides a ranking of high-demand, high-wage jobs in Louisiana, based on factors such as forecasted employment growth (long-term and short-term), jobs available in the previous year, and wages. Star Jobs ratings are developed and dynamically updated in collaboration with Louisiana academic, workforce development, economic development, and industry experts. Since the inception and implementation of Star Jobs ratings, this ranking system has been utilized by educators across Louisiana. Below are a few examples:

• The Louisiana Board of Regents incorporates the Star Jobs ratings as part of its cost formula, upon which the funding formula distribution is based.

• The Louisiana Community and Technical College System uses Star Jobs ratings to guide decisions about program eliminations, modifications and additions, to direct its federal Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education funds to grant applications that will increase the supply of high-wage jobs that meet projected state workforce needs and to direct the Workforce Training Rapid Response Grant Program.

• The Department of Education indicates the Star Job rankings related to all Jump Start industry credentials, enabling school counselors to guide students to careers that promise both interesting work and well-compensated career opportunities aligned with their interests and capabilities.

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.

LWC provides the policy and structure for the state's eligible training providers (ETPL), and the LWDBs are charged with aligning education and training resources in their local areas and regions to provide maximum opportunities for job-seekers to attain skills and experiences needed to obtain employment. As the LWOIA working group and LWC refine and develop career pathway models, local areas will be encouraged to engage education and training partners in local model design and implementation.

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 LWC has been a catalyst for the leveraging of federal, state and local investments to expand access to workforce development programs in education and training institutions. Several workforce development regions have leveraged local and state resources to attract philanthropic investments to implement innovative targeted strategies targeting low-skill

unemployed and underemployed individuals. LWC will continue to work closely with post-secondary education partners, including all Perkins postsecondary recipients, to leverage federal, state and local resources. This includes including financial aid programs and veterans (e.g. GI Bill) benefits to enhance access to educational opportunities.

It should be noted that Louisiana Community and Technical College System, as well as other public and private organizations in the state, have received millions of dollars in discretionary grants and will continue to apply to receive future discretionary grants to support workforce training services and strategies to impact the lives of targeted populations (e.g., dislocated workers, veterans, re-entry, out-of-school youth). The governor's vision is to improve coordination and collaboration in delivering services to eligible participants in an effort to improve upon the efficacy and effectiveness of service delivery, thereby increasing participation of the state's those most vulnerable populations in need of workforce training and supportive services, as well as overall program outcomes.

Under the vision and leadership of Gov. John Bel Edwards, the LWC Executive Director has initiated conversations with federal and state leaders relative to maximization of current federal and state resources to enhance and expand access of low skill citizens to workforce development programs that support career pathways. LWDBs are also being challenged to convene their local partners to develop resource maps of existing resources and transformational opportunities.

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)

Louisiana Workforce Commission/Department of Education/Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Collaboration — provides Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to "at risk" youth with disabilities to decrease the number of students dropping out and ease transition from school to work. Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is currently partnering with Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) and Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) to leverage funding for the JAG program. Through JAG, LDOE and LWC/LRS provide Pre-ETS services in twenty-seven (27) parishes, one (1) virtual school (University View Academy), one (1) community college (Southwest Louisiana Community College/J. S. Clark program) and three (3) Jefferson Parish Chamber of Commerce programs. These services reach almost 500 youth with disabilities. The JAG program provides an educational setting promoting academic and skills attainment, civic responsibility, leadership development and social awareness. Pre-ETS services provided to JAG participants include Job Exploration Counseling, Work Based Learning Experiences, Counseling on Post-Secondary Opportunities, Workplace Readiness Training and Training on Self-Advocacy. Youth with disabilities in the JAG program are encouraged to apply for Vocational Rehabilitation services through LRS after graduation..

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.

The WIC and IBCC have prioritized the development of articulation agreements and the reduction of duplicative processes that challenge and impede the success of Louisiana

Career Pathways. Core to the implementation of Louisiana Career Pathways is the identification and development of stackable credentials that meet the needs of high-demand industries and support individual mobility from one post-secondary program to another. This includes Registered Apprenticeships and occupational training programs, and from basic education into post-secondary programs.

The foundation for Louisiana's approach to post-secondary credentials is the development of Career Clusters at the secondary school level, these are:

• Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources

• Architecture & Construction

• Arts, A/V Technology & Communications

• Business, Management & Administration

• Education & Training

• Finance

• Government & Public Administration

• Health Science

• Hospitality & Tourism

• Human Services

• Information Technology

• Manufacturing

• Marketing, Sales & Services

• Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics

• Transportation, Distributing & Logistics

This Career Pathway approach is designed to prepare students to meet the demands of postsecondary education and the expectations of employers, in particular those representing "in demand" occupations.

These Career Clusters are designed to support a coherent and focused sequence of rigorous academic and career/technical course work, that commences in the ninth grade and will create a "pathway that leads to either a postsecondary education or credential (or series of credentials) then work.

Integral to this process is the opportunity for a participant to acquire a "portable" and "recognized" credential that they have successfully demonstrated skill competencies on a core set of content that is complete with performance standards that are based on a specific set of work-related tasks in either a single occupational area, or a cluster of related occupational areas. Louisiana currently maintains a list of state-wide certifications that are "Industry Based" and local regions have the opportunity to approve certifications that meet a local skills demand around the unique employment needs of specific regions.

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.

Sector strategy initiatives have been developed in each of the 8 Workforce Regions of the state. LWC has industry coordinators on staff assigned to each region. Their primary roles are to engage business and industry to identify short- and long-term workforce needs, and to assist local workforce boards and One-Stop Centers with developing goals, objectives and strategies to address these needs.

Each Workforce Region has identified at least 3 of the top industries within their respective regions that have the need to fill vacancies in high-demand occupations. Star Jobs (3-5 star jobs) are the targets. These industries are identified through the use of LMI and engagement with local and regional economic development associations.

Business metrics have been created to provide a mechanism in which to measure the effectiveness of services provided to businesses in each local area and region. These metrics include overall market penetration, targeted (top industries) market penetration, employer-based training, staff referral to vacancies in demand occupations (based on 3-5 Star Jobs) and repeat business customers.

Three regions (Alexandria, Shreveport and Monroe) are currently engaged in regional sector partnerships. These strategies were initially established through a Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant (SP-NEG) the state received to develop sector strategies and provide employer-based training such as Registered Apprenticeships, on-the-job training and customized training to eligible dislocated workers.

Consultants were engaged to assist with the development of these strategies, which include engaging business and industry, economic development organizations, business associations and others. This is a business-led approach to respond to the needs of employers within specific industries driving the economy of a workforce and/or economic development region of the state. Successful strategies resulting from this effort were shared with other regions of the state to be replicated in other workforce and economic regions in Louisiana.

The Monroe and Alexandria regions have established healthcare sector partnerships while the Shreveport region has established partnerships with the manufacturing sector. Each partnership has brought together more than thirty employers, education, economic development and workforce development entities. Similar strategies are being used to plan and launch sector partnerships in each region of the state.

LWC and local areas will also work with Louisiana Economic Development's Fast Start Program. LED- Fast Start provides quick workforce solutions to businesses in LED's effort to attract new businesses to the state, or retain existing businesses. Solutions include recruitment and workforce training, working with the state's community and technical college system to develop curriculum approved by the employer(s) to produce short-term training to job candidates and helping trainees attain the skills necessary to fill jobs quickly. Local One-Stop Centers partner with Fast Start to refer job candidates for short term training, conduct targeted job fairs to connect specific job candidates to specific employers with specific job openings that need to be filled over a specified period of time.

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.).

Customer service and a focus on consumer needs for user-friendly resources in the areas of skill assessment, career planning, post-secondary training opportunities and workforce information are the highest priority. Louisiana Occupational Information System (LOIS) integration with HiRE provides a seamless delivery point for occupational and career data.

Through HiRE, LWC has maximized customer choice, providing the ability to directly enter the labor exchange process by either self-identification or through staff assistance. The system provides job- seekers with direct access to employer listings through the self-service component, as well as the ability complete skill-based resumes.

Enhancements launched in November, 2015, provided job-seekers with the ability to do business with the LWC more efficiently with online access to file appeals to unemployment insurance decisions, access real-time claim updates and the ability to correspond online rather than through postal mail.

Louisiana's labor market information system, case management system, job bank, and internal (customer and staff) communications systems are all integrated into one system — HiRE. HiRE is administered by Geographic Solutions, Inc. (GSI). GSI is responsible for administration, development, and data management of the HiRE system. Each aforementioned functional area within HiRE has its own module for the intake and management of information (customer, labor market, job listings, etc.). This seamless coordination between these functional areas enables rapid and efficient access to different categories of information needed to assist job seekers and employers.

Louisiana's HiRE system, as the designated state tool for job postings as well as the official job search tool Louisiana's networking effort in the America's Job Bank nationwide network. The HiRE system is also used for integrating job search efforts with other agencies. The raw data from HiRE contributes to the annual projections which are used for purposes of determining the industry and occupational demands of the state.

The system is additionally used as a single entry point for accessing UI benefits and job searches required through that program. Personnel in Management Information Systems (MIS), in coordination and agreement with Workforce Development leadership will continue to identify opportunities to link electronic delivery of services and resources.

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

Louisiana Workforce Commission's HiRE system (Helping Individuals Reach Employment) is the principal repository for collected data. LWC's Management of Information Systems (MIS) unit is responsible for ensuring that the data collected is accurate and timely, analyzed and presented for performance reporting.

Collected data is managed by Geographic Solutions Inc. (GSI). GSI houses the data and aggregates the data for the different USDOL program performance reporting processes for which LWC is responsible. Reporting data is delivered through a File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site to the appropriate LWC personnel in the necessary formats for submission to USDOL. LWC personnel execute any further data processing (if necessary) and submission. LWC's Technical Support unit of its Information Technology personnel facilitates the distribution of files to and from GSI through the FTP site.

The MIS unit provides technical assistance to boards and One-Stop Center staff as it relates to data collection and reporting. Such technical assistance comprises common and program-specific requirements such as eligibility, data entry, case management, individual fund tracking and the management of providers.

As a supplement to HiRE, LWC and boards utilize a third-party vendor (Future Works) which further processes Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) data to enable greater detail of information for analysis. This allows LWC and Boards to optimize decision making related to policy and process. In addition to producing performance data each quarter, LWC (specifically Office of Workforce Development) presents quarterly performance reports during the agency's Quarterly Review Meetings. During this meeting, the agency's executive staff is made aware of successes and areas needing improvement, as well as proposed plans for improvement.

* 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.

LWC, as the lead agency for the implementation of the WIOA Combined State Plan, has developed a foundational set of policies that provide guidance for LWDBs to implement WIOA Core Programs and other associated services. The chart below presents an overview of the state's policies designed support effective implementation of WIOA and the One-Stop delivery system.

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_1117-02AmericanJobCenterCertification.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-23_1-IntegratedServiceDelivery.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-23_1-IntegratedServiceDelivery-AttachmentA.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-21-YouthProgramOperations.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-21-YouthProgramOperations-AttachmentB.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-22-TransitionofWIACarryoverFunds.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-22-TransitionofWIACarryoverFunds-AttachmentB.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-28-SectorPartnershipNationalEmergencyGrant.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-24_1-WIOAAdultandDislocatedWorkerEligibility.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-24_1-WIOAAdultandDislocatedWorkerEligibility-AttachmentA.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-23_1-IntegratedServiceDelivery.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_4-11-WIOABoardCompositionandCertification.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_4-18-CompetitiveSelectionofOneStopOperators.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-27-IEPandLMIforTradeAffectedWorkers.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_4-16-WIOACombinedRegionalandLocalPlan.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-3_3-WIOAAllocations.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_4-10-WIOAInitialDesignation.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_2-13_1-WIOACertificationProcessETP.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_1117-04-InfrastructureFundingAgreements.pdf

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.

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-LaOrgChart.jpg

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) interrelates with its partner agencies as illustrated in the organizational chart above.

Among the Executive Branch agencies, the lines of authority are very clear. Each agency is run by a Cabinet-level appointee, and these appointees all report to the governor. All of the cabinet members in the agencies listed above are members of the Workforce Investment Council (WIC).

All post-secondary education is governed by a state Board of Regents, some of whose members are appointed by the governor. The Regents' chief executive, the state commissioner of higher education, is a member of the WIC. Under the Regents' umbrella is the Board of Supervisors for the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), whose chief executive is also a member of the WIC.

Elementary and secondary education is governed by the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Eight members are elected from the eight BESE districts, and the remaining three members are appointed by the governor. BESE's chief executive is the superintendent of education, who also is a member of the WIC.

Title 1 (Adult Youth and Dislocated Worker), Title III Wagner-Peyser, Community Service Block Grants (CSBG) and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation are administered by LWC. Title II (Adult Education) is administered by LCTCS.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are administered by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

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.

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-StateBoard_1of2.jpg

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-StateBoard_2of2.jpg

II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

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

Workforce Investment Council (WIC) members are Louisiana's workforce champions. They represent a cross-section of stakeholders in the development of a comprehensive, integrated workforce development and delivery system that begins with understanding the workforce needs of industry connects Louisiana citizens to training, and links trained workers to high-wage, high-demand careers.

The Workforce Investment Council:

• Completes trainings including: ethics, sexual harassment, and board functions.

• Maintains and updates record of statewide industry-based credentials to meet skills needs.

• Promotes the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce.

• Works with state Office of Workforce Development to ensure policies to aid local boards

• Reviews the reports of Workforce Development Boards to monitor the equitable distribution of workforce development resources across the state.

• Makes recommendations to the governor of geographic designations for workforce development areas.

• Directs the activities of the Occupational Forecasting Conference, responsible for overseeing state- wide and regional job-growth projections, which underpin the planning and budgeting of state and local resources.

• Oversees the Industry-Based Credential (IBC) Council, responsible for evaluating the alignment of credentials with state workforce demand for inclusion on the IBC State-Focus List, which guides training programs and other stakeholders to important occupations in the state and the industry- recognized credentials leading to those occupations.

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.

WIOA's primary measures of performance measure each core program's effectiveness at producing desired outcomes. Proposed §677.190(a) directs that state and local final adjusted levels of performance each year will take into consideration characteristics of the participants as well as state and local economic conditions through the application of a federal statistical adjustment model. Therefore, the state and local areas will be assessed based on a comparison of the actual performance level with the adjusted level of performance each quarter and annually.

The State's review of Regional/Local Plans will contain a component regarding to how these plans support and relate to the State's Vision, Strategies and Goals, and how they relate to realistic achievement of performance measures. More specifically, how they relate to the State's Continuous Improvement Process. In general, this assessment contains the following components:

• Management Commitment, do they indicate an explicit commitment from all Partner Programs Leadership at the Level of "Decision Maker"?

• Do they indicate a link into the "Common Intake" model, "Co-Enrollment" Process, and Sector Based Business Engagement Effort?

• Do they include a component for developing and maintaining well trained and highly qualified operators (and contractors) providing services in all Partner Programs?

• Is there a component for evaluation of service providers?

• Is there a defined methodology for evaluating outcomes for all Partner Programs and a continuous feedback cycle for those evaluations?

• Are there mechanisms to quickly and accurately identify non-conforming actions in all sub- parts (staff, contractors, partners, supportive services, etc.)? These measurements must be both Valid (measures what it is supposed to measure) and Reliable (measures consistently).

• Do the plans contain a defined methodology for quickly and accurately addressing root causation for failures in a positive and proactive fashion?

These components mirror the State's approach to continuous improvement and are applied to all individual and group goals and objectives.

The state will use the following criteria to evaluate local workforce development area common performance indicators:

1. Exceed: Outcome for each measure must be greater than 100 percent of the performance level.

2. Meet: Outcome for each measure must not fall below 90 percent of the performance level.

3. Fail: Outcome for any one of the measure is less than 90 percent of the performance level.

Action: In instances when the state or a local area fails a performance measure, immediate technical assistance will be provided by the appropriate office to improve the proficiency of staff members in providing WIOA services and provide an opportunity to develop strategies to improve the program's ability to meet performance measures.

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth:

Core Programs will be assessed, in coordination with LWDBs, One-stop Operators and Core partners/providers, through financial and administrative monitoring of all sub-recipients of funds expended under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 for Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs), Adult Education and Literacy Act, Rehabilitation Act Title I, and Wagner-Peyser Act. Other programs and activities will include, but not be limited to discretionary grants such as the National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) and the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program under the Trade Act of 1974, and the Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2015. The State will provide policy guidance to each entity responsible for the administration of Core Programs.

The assessment and evaluation process will include completing annual on-site monitoring reviews of each Core Program to ensure compliance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements of WIOA Section 184(a)(4). These reviews include the appropriate administrative requirements for sub-recipients and applicable cost principles.

The assessment will ensure established policies achieve program quality and outcomes, and meet the objectives of the governing federal laws and regulations. This includes the provision of services by One-Stop Operators, eligible providers of training services, and eligible providers of youth activities; and makes certain that sub-recipients and contractors have demonstrated substantial compliance with federal requirements.

The State will ensure compliance with provisions in WIOA for all Core Programs as well as implement a more robust monitoring and oversight process across all levels. Comprehensive and effective monitoring is key to providing opportunities for technical assistance, training, and sharing of proven strategies and practices, which will lead to improved quality of service to job seeker and a stronger workforce.

Adult Education:

Programmatic/Fiscal Onsite Monitoring: Programs are identified for onsite monitoring through a comprehensive risk analysis based on the following factors: (1) desk monitoring; (2) need to verify data quality and program expenditures; (3) consistent low performance on NRS indicators in several categories; (4) prospective noncompliance with grant requirements identified through review of programmatic and fiscal reports, or ongoing communications with the program; (4) unresolved audit findings; (5) ongoing lack of progress in resolving required actions from prior monitoring visit; (6) significant staff turnover in the program; and (7) recent or newly established programs.

The goals for State onsite monitoring visits are to:

• ensure that programs meet AEFLA requirements;

• improve the quality of federally-funded activities;

• provide assistance identifying and resolving accountability problems; and,

• ensure the accuracy, validity, and reliability of data collection and data reporting as well as policies and procedures for program accountability.

Vocational Rehabilitation:

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) will monitor the services provided within the guidelines of the existing corporative agreements and evaluate if modifications will be needed when they are renegotiated.

LRS will monitor vendors to ensure the quality of supported employment services provided to eligible consumers. The monitoring will utilize site reviews and include quality indicators to evaluate the assessment of employment outcomes and an evaluation of the provision of services. The monitoring will be carried out by the state and field office staff.

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.

Partner agencies and Partner Programs not covered under the monitoring umbrella of the Core Programs shall be monitored in accordance with their individual governing authority and under the general rules of federal and state fiscal compliance. The LWDB will determine the impact of any of these programs on the Common Intake and Co-enrollment process.

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.

All core programs met or exceeded performance goals, at the State level, for program years 2013 and 2014. Adult Education performed at and above the National average at the same time transforming program service delivery to English Language Learners and establishing Career Pathways.

Program years 2016 and 2017 have been transition periods to the new performance accountability requirements. During PY16, baseline data was collected on the core indicators, definitions, and methodologies. Data was collected and reported as well as system changes made to accommodate the new reporting criteria. At the time of this writing, PY17 measures are either being met or exceeded where data is available.

The State continues to focus on increasing and enhancing the quality of employment outcomes for participants. In addition, the state continues working toward the development of the integrated data management system which will be an instrumental tool in identifying areas of weakness at the local, regional, and state levels.

D. EVALUATION

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

The Louisiana Workforce Investment Council (WIC) ensures public accountability by evaluating the effectiveness of the overall workforce development system through reported data. Additionally, the WIC aids in the monitoring of the effectiveness of LWDBs in meeting workforce demand. This component of the plan is a work in progress intended to provide core program administrators, WIOA program partners, and the LWDBs the opportunity to provide input to an evaluation matrix.

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),

Youth activities in accordance with WIOA section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3),

• 33 1/3 percent based on the relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the local workforce investment area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.

• 33 1/3 percent based on the relative excess number of unemployed individuals in the local workforce investment area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state.

• 33 1/3 percent based on the relative number of disadvantaged youth in the local workforce investment area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state.

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

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

• 33 1/3 percent based on the relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the local workforce investment area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in all local workforce investment areas in the state.

• 33 1/3 percent based on the relative excess number of unemployed individuals in the local workforce investment area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in all local workforce areas in the state.

• 33 1/3 percent based on of the relative number of disadvantaged adults in the local workforce investment area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged adults in all local workforce investment areas in the state.

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

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

Unemployment concentration: 35 percent

The 12-month average for the most recently completed October-September fiscal year will be used showing the unrounded number of persons unemployed by parish within each LWDA.

Insured unemployed without earnings: 20 percent

The 12-month average for the most recently completed October-September fiscal year showing the number of continued claims filed without earnings for the reference week that includes the last day of each month. Data is also by parish within the LWDA.

Exhaustees (long-term unemployed): 25 percent

This is long-term unemployment data that refers to claimants who received a final payment in unemployment benefits. Data is by parish and is an annual average for the most recently completed fiscal year.

Declining industries: 15 percent

Since data on all parishes from the suggested CES Program do not exist, covered employment from the ES-202 Program was used to identify industries that showed a decline in employment for the four-year period ending in March of the prior fiscal year. Decreases in employment for all industries within a parish were totaled and that figure was used toward the allocation of funds for that parish and LWDA.

Farmer/rancher economic hardship: 5 percent

Numerical difference between the last two Census of Agriculture to determine decline in hiring farm workers.

LWC will evaluate alternative formulas for future allocations in alignment with WIOA sec 133 (b)(2)(B) to ensure that the most appropriate information that is available is incorporated.

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.

Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy funding allocations were established based on data from the American Community Survey in addition to a review of the number of citizens needing literacy services within each of the eight LA Workforce regions. WorkReadyU ensured that funding allocations were used to provide comprehensive literacy programs in all eight geographical workforce regions and that local providers are sufficiently equipped to meet the needs identified for each area. Further, eligible providers were expected to identify, and coordinate with, all available organizations and programs in their workforce areas to expand and leverage deliverable services beyond those provided solely through WRU state/federal funding.

Louisiana is focused on performance to ensure that funds are used effectively to serve customers and produce positive results. WRU implemented a funding formula for state/federal adult education funds. The formula was designed to consider the scope of services provided in the local program and performance as compared to established benchmarks as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds. Performance benchmarks and performance standards were established with the expectation that grantees will maintain or exceed performance standards through effective service delivery and innovation.

LCTCS awarded multi-year grants to eligible local providers through a competitive RFP process for the purpose of developing, implementing, and improving adult education within the State. The grants are for a three-year cycle that applies to all programs. After implementation of services, providers must apply on an annual basis for continuation funding under Title II. (See Title II — Adult Education and Literacy Programs (b) Local Activities, Eligible Provider)

During grant year 2016-17, LCTCS released a competitive application process for all federal AEFLA funding to determine eligible providers that will be awarded funds starting July 1,

2017. The review of proposals included rating responses to the 13 considerations in Title II of WIOA.

All applications were evaluated using the 13 considerations in WIOA section 231(e). The evaluation of each grant application involved an intense assessment of the ability of the eligible provider to comply with the expectations and statutes described within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity inclusive of: (a) meeting the literacy needs of the area; and (b) demonstrating past effectiveness in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially those individuals who have low levels of literacy, participants with disabilities; refugees, dislocated youth and foster care youth, individuals with low literacy skills, displaced homemakers, ex-offenders, individuals with cultural barriers and individuals with a variety of barriers to employment. As a result of the evaluation process, LCTCS funded twenty-eight (28) eligible providers that includes local educational agencies; community colleges, faith-based and community-based organizations and correctional institutions in fiscal year 2017-2018.

As required in Section 427 of GEPA, each applicant provided a description of the agency's process to ensure equitable access to and participation in, the WIOA Title II adult education program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. LCTCS has approved state policies that provide for equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, accessibility to, participation in, treatment in or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System ensured that all applicants provided data demonstrating their ability to improve the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains of reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services contained in the RFP application for funds and in accordance with WIOA §463.24. Forms were provided for new eligible applicants (See Title II — Adult Education and Literacy Programs (b) Local Activities, Eligible Provider) to provide performance data for student learning gains, including performance outcomes for low-literacy level and English language learners. All applicants were required to report effectiveness in improving the knowledge and skills of adults to successfully transition to postsecondary education, skills training, or employment. Each application was reviewed to determine whether it met the standard of demonstrated effectiveness.

Several factors were used to determine the funding amounts for successful applicants: (1) performance-based funding formula based on the core indicators of performance as outline in Title II of WIOA and (2) the literacy rate within each workforce region. The formula was designed to consider the levels of performance in the local programs as compared with established benchmarks as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds.

Programs that do not meet established minimum standards in the first year will be expected to demonstrate and document substantial improvement toward meeting those standards. Using the approved statewide data management system, monitoring results, and other documentation, WRU will determine and apply requirements for program improvement in the subsequent grant cycles. Minimum standards will be determined initially based on data collected during the first year and will be raised with each new grant cycle. Programs that

do not demonstrate and document substantial improvements during each year of the multi-year grant cycle may not be eligible to receive funding in subsequent years of the cycle.

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.

LCTCS required all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243 to use the same application process. This ensures that all applications were evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria.

LCTCS conducted a full and open competition consistent with the standards of Subpart C, CFR 200.319. All eligible providers were allowed direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. LCTCS adhered to all State and Louisiana WIOA Combined Plan laws in regards to awarding grant funds and the expenditure of public funds. The following steps were utilized to ensure direct and equitable access:

• An announcement of the availability of federal funds, under the support of Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, was disseminated in various methods including but not limited to a minimum of two newspaper outlets that provide state, local and regional news coverage, the LCTCS website, and social media outlets in order to provide the widest possible state coverage.

• The same grant and application process was used for all eligible providers in the state.

• Standard criteria for evaluation of local proposals were used for all eligible providers.

• Technical assistance was provided to assist with dissemination of information to all eligible providers interested in applying. Technical assistance opportunities were included in announcements and the Request for Proposal.

• The announcement contained information such as:

o Type of grants available.

o Contact person to obtain RFP guidelines.

o Timeline with grant application due date.

o Other pertinent items.

o Any information required by state law in regard to the awarding of contracts and the expenditure of public funds.

LCTCS used the following process to distribute funds to approved applicants:

1) Not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under section 231 and to carry out section 225, Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals, of which not more than 20 percent of such amount shall be available to carry out section 225;

2) Shall not use more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds to carry out state leadership activities under section 223; and

3) Shall not use more than 5 percent of the grant funds for administrative expenses of the eligible agency.

Federal funds may be used to increase the level of nonfederal funds that would be available in the absence of federal funds, and, in no case, replace those nonfederal funds. Federal funds must not be used for the purpose of supplanting, only for supplementing.

See Title II — Adult Education and Literacy Programs (b) Local Activities for additional details regarding the processes for the request for application process.

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.

This is not applicable in Louisiana since blind services are operated within the same agency.

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.

Effective November 9, 2015, the Louisiana Workforce Commission's HiRE system became a comprehensive system that fully integrates workforce development with unemployment insurance. Not only does this aid the job-seeker/claimant in managing their unemployment insurance benefits, job-search functions, and case management, it also enhances services provided to employers by allowing them to manage unemployment claims as well as utilize recruiting features within the system.

In 2010, Title IV's Vocational Rehabilitation services moved to LWC's oversight, specifically under the Office of Workforce Development. Since the transition, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services continues to use the AWARE system (Accessible Web-based Activity and Reporting Environment).

As the lead state agency, LWC hosts regularly scheduled meetings with the administrators of the core partner programs. Louisiana's Office of Technology Systems (OTS) is a key player in the development of a data warehouse. This data warehouse will be used to collect common data points as it relates to performance ,and will allow each partner agency to extract data for reporting requirements. At the time of this writing, each core partner program has illustrated its process of data collection and reporting structure as well as evaluating the common data points to include in the new data warehouse structure. Data sharing agreements are being reviewed and/or written to ensure a seamless delivery of information.

Having a fully integrated data warehouse offering a full case management system is a long term goal. However, the construction of such a system will be a phased approach. Phase 1 will introduce all common data points, common intake and meet minimum reporting requirements. In Phase 2, the data warehouse will begin to incorporate non-required partner data and feature enhancements such as management of training providers. With this phase individuals will be exposed to all partner services and referred to appropriate services based on intake information.

Louisiana currently produces reports as required by the Workforce Investment Act by aggregating data through multiple sources. HiRE houses participant case management data. Unemployment Insurance wage data is housed in a state-managed mainframe system. Louisiana is also a WRIS member and imports out-of-state wage data for its participants from other WRIS member states and territories.

Unemployment insurance is integrated within our workforce development system via HiRE for ETA programs. HiRE's system administrator, Geographic Solutions Inc., aggregates data from the aforementioned sources in the required WIASRD format for WIA reporting. Geographic Solutions will continue to assist LWC in the aggregation and preparation of data for WIOA reporting.

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.

Louisiana's Implementation Team established a workgroup specifically tasked with data alignment, data sharing and the integration of such data as it relates to WIOA. The group is in the process of evaluating each core partner's current collection method of the required data elements. Specifically, the group is examining what is collected, how it is collected and how and where data is stored. Collection process changes will be an outcome of the evaluation and will be incorporated into a data warehouse among partner agencies.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission and the state's Office of Technology Systems are working together to develop a data warehouse where data systems from core partners, minimally, will be integrated to track participation across programs. At the time of this writing, the architecture is being designed and business rules are under development in a phased approach. Phase I will concentrate on the development of the data warehouse with core partners, determine what to collect and how to collect it, as well as the frequency of the collection in a secure exchange environment. Business rules will be established, and data-sharing agreements put into place. Phase II will include the evaluation of common intake

and service delivery across all programs. As a result of the two-phase process, reduced duplication of services and improved efficiency is anticipated.

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.

At the start of WIOA, Louisiana's Implementation Team established a workgroup specifically tasked with data alignment, data sharing and the integration of such data as it relates to WIOA. Over the next several months, the group will continue to evaluate each core partner's collection method of the required data elements. Specifically, the group will examine what is collected, how it is collected and how and where data is stored. Collection process changes will be an outcome of the evaluation and will be incorporated into an eventual data management system among partner agencies.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission will work with core partners to track participation across programs. A phased approach will be taken to achieve the goals of program alignment. Phase I will concentrate on the development of common intake and collection system with core partners, determine what to collect and how to collect it, as well as the frequency of the collection in a secure exchange environment. Business rules will be established, and data-sharing agreements put into place. Phase II will include the evaluation of common intake and service delivery across all programs. As a result of the two-phase process, reduced duplication of services and improved efficiency is anticipated.

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

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. Separately, the Departments of Labor and Education anticipate working with states to inform future guidance and possible information collection(s) on these accountability systems. 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.

The State is negotiating data sharing agreements (DSA) between partnering agencies to govern terms and conditions under which program data may be shared. Upon the successful execution of the DSA's, the State shall collect program data from each partnering agency through secured data transmission protocols and deposit this data into a data warehouse.

The State has executed data sharing agreements with the UI Division, Louisiana Techncial and Community College System, and the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services.

The WIOA partners will provide these business rules

- generic program identifiers for citizens who are served by this program,
- data matching, so the records of program participants that are introduced through multiple interfaces can be united; and,
- data conflict resolution, such that conflicting data is reconciled.

Additional business rules will provide periodic updates to the data warehouse from partnering agency interfaces, through a combination of web based interfaces. Protocol will ensure privacy of personally identifiable information. Partnering agencies will update information to ensure real time data.

The data warehouse will become the source for all subsequent program activities:

- applications available at State One-Stop centers and affiliate locations
- any federal or state reporting requirements; and,
- any program activities that are initiated throughout the workforce system.

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 State is committed to understanding and improving the six primary performance indicators for the core programs. Case management and follow up processes will continue using benchmarking as a strategy to assess and evaluate results, adjusting strategies as necessary to effectively serve participants.

The State requires employers to report Descriptive Job Title / SOC and Nominal Hourly rate of pay. This will allow a better assessment of participant program success for: Participants entering occupations related to the program from which they exit. • Participants completing longer-term training / services programs relative to those who enter shorter programs and self-service (Return on Investment) • Career progression / Career Pathways typically taken by participants. • Skills acquired at each level of career and skills gap analysis.

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.)

The use of UI wage record data will continue. Data Sharing Agreements are being reviewed and expanded to accommodate performance related goals.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) is currently importing out-of-state wages from the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) into its participant wage records. There are a significant number of participants who previously had and/or seek out of state employment before and after participation in workforce programs. LWC will continue to use WRIS wages to produce a more complete and accurate record of participant earnings.

LWC is also a participant in WRIS2, which permits the use of aggregated data for appropriate Third Party Entities (TPEs). Louisiana may utilize WRIS2 data, as permitted, as its relationships evolve with the administrators of WIOA partner programs. Specific plans for the sharing of WRIS2 data with TPEs has not been finalized.

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.

Agency legal counsel and Division of Administration Office of Technology Services reviews and approves language in any applicable data-sharing agreement (DSA) and service contracts to ensure that privacy safeguards are properly in place.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) employs multiple safeguards to customer data. Internally, staff members are held accountable for the use of customer data. All employees accessing LWC's case management system, HiRE, are required to sign confidentiality agreements governing the use of information in the HiRE system. Rules, policies, and practices employed by LWC staff are focused on guarding customer data being used strictly for LWC program purposes. Staff use of the HiRE system is monitored by supervisors and state administrators for appropriate use.

Information in HiRE is kept on file in a secure database and will only be used by our staff to better provide assistance to LWC's customers in determining eligibility for federal assistance in obtaining employment and/or training for employment. Customer information will not be transmitted to other companies, solicitors or organizations not associated with the performance of the responsibilities delineated in the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.

For security purposes and to ensure that this service remains available to all users, HiRE also employs software programs to monitor network traffic to identify unauthorized attempts to upload or change information, or otherwise cause damage.

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.

The state shall provide priority of service for veterans in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4215(b). The term "priority of service" means, with respect to any qualified job training program, that a covered person shall be given priority over nonveterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under that program, notwithstanding any other provision of law. Such priority includes giving access services to a covered person before a non-covered person, or, if resources are limited, giving access to such services to a covered person instead of a non-covered person.

Priority starts with the first One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) member that comes in contact with the veteran or eligible person. During the reception process, a series of questions identifies veterans and eligibility status. Qualified veterans and/or qualified spouses are provided services prior to other customers and an initial assessment is completed by the first available OSCC staff member. If during the initial assessment it is determined that the veteran has an SBE or is a member of another special category, the veteran is immediately referred to a DVOP specialist.

The state provides priority of service in accordance with TEGL 05-03. When a veteran is identified as having barriers to employment, they are fast tracked on a priority basis to ensure that those barriers are resolved as expeditiously as possible. The state has memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with U.S. Department of Labor-funded programs covered by Section 4215 on veterans' priority and refers veterans to training and supportive services within that network on a priority basis. The state has partnered with educational entities within the state and the vocational/technical institutions, which also provide priority service for veterans and assists them with their educational and literacy needs.

Veterans receive priority for employment and job training opportunities available through WIOA funding, on-the-job training, skills development training and youth training contracts. Veterans can locate training opportunities through use of the HiRE database and receive training at private facilities, which have been approved through the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Should veterans meet the eligibility criteria, their training costs are paid by the WIOA program or through individual training accounts. Veterans are given priority in instances of training fund shortages. LVER staff and other OSCC staff identify jobs and training opportunities specifically tailored for veterans, as they promote veterans as potential employees. These priority services are made available and provided to veterans, transitioning service members, Chapter 31 veterans, Native American veterans and other groups targeted for special consideration, including difficult-to-serve veterans and veterans with barriers to employment.

The state will closely monitor the provision of priority of service. Both JVSG management and local area coordinators shall periodically conduct site checks to ensure all required priority of service signs are present and properly displayed, and that OSCC staff understand both the requirement of priority of service and its proper implementation. During these site visits, monitors pay particular attention to the implementation of priority of service beyond core services, particularly in the allocation of training funds. The state shall consider an indicated referral rate in any one of these areas being lower for veterans and other eligible persons than for nonveterans to be evidence of a potential priority-of-implementation

problem. The state shall immediately place the affected region under examination and take corrective action measures to include, but not be limited, to additional training.

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.

Recognizing the high unemployment rate among individuals with disabilities and the qualified- employee shortage businesses are facing, the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and access to all programs, services and facilities. Each One-Stop Career Center should utilize the one-stop disability access checklist provided by the United States Department of Labor to self-evaluate its current level of accessibility.

With support of the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant (2012 -2015), LWC worked to ensure the physical, communication and programmatic accessibility of all One-Stop Career Centers by conducting specialized training for all center staff on topics including accessibility for all, disability etiquette and awareness, and identifying and assisting job-seekers with hidden disabilities. LWC will continue to maintain these investments in staff training and technology to make certain One- Stop Career Center staff serve adult job-seekers with disabilities effectively.

LWC has incorporated accessibility criteria as part of the One-Stop certification policy criteria in collaboration with the Workforce Investment Council, local boards and CEOs. Additionally, all One-Stop Centers will be monitored onsite annually to ensure compliance with this requirement.

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.

The State encourages local workforce development areas to work with partners --including non-traditional partners such as faith based and community based organizations to identify resources for bilingual assistance in providing services. In addition, future staff recruitment efforts should considered inclusion of second language skills in job descriptions. Basic informational collateral materials describing basic program services should be made available in languages that reflect the make-up of the citizens in the community.

Currently the HiRE case management system is available in Spanish. “Google Translate” has also been added to the HiRE system.

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.

At an Oct. 27, 2014 meeting, the leadership of LWC, DCFS and LCTCS agreed that an inter-agency team should lead the development of the combined state plan. This team operated according to the protocols of LWC's Agency Initiative Management (AIM) office. The AIM team was tasked with the development of the combined state plan and with the following objectives:

• Develop an inter-agency workforce strategy and high-level implementation plan for the state.

• Divide the state into common regions.

• Create a plan to reach high-risk populations and locations.

• Perform asset mapping throughout the state to coordinate and optimize resources.

• Refine the list of eligible training providers.

• Define the flow of job-seekers from entry points in any of these agencies through:

A series of assessments, including employment needs and eligibility for services in any agency.

The provision of essential services to enroll job-seekers in training and/or employment.

Placement in 3-, 4- or 5-Star Jobs with good wages, existing openings and solid career prospects.

The deliverables developed by the inter-agency AIM team were the road map for state and local areas to implement WIOA service delivery, including all core programs and any other activities and programs the agencies deem necessary.

The team formed by LWC, DCFS and LCTCS will develop a process to identify, assess, train and place job-seekers quickly and efficiently by aligning their federal funding and programs. The goal of this partnership is an efficient and effective service delivery model.

Factors that should be kept in mind while developing this process are:

• Which agencies or programs should/must co-locate? How will the infrastructure and technology costs be spread among the collaborating agencies?

• How will WIOA affect the current field office format for DCFS and LWC?

• How will the state support access to services as outlined in WIOA, making Temporary Assistance for Needy Families mandatory partners? Must these partners be co-located?

• Forecasting data for Louisiana will be used to aid in local and regional coordination. Should forecasting data drive the regional and local plans? … and if so, how?

• How will the state benefit from the addition of other non-core program partners in this collaboration? (e.g. Department of Corrections, Department of Veterans Affairs, universities, Louisiana Department of Education (K-12), Louisiana Department of Revenue, Louisiana Economic Development).

State Leadership, Governance and Compliance (Strategic)

• Develop a "Combined State Plan" which includes the six core programs, plus one or more optional programs which promote a shared understanding of the workforce needs of the state and a comprehensive strategy for addressing those needs.

• Align core and other programs in a manner that supports a comprehensive in-demand, job-driven workforce system.

• Guide the implementation and continuous improvement of the workforce development system (addressing alignment, career pathways, sector partnerships, and coordination between partners and local areas).

• Identify and disseminate best practices in priority populations.

• Develop strategies for technological improvements.

• Streamline statewide workforce and labor market information systems.

State Leadership, Governance and Compliance (Operational)

• Develop a plan to integrate intake, case management and reporting systems across key programs.

• Develop policies to promote partnerships, collaboration, integration, and alignment of WIOA programs and activities at the state and local levels.

• Develop policy establishing local board certification, to the extent the local board has ensured that workforce investment activities carried out in the local area have enabled the local area to meet the corresponding performance accountability measures and achieve sustained fiscal integrity.

• Develop policy criteria for certification of One-Stop Centers.

• Develop strategies to support staff training and awareness across the workforce development system and its programs.

State Leadership, Governance and Compliance (Compliance)

• Develop comprehensive state performance and accountability measures to assess core program effectiveness.

• Establish guidelines for determining partners' contributions to infrastructure funds for the One-Stop system in the event that a local area fails to reach agreement.

Local Leadership and Governance (Strategic)

• Develop strategies to continuously improve and strengthen the workforce development system through innovation in, and alignment and improvement of, employment, training and education programs to promote economic growth.

• Develop regional plans that align with the state's strategic and operational vision and goals outlined in the Combined State Plan.

• Develop effective regional industry and sector partnerships that support employer utilization of the local workforce development system.

• Align workforce investment, education and economic development systems (addressing career pathways, sector partnerships and coordination between partners and local areas).

• Identify and promote best practices for meeting the needs and serving employers, workers and job-seekers/priority populations.

Local Leadership and Governance (Operational)

• Increase access and opportunities (particularly for those identified as priority populations).

• Provide workers with skills and credentials to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages and to provide America's employers with skilled workers.

• Improve the structure and delivery of services to better address the employment and skills needs and improve the prosperity of workers and employers.

• Develop strategies for using technology to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of the local workforce development system.

Local Leadership and Governance (Compliance)

• Align local board membership with members that possess optimum policy-making authority in the organizations they represent and have the skills and practical knowledge to contribute fully to the strategic vision of the local area's workforce system.

• Establish bylaws, consistent with state policy, that help improve operations of the local board.

Communications/Stakeholders

• Develop a communications/marketing plan that encompasses all working groups.

• Initiate a stakeholder analysis.

• Identify communication needs and stakeholder needs.

• Identify partners to collaboratively develop and effectively communicate clear guidance and direction that aligns state economic development, education and workforce system policies.

• Develop strategies that improve public awareness and recognition of the One-Stop system to help job-seekers and employers readily access services.

Eligible Service/Training Providers

• Establish eligibility procedures to ensure the accountability, quality and labor-market relevance of programs or training services that receive funds through WIOA Title I-B.

• Ensure that qualified providers offering a wide variety of demand job-driven training programs are available to participants, including eligible providers with expertise in assisting individuals with disabilities and eligible providers with expertise in assisting adults in need of adult education and literacy activities.

• Establish a mechanism to share eligible training providers under Title II and IV across core program and partners.

Performance and Data Management

• Develop strategies and policies that align technology and data systems across One-Stop partner programs to enhance service delivery and improve efficiencies in reporting and performance accountability measures.

• Develop effective on-going training and dissemination of information practices across core programs that promote quality and accuracy of data.

• Develop methods of reporting performance of the workforce system that promote transparency and accountability to all stakeholders.

Service Delivery and Infrastructure

• Enhance and streamline operations through the integration of customer intake, case management, reporting and fiscal and management accountability systems of One-Stop partners.

• Increase access and opportunities to the workforce system, particularly for those with barriers to employment, both physical and virtual.

• Develop innovative workforce services and strategies for area employers that include career pathways, skills upgrading, apprenticeship and other effective initiatives for meeting the needs of area employers and workers.

• Ensure equitable funding of services and infrastructure costs of the One-Stop delivery system.

• Strengthen professional development of providers and workforce professionals.

Other Collaborative Activities

A Louisiana Workforce Symposium was held on December 15-16, 2015 in Baton Rouge. The two-day event spotlighted tools to help workforce, education, labor and other organizations sharpen their effectiveness under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The two-day event coincided with the Workforce Investment Council meeting which provided the opportunity to network, share best practices and hear inspiring stories of success in building an outstanding workforce across Louisiana.

Throughout 2015, many partner statewide events have included presentations on WIOA. These opportunities to coordinate in statewide events will continue and grow in order to maximize collaboration.

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.

The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act of 2014 calls for realigned workforce, education and economic development systems. One of the cornerstones of this legislation is to define common regions across multiple state agencies, most notably workforce, education and social assistance programs. The LWC's Research and Statistics division developed a report based on seven of the eight factors proposed in the new legislation including: population centers, commuting patterns, industrial composition location quotient, local labor market conditions, accessibility of community colleges and geographic boundaries. The following map illustrates 8 workforce regions in Louisiana. Within the 8 regions are 15 local workforce development areas (LWDAs). Previously, there were 18 LWDAs under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Four of the 18 boards were either merged or redesigned as a single local area under WIOA. LWDAs 82 (Morehouse, Union and West Carroll) and 83 (Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Madison, Richland and Tensas parishes) were merged after recommendation of the WIC at its June 15, 2015 meeting and the governor's approval of the recommendation on July 14, 2015.

Regional Louisiana Map: http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-LaRLMAmap.jpg

Under WIOA, local LWDAs 50 (Allen Beauregard and Vernon parishes) and 51 (Cameron, Calcasieu and Jefferson Davis parishes) requested to be re-designated as a single local area within Region 5 in accordance with WIOA Section 106(b)(4). At its September 15, 2015 meeting, the WIC approved the request of LWDAs 50 and 51 to recommend re-designation to the governor. The LWC executive director, as designee of the governor, approved the re-designation recommendation on September 29, 2015.

On September 14, 2106 Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards re-designated Local Workforce Investment Areas 40 and 41 into a single area which abolished Local Workforce Development Board 41 and added Lafayette Parish to Local Workforce Investment Area 40 which also includes the Parishes of Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, St. Landry, St. Martin and

Vermillion. All other local areas were approved for initial designation under WIOA and their boards have been subsequently certified by OWD.

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.

If the chief elected official and Local WDB in a local area submitted a request for initial designation, the Governor did approve the request if, for the 2 program years preceding the date of enactment of WIOA, the following criteria were met: (1) The local area was designated as a local area for purposes of WIA; (2) The local area performed successfully by meeting or exceeding the levels of performance the Governor negotiated with the Local WDB and chief elected official under WIA sec. 136(c) for the last 2 full program years before the enactment of WIOA, and that the local area has not failed any individual measure for the last 2 consecutive program years before the enactment of WIOA. (3) The local area sustained fiscal integrity and was not found in violation of one or more of the following during PY 12 and PY 13: • Final determination finding(s) from audits, evaluations or other reviews conducted by state or local governmental agencies or the United States Department of Labor which identify issues of fiscal integrity or improperly expended funds due to the willful disregard or failure to comply with any WIA requirement. This includes failure to grant priority of service or verification of participant eligibility; or • Gross negligence, defined as a conscious and voluntary disregard of the need to use reasonable care, which is likely to cause foreseeable grave injury or harm to persons, property or both; or • Failure to observe accepted standards of administration. Local areas must have adhered to the uniform administrative requirements set forth in Title 2 CFR Part 200 and Title 29 CFR Parts 95 and 97. Local areas must have fully met their federally-mandated responsibilities for the two previous program years, including timely reporting of WIA participant and expenditure data, completed and submitted the required annual single audit and not having been placed on cash hold for longer than 30 days. (WIOA Section 106(e)(2)) (i.e. failure to submit timely expenditure reports to LWC). The initial designation requirements and application procedures are described in Louisiana Workforce Commission Policy OWD 4-10 which is shown below.

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/LWC_4-10-WIOAInitialDesignation.pdf

With regard to subsequent designation, the Governor must review all local areas that were initially designated under WIOA before submitting the State Plan during each 4-year State planning cycle to evaluate whether the area continues to meet the requirements for subsequent designation. The local area and chief elected official must be considered to have requested continued designation unless the local area and chief elected official notify the Governor that they no longer seek designation. Subsequent designation will be granted if: 1. The local area performed successfully by meeting or exceeding the levels of performance the Governor negotiated with the Local WDB and chief elected official for Program Years 2016 and 2017 and the local area has not failed any individual measure for Program Years

2016 and 2017. 2. The local area sustained fiscal integrity and was not found in violation of one or more of the following during PY 2016 and 2017: • Final determination finding(s) from audits, evaluations or other reviews conducted by state or local governmental agencies or the United States Department of Labor which identify issues of fiscal integrity or improperly expended funds due to the willful disregard or failure to comply with any WIOA requirement. This includes failure to grant priority of service or verification of participant eligibility; or • Gross negligence, defined as a conscious and voluntary disregard of the need to use reasonable care, which is likely to cause foreseeable grave injury or harm to persons, property or both; or • Failure to observe accepted standards of administration. Local areas must have adhered to the uniform administrative requirements set forth in Title 2 CFR Part 200 and Title 29 CFR Parts 95 and 97. Local areas must have fully met their federally-mandated responsibilities for the two previous program years, including timely reporting of WIOA participant and expenditure data, completed and submitted the required annual single audit and not having been placed on cash hold for longer than 30 days. (WIOA Section 106(e)(2)) (i.e. failure to submit timely expenditure reports to LWC).

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

Appeals Process for Initial Designation

In accordance with Section 106 of WIOA, a unit of local government (or combination of units) which has requested and been denied an initial designation as a local area under WIOA may appeal the denial to the State Board within 15 calendar days of the date of the decision.

The request for appeal must be sent by certified mail, return receipt, to the Louisiana Workforce Commission, Attention: Office of Workforce Development P.O. Box 94094 Baton Rouge, La. 70804-9094. The request must include the name of the contact person (e.g., WDB Director) and the address where official notices are to be mailed. The appeal request must be legible, written/typed clearly and concisely and the following must be placed at the top of the first page in capital letters: REQUEST FOR APPEAL. The written/typed appeal must specifically state why the designation as a LWDA should be approved. The request shall be no longer than five pages. (Exhibits and attachments are not included in the five-page limit). Within five calendar days of the receipt of the appeal, the State Board will contact the appellant to schedule a hearing date. The State Board will conduct the appeal hearing and provide a written decision to the appellant no later than ten calendar days after the hearing.

Appeal of State Board Decision

If the appeal to the State Board does not result in approval for initial designation, the appellant, if appealing an initial designation under WIOA Section 106(b)(2) or subsequent designation under Section 106(b)(3), may request review by the Secretary of Labor. An appeal to the Secretary must be submitted by the appellant or grant recipient no later than 30 calendar days after receipt of written notification from the State Board that the appeal has been denied. Appeals must be submitted by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210, Attention: Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration. A copy of the appeal must be simultaneously provided to the State Board.

If the Secretary determines that the appellant was not accorded procedural rights under the appeal process established under the above section, or that the area meets the requirements for initial or subsequent designation in WIOA Section 106(b)(2) or 106(b)(3), the Secretary may require that the area be designated as a workforce development area. The Secretary must issue a written decision to the Governor.

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

The State and LWDAs continued to negotiate local funding agreements as previously done under WIA for PY 2016. Local funding agreements must satisfy the requirements of section 121(h) of WIOA in PY 2017. The state developed an infrastructure funding policy and all local areas developed and completed Infrastructure Funding Agreements that were included as part of their Memorandums of Understanding. The state is continuing to develop a State Funding Mechanism option in case it is necessary in the future.

For a one-stop partner administering a program described in §§ 678.400 through 678.410 to appeal the Governor's determination regarding the one-stop partner's portion of funds to be provided for one-stop infrastructure costs, the appeal may be made on the ground that the Governor's determination is inconsistent with proportionate share requirements in § 678.735(a), the cost contribution limitations in § 678.735(b), the cost contribution caps in § 678.738, consistent with the process described in the State Plan. The one-stop partner must submit a written appeal within 21 days from receipt of the Governor's determination. The governor will issue a determination within 30 days of receipt of the appeal.

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.

REQUIRED STATEWIDE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES- ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, YOUTH PROGRAMS It shall be the policy of State to use funds reserved by the Governor, as described in WIOA sections 128(a) and 133(b), regardless of whether the funds were allotted as Youth, Adult, or Dislocated Worker Formula Funds, to achieve the following statewide activities:

• Provide assistance to state entities and agencies, local areas, and one stop partners in carrying out the activities described in the combined state plan, including the coordination and alignment of data systems used to carry out the requirement of WIOA

• Provide assistance to local areas for carrying out the regional planning and service delivery efforts required under sec. 106(c) of WIOA

• Provide assistance to local areas by providing information on, and support for, the effective development, convening, and implementation of industry sector partnerships

• Provide assistance to local areas, one stop operators, one stop partners, and eligible providers, including the development and training of staff, which may include the development and training of staff to provide opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment to enter in-demand industry sectors or occupations and nontraditional occupations, the development of exemplary program activities, and the provision of

technical assistance to local areas that fail to meet local performance accountability measures described in sec. 116(c) of WIOA

• Disseminating the State list of eligible providers of training services, including eligible providers of nontraditional training services and eligible providers of apprenticeship programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act of 1937

• Disseminate information identifying eligible providers of on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, incumbent worker training (IWTP), internships, paid or unpaid work experience opportunities, or transitional jobs

• Disseminate information on effective outreach to, partnerships with, and services for, businesses

• Disseminate information on effective service delivery strategies to serve workers and job seekers

• Disseminate performance information and information on the cost of attendance including tuition and fees, for participants in applicable training programs on the Eligible Training Provider's List (ETPL) with recognized post- secondary credentials, as well as OJT and IWTP

• Disseminate information on physical and programmatic accessibility, in accordance with sec. 188 of WIOA relative to nondiscrimination, if applicable, and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 for individuals with disabilities

• Conduct evaluations of State Programs, in coordination with evaluations of programs and activities carried out by the U.S. Secretary of Labor

• Disseminate a list of providers of youth workforce investment activities eligible to receive competitive, or sole source, grants and contracts for training with credentials for youth

• Provide re-designation assistance to local areas

• Provide assistance in the development of Regional Plans

* Operate a fiscal and management accountability information system (MIS) to manage, track, and report primary indicators of performance for Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Programs

• Conduct continuous, and at least annually, monitoring and oversight of activities carried out by sub-recipients of WIOA funding to conform to the Uniform Administrative Requirements (UAR)

• Provide additional assistance to local areas that have high concentrations of eligible youth

ALLOWABLE STATEWIDE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES (Discretionary Funds)

This policy allows the State to use funds not more than 15% of the amount of WIOA formula funding allotted for Adult, Youth and Dislocated Workers, reserved by the Governor, and administered by the Executive Director, or her designee, to provide for additional statewide employment and training activities under WIOA. These may include the following:

• Developing strategies for effectively serving individuals with significant barriers to employment and for coordinating programs and services among one stop partners

• Implementing innovative programs and strategies designed to meet the needs of all employers, including small employers, in the State, which programs and strategies may include IWTP, customized training, sector and industry cluster strategies and implementation of industry or sector partnerships, and career pathway programs

• The development or identification of education and training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis, utilize direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure and provide credit for prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences, evaluate such skills and competencies for adaptability, ensure credits are portable and stackable for more skilled employment, and accelerates course or credential completion

• Implementing programs to increase the number of individuals training for and placed in nontraditional employment

• Carrying out activities to facilitate remote access to services

• Supporting the provision of career services in the one stop delivery system in the State

• Activities to improve coordination of employment and training activities with child support services

• Activities in the corrections system that assist ex-offenders in re-entering the workforce

• Activities consisting of development and dissemination of workforce and labor market information

• Conducting research and demonstration projects related to meeting the employment and education needs of adults and dislocated workers

• Implementing promising services for workers and businesses, which may include providing support for education, training, skill upgrade, and statewide networking for employees to become workplace learning advisors and maintain proficiency in carrying out activities associated with such advising

• Developing and disseminating common intake procedures and related items, including registration processes, materials, or software

• Providing technical assistance to local areas that are implementing pay-for-performance contract strategies, which technical assistance may include providing assistance with data collection, meeting data entry requirements, identifying levels of performance, and conducting evaluations of such strategies

• Research related to meeting the education and employment needs of youth

• Demonstration projects related to meeting the education and employment needs of youth

• Supporting the development of alternative, evidence-based programs and other activities that enhance the choices available to eligible youth and encourage

• Supporting financial literacy, including the ability of youth program participants to create household budgets, initiate savings plans, and make informed financial decisions about education, retirement, home ownership, wealth building, or other savings goals

• Supporting activities that address the particular financial literacy needs on non-English speakers, including providing the support through the development and distribution of multi-lingual financial literacy and education materials; and

• Providing technical assistance to, as appropriate, local boards, chief elected officials, one stop operators, one stop partners, and eligible providers, in local areas, which provision of technical assistance shall include the development and training of staff, the development of exemplary program activities, the provision of technical assistance to local areas that fail to meet local performance accountability measures, and the provision of technology to facilitate remote access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system in the State.

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

The goal of Louisiana's Rapid Response unit is to quickly mobilize resources to minimize the adverse impact on companies, affected workers and communities that are associated with a job loss. Rapid Response services expedite the process of obtaining information about where new jobs can be found and training, education and/or supportive services that facilitate re-employment as quickly as possible.

Pursuant to WIOA section 134 (a)(2)(A), the governor shall reserve not more than 25 percent of WIOA Dislocated Worker funding to carry out statewide rapid response activities. These statewide rapid response activities shall include: 1. Provision of rapid response activities, carried out in local areas by the State, or by an entity designated by the State, working in conjunction with local boards and the chief elected officials for the local areas; and

2.Provision of additional assistance to local areas that experience disasters, mass layoffs, or plant closings, or other events that precipitate substantial increases in the number of unemployed individuals, carried out in local areas by the State, working in conjunction with the local boards and the chief elected officials for the local areas. The State's Rapid Response activities will include, but are not limited to immediate contact with the employer, representatives of the affected workers and the local community, which may include an assessment of the layoff plans and the schedule for reemployment orientation sessions. The team will provide customized transition services and assistance. These services are provided at the job site, prior to the layoff and are offered at times convenient for the employer and affected workers.

Companies and individuals not covered and/or specifically addressed in the WARN Act are also eligible and provided services through the Rapid Response unit.

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.

Louisiana has developed a comprehensive and well-tested disaster response and recovery plan. Rapid Response is a critical component of the state's disaster response and recovery plan and provides services such as:

- Filing for Disaster Unemployment Insurance.
- Recovery job placement.
- Assistance in accessing other supportive services.

Rapid Response mobile units function as offices on wheels. In the event of a disaster resulting in a job loss or other interruption in employment, the mobile units are deployed. The units run on generators and are equipped with computers and Internet access. The units can also be deployed to remote locations or to regions where offices may have been destroyed.

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.

LWC has a policy requiring co-enrollment into WIOA services for Trade affected workers receiving services under Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA). Co-enrolling (or multi-enrolling) TAA participants aligns resources and supports development of clear plans for integrated service strategies necessary to effectively and efficiently assist the Trade-affected workers in transition.

Upon receipt of a valid WARN notification, and LWC determines the lay- off warrants a public announcement, notices are disseminated to personnel identified within the WARN notification network. To ensure timeliness, the State's Rapid Response team, begins intervention efforts within 48 hours of a layoff notification. To better meet local need, designated Rapid Response coordinators cover each region of the state to lead and manage activities, and to provide customized responses to businesses and workers within their regions. The designated Rapid Response Regional Coordinator makes initial contact with the employer and gathers information regarding the cause of the layoff, demographics of the affected workers, immediate needs of the workers, etc.

LWC has activated cross-program strategic planning and service integration (TAA, Dislocated Worker, and Rapid Response) by providing core and intensive services through the Rapid Response unit and by co-enrolling TAA certified participants in need of training in WIOA and TAA. The TAA Statewide Coordinator notifies the Rapid Response Statewide Coordinator whenever a new petition is filed to ensure that Rapid Response services are provided.

When sufficient notification is given, orientation sessions will be held for employees when there is an active petition in the Trade program. The state also provides guidance to Local Boards to develop strategies and policies to provide progressive levels of intervention for job-seekers. Using information collected through early intervention, WIOA staff initiate enrollment of eligible laid-off employees for case management at One-Stop Centers statewide. All eligible dislocated workers are provided a full range of career services, training and other individually appropriate local partner services.

To accommodate worker schedules and enable more employees to access services every effort is made to negotiate on-site services and paid time-off. When possible, Worker Transition Centers are established on-site. Statistics have proven that when services are on-site and during company time it increases participation, morale, while maintaining productivity. The Work Test is provided throughout the interface of staff with unemployment insurance claimants, not just during the eligibility review process. In both daily re-employment (of claimants) efforts and during the eligibility review process, daily notification of work test issues are provided to the UI adjudication staff for follow-up.

Early intervention services that include orientation; initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes and abilities; the provision of labor market information; job-search assistance and financial management workshops continue to be a priority for workers in the TAA program. Once trade-impacted employees are certified, local-merit staff at the One-Stop Center approves and enter the TAA program budget obligations and expenditure records in the HiRE system and complete the enrollment of these participants in TAA training.

Certification of a dislocated worker for TAA includes determining eligibility by matching the laid-off employee to the USDOL-certified petition and the employer's laid-off list, as well as approval of the individual using the six TAA criteria for eligibility to be placed in training along with other steps. The TAA criteria requires assessing the emotional, spiritual, financial and intellectual abilities of the trade-impacted worker, to demonstrate the individual's qualification to undertake, complete and benefit from the planned training. Supporting the assessment are testing tools (SAGE, TABE, WorkKeys, etc.) administered at the local One-Stop Center level. If the assessment identifies a TAA-certified participant's need for adult education or remedial services, these programs can be offered by local-merit staff. The assessment tool also can be used to identify education gaps and to pinpoint work-related aptitudes and interests. Approval for TAA training services and selection of a training method or program is based on matching these factors to the participant for appropriate training for a demand occupation.

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.

The State will maximize Work-Based Training program models including on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, registered apprenticeship, transitional jobs (Work

Experience), and customized training as part of its training strategy. These models are designed to ensure high quality training for both participants and employers. The Louisiana Work-Based Training model has as its goal to meet job seeker as well as employer needs.

In order to enhance the success of the Work-Based Training program's model, Louisiana will engage partners in the development of strategies, frameworks, and models to insure successful implementation of work-and-learn experiences. The State will strategize to elevate the importance of work-and-learn models. Through partnerships with employers LWC will strive to mitigate employer challenges as well as determine best practices.

Furthermore, job seekers will be able to establish connections directly with potential employers by using this evidence-based approach to career readiness. The State will additionally provide guidance for the field through policies, standardized procedures, statewide training, and technical assistance.

Work-Based Training models will utilize work-based learning to fill regional business needs for skilled employees, thereby increasing employee earning potential and the business's bottom line. To ensure quality in work-based training, local Workforce Development Areas are expected to demonstrate evidence of the following criteria:

• Occupation training for in-demand jobs (STAR JOBS)

• Clear program goals

• Outreach implementation to program participants and employers regarding OJT opportunities; including leveraging various partners' relationships with employers

• Standardizing and streamlining forms, including contracts and training plan templates in each region

• Clear roles and responsibilities for trainers, worksite supervisors and support personnel

• Assessments to identify existing skills of individual learners

• Reasonable training length reflecting both the complexity of the job and skills of the trainee

• Specified methods of instruction

• Assurance that participants are job-ready prior to work-based training opportunities

• Established evaluation processes

• Clear expectations and feedback to assess progress toward achieving learning/skills acquisition goals.

These Work-Based Training programs will better prepare adults and dislocated workers for an economy that demands that workers have career knowledge and skills, are adaptable to change, and are prepared for lifelong learning. The strategy of Work-Based Training will utilize community partners in an effort to provide job seekers with the opportunity to learn the necessary workplace skills required for success in the new economy.

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).

Under WIA, many local workforce investment boards were reluctant to support registered apprenticeship with workforce funding for a multitude of reasons, including concerns regarding perceived performance implications. With the new provisions in WIOA that clearly support the expansion and incorporation of registered apprenticeship as an evidence-based approach to workforce development, the State of Louisiana sees this as an opportunity to create a new statewide vision that supports substantive partnerships between LWDBs and registered apprenticeship program sponsors. Aligning registered apprenticeship opportunities with WIOA service design and delivery in a holistic and comprehensive manner, however, will take time and a great deal of education. Further, policy development at the state level is needed to clarify broad parameters within which local staff can operate in order to achieve the high ROI that studies clearly indicate registered apprenticeship yields.

Looking forward towards the next several years, we envision a workforce development system where more LWDBs and One-Stop operators are more knowledgeable and involved in supporting registered apprenticeship programs, including: the provision of assistance with screening and testing potential applicants for registered apprenticeship programs; making well-informed and appropriate referrals to available registered apprenticeship programs; encouraging the development of pre-apprenticeship learning opportunities for WIOA participants who are not yet ready for a registered apprenticeship program; providing supportive services to enable apprentices to fully participate and complete their programs and supporting apprentices throughout all or part of their program using WIOA funds to help defray the costs of OJT and the provision of required classroom training. Getting to this point will be a statewide endeavor that fully utilizes the State Apprenticeship Director, in addition to staff from USDOL's Office of Apprenticeship in Dallas. We are committed to developing better partnerships between registered apprenticeship programs and our statewide workforce system by using the new elements within WIOA that provide better opportunities for building relationships between them.

The State is also focused on expanding registered apprenticeship opportunities throughout Louisiana. Although building and construction trade programs have been and continue to be the backbone of registered apprenticeship in this state and across the country, we are working to develop new non- traditional programs in industries such as health care, advanced manufacturing, and Information Technology. 2017 brought progress in some of these areas with the registration of two medical billing and coding programs and a LPN programs. The apprenticeship division continues to encourage new and currently existing programs to take advantage of partnership opportunities with our workforce system and has played an active role in discussions regarding Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) policies and procedures as it applies to registered apprenticeship under the new WIOA regulations; as well as discussion on how to get apprenticeship programs to better utilize the IWTP..

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).

LWC is responsible for facilitating the application process and for calculating the performance outcomes based on student level data submitted by training providers. In addition, LWC is required to disseminate the State's list of eligible providers of training services, including eligible providers of non-traditional training services, performance information and program costs.

LWDBs are responsible for notifying providers in their area of the opportunity to apply for status as approved eligible training providers. At its own discretion, an LWDB may also solicit training providers from outside of their LWDA. Solicitation may be done through a combination of direct mailings, newspaper notices and other appropriate means. An LWDB is responsible for ensuring that training providers have access to the application for certification and a list of demand occupations for their LWDA. The demand occupation list is important because WIOA requires training funds be used primarily for training job seekers for demand occupations. The list contains information for training providers regarding where training funds should be used.

Training providers that do not have data entry access to the HiRE (Helping Individuals Reach Employment) should contact LWC's Office of Occupational Information Services at (225) 219-7761 to obtain the necessary security access. Refer to the Eligible Training Provider Manual for additional information on the application process, at http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WFD/WIAETPLManual.pdf. pdf.

The statewide standardized system eliminates duplication and provides uniformity in the provider information gathered for the statewide list. Potential training providers must submit an application for each course of study or program being proposed, including cost information on each course or program. Each training provider must submit one (1) single application containing all required information on the training institution and one (1) on each program being proposed to receive WIOA training funds.

In addition to the application, each provider must submit required student data as outlined in chapter 7 of the Eligible Training Provider Manual. High school students, prisoners and non-degreed individuals are excluded from the student data requirements. A non-degreed individual is defined as an individual who is enrolled for a single course without the intention of completing a program. The data submission must include the signed "Student Data Certification Statement" found in Appendix 1 — Form C .As part of the certification process the state will verify, through the Louisiana State Board of Regents, a proprietary school's licensure status. Applications will not be processed through the certification process until this verification has been made. Questions regarding licensure status should be directed to Carol Marabella at (225) 219-7150, (225) 342-4253 or at the following address:

Louisiana State Board of Regents Proprietary School Section P. O. Box 3677 Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3677

Initial Eligibility

o Providers must submit an application to the State for training program(s) it wishes to offer. In addition to any local requirements, providers must follow the process outlined in this policy and submit student and performance data as required by the LWDB and/or State.

o Providers are eligible only for programs that qualify and are approved by the State and LWDBs.

o Providers must submit evidence of accreditation and/or licensure from the appropriate state or other governing body.

o Distance learning programs are eligible only when offered by institutions that are fully accredited by a recognizing accrediting body.

o Initial eligibility is limited to a period of one (1) calendar year for each approved program.

o The provider must renew its eligibility and establish continued eligibility for each approved program to continue receiving WIOA funds after the program's one-year period of eligibility ends.

o Providers must contact the State every two years to renew each program's continued eligibility to receive WIOA funds.

o The State shall provide a written notice of determination of acceptance or rejection of an initial application in HiRE to an applying entity within thirty (30) calendar days of the receipt of the completed initial eligibility determination application.

Continued Eligibility

All training providers must apply annually to remain on the ETPL by submitting a completed application along with the required information. The State will review the application, make a determination of approval, and notify the applicant of the determination within 30 days of receiving the completed application. The State will notify the applicant of the final determination in writing in HiRE, including in the case of a denial, the reasons for the final determination and a statement that the provider may appeal the determination as provided in this policy. The applicant may appeal the determination of the State using the appeals procedures outlined in this policy. Any training provider that does not apply to remain on the ETPL pursuant to this policy shall be removed from the ETPL.

The following information is required for a continued eligibility determination:

1. A completed application;

2. Performance reports for the past two years, as applicable; 3. Certification that the following have not changed from previous years: the provider's refund, equal employment opportunity and accessibility policies; and the class schedule. If changes have been made, new copies of the aforementioned shall be provided;

4. Any additional information requested by the State.

A continued eligibility determination will be made for each training provider on a program-by-program basis and be based on the following criteria:

o A training provider's prior eligibility status or status of existing programs.

o The performance of training providers on the performance accountability measures relating to the State Plan and the training provider's individual performance measures established by the State.

o The availability of training services throughout the State.

o Information reported to State Agencies with respect to Federal and State programs involving training services, including the adult education and vocational rehabilitation programs.

o The degree to which the program relates to in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the State.

o Compliance with State licensing requirements, where applicable.

o The ability of the training provider to offer quality programs that lead to postsecondary credentials.

o The ability of the training provider to provide training services to individuals who are unemployed, underemployed, incumbent workers and individuals with barriers to employment.

o Demonstrated ability of the training provider to submit timely and accurate performance reports.

o Continued compliance with State labor laws such as workers compensation, unemployment insurance, wage and hour, and nondiscrimination.

o A training provider's ability to meet the State Plan's performance measures as required by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Registered Apprenticeship

Under WIOA, title 1, Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors are automatically eligible for placement on the state-approved ETP list and will remain on the list as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor notifies the State that it no longer wants to be included on the list. Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same application and performance information requirements or to a period of initial or continued eligibility as other providers. If a Registered Apprenticeship program is deregistered, it shall be removed from the ETPL.

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.

WIOA establishes a priority of service requirement with respect to funds allocated to a LWDA for "individualized" career services in addition to training services. Such "individualized" career services may include career counseling and the development of an individual employment plan which involves more dedicated staff time to provide. One-Stop center staff responsible for these funds must give priority to:

• Recipients of public assistance

• Other low-income individuals

• Individuals who are basic skills deficient

As outlined in OWD policy 2-24," Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility Policy", for the purpose of determining eligibility of Adults under WIOA, individualized career or training services shall constitute a minimum of 51 percent of Adults served meeting the priority target groups. This minimum threshold will ensure that local One-Stops are targeting Adults in most need of services beyond "basic career" services while developing talent pools that meet the short term as well as long term workforce needs of businesses.

Compliance with Adult priority will be evaluated on an annual basis at the end of each program year and should be tracked at the local level on an ongoing basis using regular monitoring and reporting systems.

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

Per section 133 (b)(4) (4) TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—A local board may transfer, if such a transfer is approved by the Governor, up to and including 100 percent of the funds allocated to the local area under paragraph (2)(A) or (3), and up to and including 100 percent of the funds allocated to the local area under paragraph (2)(B), for a fiscal year relative to Adult employment and training activities; and dislocated worker employment and training activities.

However, State policy will limit the maximum allowable transfer to 75 percent. A local board may send written notice requesting a transfer of funds between adult and dislocated worker funds up to a maximum amount of 50 percent in the first year in which funds are made available. In the second year, local boards may send written notification requesting up to an additional 25 percent.

The written request must include the following information:

1. Why is there a need to transfer funds? (Example: Economic conditions such as high/low unemployment, business closures, etc.)

2. The request must indicate how the transfer of funds will affect the participant levels in both the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. The written request must provide an estimated number of Adult and Dislocated Workers expected to be served if the transfer is granted.

3. The request must also explain the impact on jointly funded employment and training programs in the Local Service Delivery System.

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)

Local areas are encouraged to refocus traditional performance—based contracts to place an emphasis on the contractor achieving outcomes, like participants obtaining and retaining good jobs, rather than outputs like the number of people served. No more than 10 percent of the local youth allotment can be expended on the implementation of WIOA pay—for—performance contract strategies for youth training services and other activities.

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.

The Local Boards are responsible for developing local plans for the governor's approval, designating local One-Stop operators, designating eligible partners of training services, negotiating local performance measures with the state workforce board and the governor, monitoring local system performance against established performance measures, and helping to develop the labor market information system for local areas. Local Boards will facilitate relationships between Partner Programs, local entities, and supportive service agencies for a strengthened service delivery in regard to provision of services to youth. These relationships will include, as a minimum, procedures for youth participant co-enrollment and common intake as necessary to integrate: intake, case management, and reporting. This shall be the case for all Partner Programs under which youth may be served. Youth services shall begin with a systematic approach to gathering information about strengths and assets, need and challenges, and interests and goals. These assessments shall be used to determining program eligibility, and subsequently guide the development of individualized plans and all other Case Management activities. Youth shall be co-enrolled as necessary in any programs under WIOA funding sources and any Partner Program that is not WIOA funded, e.g., Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Children and Family Services that is necessary based on their needs assessment. Youth will be simultaneously co-enrolled in any and all programs under which they are eligible for, and receiving, services. This will prevent youth having to wait until they exit one program in order to access services offered by other programs, and allow them to receive the best combination of services from different funding streams. For any program year, LWDBs must spend not less than 75 percent of local workforce development area funds to provide direct services to out-of-school youth. For any program year, LWDBs must spend not less than 20 percent of the funds allocated to the local area to provide in school youth and out of school youth with work experiences such as summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, internship, job shadowing, and on-the-job training. Local boards shall ensure that parents, participants, and other members of the community with experience relating to the programs for youth are involved in its design and implementation. One-Stop operators shall carry out programs

that: • Provide an assessment of academic levels, skill levels and occupational skills, any prior work experience, employability, interests and aptitudes. • Develop service strategies for each youth that directly links to one or more of the established performance indicators. • Provide activities leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent or a recognized postsecondary credential. • Provide for preparation for postsecondary educational and training opportunities. • Create strong linkages between academic instruction and student academic achievement standards that lead to postsecondary credentials. • Prepare for unsubsidized employment opportunities. • Establish effective connections to employers in demand industry sectors and occupations of the local and regional labor markets.

Local boards shall develop strategies that support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants, the programs shall provide elements consisting of: • Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized post-secondary credential. • Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate. • Paid and unpaid work experiences that have an academic and occupational education component. * Pre-Apprenticeship programs • Occupational skills training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved, if the Local Board determines that the programs meet quality criteria. • Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. • Leadership development opportunities including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors. • Supportive services. • Adult mentoring for duration of at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation. • Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation. • Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth. • Financial literacy education. • Entrepreneurial skill training. • Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services. • Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.

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)

Local workforce development areas will ensure that all 14 program elements are made available to youth participants. Local workforce development areas must conduct a survey and assessment of partner services prior to establishing the premise for the request for

proposal (RFP). Participant activities will be monitored through desk reviews and other monitoring methodologies.

This survey process will foster continued collaboration across all partners while maximizing opportunities for Co—enrollment of participant. This will result in improved outcomes.

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.

As outlined in OWD policy 2—21 "Youth Program Operations" LWDBs must establish, and review annually, a policy addressing their criteria for youth "requiring additional assistance". This policy is subject to the monitoring process.

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.

Louisiana R.S. 17:221, states that "Every parent, tutor, or other person residing within the state of Louisiana having control or charge of any child from that child's seventh birthday until his eighteenth birthday shall send such child to a public or private day school, unless the child graduates from high school prior to his eighteenth birthday shall send such child to a public or private day school, unless the child graduates from high school prior to his eighteenth birthday." For the purpose of this plan, this age range is considered the "age of compulsory school attendance."

A youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent completed school year calendar quarter. A school-year calendar quarter is based on how a local school district defines its school year quarters.

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.

Basic Skills Deficient: A youth is basic—skills deficient if he/she has English reading, writing or computing skills at or below the 8th—grade level on a generally—accepted standardized test; 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. (Assessment process must include reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities).

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 does not apply to Louisiana.

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:

K. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;
L. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;
M. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;
N. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND
O. 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:

P. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;
Q. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;
R. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;
S. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.
T. 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;

Louisiana is not submitting any waiver request as part of this revision.

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.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission, Office of Workforce Development has developed and implemented the following internal training program for employment service staff, which includes:

• Standardized performance ratings for individual staff members with technical competencies based on federal and state laws, regulations, statutes and standardized operating procedures were developed for use statewide with behavioral competencies required for effective "case management" and provision of service.

• Standardized performance monitoring of case management and other intensive services.

• An on-boarding training process provided by expert staff members.

* A mandatory quarterly training program that was specific to the shortfalls and errors discovered in managerial metrics and performance monitoring. (For JVSG funded staff, sending new staff members to NVTI for their first training session within 45 days of being hired).

• A streamlined and effective service delivery model that fit within the requirements of WIOA and Wagner-Peyser, with the nuances required under other programs

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.

As described in the Integrated Service Delivery Policy (OWD 2-23) and in accordance with the provisions of and regarding individuals profiled as qualifying for and receiving services under the Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Grant, and for those claimants who qualify for priority of service and/or are eligible for unemployment compensation for ex-service members (UCX) which provides benefits for eligible ex-military personnel. Additionally, the UCX program covers any former members of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.

Louisiana operates the RESEA program statewide due to its integrated service-delivery system. Louisiana's system is demand-driven and operated under a continuous improvement process. Therefore, the system is able to respond quickly to immediate and long-term requests by connecting job-seekers to employers seeking candidates with the

skills and/or credentials in demand occupations. Louisiana's integrated service-delivery process was redesigned as a foundation for establishing operations that support the key principles in WIOA law and to initiate expanding partnerships and services.

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.

All One-Stop Center staff members are trained in the program overview, case management and all key aspects of job-specific functions. Administrative and managerial staff members at all levels provide operational oversight and technical support for programs. Regional senior managers through their local managerial structure and in cooperation with LWDA leadership are responsible for ensuring a seamless process in One-Stop Centers through coordinating staff training, providing technical support, maintaining program documentation and continuous communication and dissemination of information. These leaders work in coordination with Management of Information Systems (MIS) technicians and UI technical support teams on all issues relating to UI eligibility, disqualification and requalification.

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

State management, with support from local management, also provides fiscal and programmatic monitoring and serves as liaisons between workforce development and UI programs. UI staff (the claim center, adjudication, appeals and the technical support unit) provides technical support for external customers (job-seekers/claimants) and internal staff (Workforce Development Specialists (WFDS) and workforce development management). The UI technical support unit will upon request provide training to all WIOA and WP staff concerning federal and state UI regulations, eligibility reviews, adjudications services, appeal processes and all other related UI services for job-seekers/claimants.

MIS also provides technical assistance for state and local staff using LWC's integrated case-management system, HiRE (Helping Individuals Reach Employment). This system is used to record and track all re-employment service-delivery activities. Staff training is provided quarterly via localized statewide training, web-based courses and conferences and meetings. Subject-matter experts in workforce services and UI facilitate initial, recurring and specialized training as part of the CIP and as necessary to ensure all service-delivery methods and program-specific goals are being met.

OWD's Technical Assistance Unit provides assistance to state and local staff through various methods including needs assessments, monitoring outcomes and updates and/or newly issued federal and state requirements. This process identifies knowledge/skills/attitudes (KSAs) gaps and learning objectives for: (1) grants/programs, (2) service delivery, (3) internal (state) and external (local) processes and procedures, (4) accessing/using HiRE, (5) Workforce Specialist roles & responsibilities), etc. Assistance is provided through statewide training, webinars, conferences, workshops and meetings.

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;

LWC has taken an aggressive approach in developing more comprehensive integrated systems throughout the agency. True integration and collaborative processes have been established through building stronger links among OWD, UI, and IT working together to provide a full array of services to our customer base. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is currently in place with all partners. Louisiana Workforce Commission's OWD, UI, IT and Management of Information Systems (MIS) departments have collaborated to create a seamless relationship in the sharing and transferring of information. This relationship produces the required Federal Reports, ETA 9128 and 9129, as required by USDOL for both the treatment and comparison groups. Once ETA releases the guidance on the 9128 X and 9129 X, the UCX and Quarterly Narrative Report 9165, Louisiana Workforce Commission will ensure the required data is tracked accurately and reported quarterly.

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

Any person filing a UI claim in Louisiana is automatically registered with the State's Employment Service through the HiRE platform. Subsequent to the completion of any UI claim and prior to determination of "monetary eligibility" all claimants are "enrolled" in Wagner-Peyser services and are then profiled and placed on a standardized service deliver track as delineated in the state's "Integrated Service Delivery" policy.

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

For delivering services to Job Seekers, regardless of their "reason for" or "point of" entry into One-Stop Center service delivery, the State has adopted a Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) methodology. This process moves the Program Partners away from "Compartmentalization" and allows for the following in a real-time context: benchmarking (metric driven change); anticipating and meeting customer changing needs; local control of the process to reduce cycle time and idle resources; and incorporating lessons learned through marrying quality assurance (monitoring) directly to staff training.

The new design is customer demand driven and efficient. So, while it is important that all offices will "standardize job seeker core services and enrollment processes," the way in which these are delivered may be flexible, and link directly to the manner in which Program Partners serve employers.

The new roadmap for all job seekers regardless of their reason for entering LWC services is designed for speed and flexibility by providing for Continuous Assessment, Career Services, and Follow-up. This supports determining participant needs, routing participants to the

appropriate service, tracking participant activity throughout the process, and targeting and recording participant outcomes.

All customers visiting a physical One-Stop-Center location who receive staff-assisted services shall be included in the common measures performance calculations.

Because all One-Stop Center services, staff, facility and activities are funded in-part by both WP and WIOA, the sequence of services and assessments shall determine the timing for co-enrollment of job seekers who receive WP or WIOA Title 1B staff-assisted service in a One-Stop Center for reporting and performance measures.

Most jobseekers served in any One-Stop Center should be counted as participant in WIOA, regardless of the presence of WIOA-funded staff onsite. Conversely, most WIOA participants should be counted as WP participants; regardless the presence of WP funded staff at the enrolling service location.

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

The State requires One-Stop Center and LWDBs to provide services to participants with the specific intent of developing a quality outcomes. For this reason, the State bases its performance accountability system on the quality of services and not the number of services provided.

The State has replaced the concept of "Intake Process" with "Assessment Process" (which is the step following "Common Intake"), further dividing the assessment process into an "Initial Assessment" and "Comprehensive Assessment". The assessment process is continuous and ongoing in the context of referrals and assistance in acquiring training, education, access to resources, and employment.

Assessments shall include the use of assessment tools and processes modified by local leadership to be most effective based on the demographics of their local area, customer base, staffing levels, program (and Program Partner) availability, and supportive services access. To provide a foundation for all services, as a minimum, job seeker services shall include: initial registration, WP and (when applicable) WIOA Enrollment, with the appropriate staff assisted first service.

One-Stop operators shall provide both core and intensive services as appropriate based on job seeker and employer need, and the most recently directed criteria associated with compliance and performance under any applicable USDOL grant. These services may include, but are not limited to: assisted job search activities, evaluation of skills, interests, preferences, career counseling training options, matching skills to current job openings, intensive services, case management and follow up.

Comprehensive assessment is vital to collecting information on job seeker barriers to employment, employment goals, knowledge skills and abilities, and proficiency in occupational knowledge. This assessment shall be done as a client centered approach to evaluating the needs of a participant without regard to services or training program availability. The purpose of the assessment will be to determine the job seeker's needs and not simply to match the job seeker to what is available.

This assessment is best defined operatively as an "intensive interviewing process." which includes behavioral observations and may also require the use of structured assessment tools. Other information gathered may include detailed work history, family support available, social services affiliations, offender status, and a detailed education history.

Comprehensive assessments must be documented via case notes, with regard to privacy and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA") rules.

The comprehensive assessment is the foundation for development of an IEP. No IEP shall be created without completing a comprehensive assessment. In many cases the comprehensive assessment will be an ongoing process that may result in changes to the goals and objectives of the IEP.

The IEP is developed with a job seeker to identify or create employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and the right combination of services to assist in achieving goals and objectives. In short — "where am I now," "where do I want to go," "how will I get there?"

The IEP is a plan for the future, not a rehash of the past. It must include goals and objectives that are SMART (specific, measureable, attainable, realistic, and time bound).

Case Management requires a regular follow-up and review or revision of the IEP, until such time as the job seeker becomes workforce ready or enters a training program. In either case follow-up is critical, using the 30, 60, and 90-day cycle until employed or training is complete is appropriate — except for long term training. For long-term training, Career Specialists should follow the most current guidance.

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.

Assessment of Needs

The agricultural industry is characterized by a large workforce with numerous job openings, chronic unemployment and underemployment due to the cyclical nature of the work, and below average pay. Migrants and seasonal farmworkers, whose livelihood is primarily derived from agricultural employment, not only experience the chronic unemployment or underemployment inherent in the industry, but also face additional, significant barriers to employment. These include low levels of education, limited English proficiency, inferior housing, and few assets to sustain them through a period of retraining.

In addition, farmworkers also experience geographical isolation and many lack transportation. Public transportation is rarely available to where they live, and therefore, they are dependent upon their employer or friends for rides, making it difficult for them to make and keep appointments for employment, health, training, or other services.

Despite the above general characteristics of MSFWs, exact figures on the number of MSFWs in Louisiana are limited and contradictory. How the LWC intends to remedy the situation will be discussed further in this report.

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 Louisiana State University (LSU) Ag Center 2016 Agricultural Progress Report, Louisiana agricultural products contributed $5.9 billion to the state's economy. "Couple th[e] 'gross farm value' with the 'value added' as those products made their way to consumers and Louisiana agriculture had a total economic value of over $10.9 billion in 2016." The top five labor intensive crops include: Sugarcane, Soybeans, Aquaculture, Rice, and Produce (fruits and vegetables). See attached maps for areas of highest production in these areas:
http://www.lsuagcenter.com//media/system/3/5/a/d/35ad6620c7632d2a9b2be67117ffce07/highlights%20of%20louisiana%20agriculture%202016%20ac-4pdf.pdf

Table 22: Top Crops in Louisiana

Crop	Peak Season(s)	Geographical Area(s)	Gross Farm Value	Total Value
Sugarcane	Planting: July through October Harvest: mid-September through early January	Eastern Acadiana Parishes and River Parishes from Avoyelles to Lafourche	$496,604,901	$841,248,702
Soybeans	$554,694,039	$651,765,496		

Crop	Peak Season(s)	Geographical Area(s)	Gross Farm Value	Total Value
Aquaculture	Aquaculture includes: crawfish, catfish, alligators, oysters, soft-shell crabs, turtles, minnows, and other bait fish	$344,449,380	$576,952,712	
Crawfish	Harvest: March through June, variable	South Central to Southwestern LA		
Rice	Planting: mid-March through May 31th Harvest: late July through early October	South Central to Southwestern LA	$305,489,269	$407,217,196
Produce	Produce includes: commercial vegetables, greenhouse vegetables, fruit crops, sweet potatoes, pecans and home gardens.	$496,400,000		
Sweet Potatoes	Planting: early April through mid-June Harvest: early September through late November	Northeastern parishes	$43,483,180	$76,095,565
Greenhouse Vegetables	$806,098	$3,109,235		
Commercial Vegetables	$45,177,257	$106,166,554		

Crop	Peak Season(s)	Geographical Area(s)	Gross Farm Value	Total Value
Fruit Crops	Tangipahoa and Livingston Parishes	$44,766,870	$60,435,275	
Plant Nurseries	January through mid-November	Rapides and St. Tammany Parishes	$101,389,250	$157,153,338

The general employment trend in rural Louisiana has been for workers to leave agricultural work for higher paying or less labor intensive jobs in other occupations. Additionally, while many workers enjoy agricultural work, very few can adapt to living on a seasonal income. As a result, agricultural employers have a difficult time finding reliable local workers. The H-2A temporary agricultural foreign worker program has become increasingly popular among Louisiana agricultural employers, following the national trend. Today, H-2A workers dominate the agricultural labor force in the state.

According to Louisiana Summary: Agriculture and Natural Resources 2016 (p. 3):

Many Louisiana communities depend on agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and wildlife for local jobs and their economic well-being. However, for those who work in it day in and day out, agriculture, forestry and fisheries are far more than a business, a major job contributor and economic engine. It truly is a way of life. Families have lived on many of these farms, forest lands or fishing villages for generations following a preferred way of life even though it means hard work, many hours, high risks and sometimes low incomes.

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.

Assessment Of The Unique Needs Of Migrant And Seasonal Farmworkers

According to the AOP submitted with the Unified State Plan for 2016:

During 2015, agricultural employers placed 791 job orders, 99 more than 2014, and 279 more than 2013. The total number temporary or seasonal workers requested through these job orders was 7,787, an increase of 565 workers from 2014, and 1,199 from 2013. Almost all of these were H-2A Temporary Foreign Laborer Agricultural job orders. Although this indicates the level of demand for agricultural workers within the state, it also suggests an

opportunity for greater coordination of MSFW stakeholders in placing workers into these jobs.

It is estimated that, in Louisiana, there are currently 1,500[1] MSFWs in the following agricultural industries.

Sugarcane: 50

Strawberry: 100

Crawfish and soybean: 80

Nursery: 250

Animal farms and other crops: 220

Non-migrant seasonal farm worker: 1,000

During 2015, LWC contacted 282 MSFWs, of which 38 were referred to jobs. During 2016, LWC intends to increase the number of MSFWs by five percent as staff is better trained to increase their outreach to MSFWs and to recognize MSFWs who enter the Business and Career Solutions Centers network and register in HiRE. LWC anticipates that at least 55 staff days may be required to provide the qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate level of services to MSFWs, compared to non-MSFWs.

):

Data: MSFW Accomplishments

During PY 2016, the SWA and its One-Stop partners contacted 271 MSFWs, a 27% increase from the previous year. The goal was a 5% increase, which indicates the SWA surpassed the goal. Of this number, 28 were referred to jobs, a 29% decrease from the previous year. Although undetermined, it is possible this decrease is related the effect of reduced oil prices on a general downturn in the Louisiana economy. A greater focus is being placed upon this indicator for PY 2016.

It is estimated there are approximately 920 MSFWs in Louisiana, with greater concentrations in the northeastern quadrant of the state and Tangipahoa Parish. It is estimated over 90% of these workers are U.S. citizens who are seasonal, non-migrant workers and whose primary language is English. On average 240 of the MSFWs in the state receive some kind of service from the One Stop system annually.

During PY 2016, all but one minimum service level were met each quarter, except two - Placed in a Job and Field Checks Conducted. Field checks are to be conducted on a certain ratio of agricultural job orders where domestic workers are hired. One indicator - Reviews of significant offices - is not applicable in Louisiana because Louisiana has no significant offices. Also, during PY 2016, no MSFW or MSFW-related complaints were received.

During PY 2016, MSFWs comprised 1.3% of the total number of job seekers served through the Louisiana One-Stop system. Five indicators are used to determine whether services to MSFWs are qualitatively equivalent to non-MSFWs. During PY 2016 LWC met one of the equity indicators.

Table 23: Program Year 2016 Equity Ratio Indicators

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_23.jpg

[I]t is estimated that, in Louisiana, there are currently 920 MSFWs in the following agricultural industries. (This estimate does not include H-2A non-immigrant agricultural temporary workers.)

50 - Sugarcane

20 - Strawberry

40 - Crawfish and Soybean

100 - Nursery

60 - Animal Farms and Other Crops

650 - Other seasonal farmworkers

Although some of these MSFWs are Spanish-speaking Mexican or Central American immigrants or descendants, the great majority of MSFWs in the state are local seasonal workers. According to best estimates the number of migrant workers is very small compared to the size of the LA agricultural industry. Three areas comprise the largest concentrations of MSFWs; Ouachita, southern Rapides, and western Tangipahoa Parishes.

From the best estimates, based upon MSFW contacts by LWC, Motivation, Education and Training, Inc. (MET, Inc., the state Section 167, National Farmworker Jobs Program [NFJP] grantee), and the High School Equivalency Program (HEP) at Delta Community College, the number of migrant farmworkers is very small. According to MET, Inc., (using the broader definition of MSFWs under the NFJP grant) migrant farmworker clients are rare. In PY2014 and PY 2015 100% of MET, Inc. clients were local seasonal workers. The first language is of most of those clients was English. Approximately 3,000 people enroll in HEP annually. Of that number an average of 100 enrollees have engaged in farm work and approximately 50% of them would be categorized as an MSFW. An estimated 75% of that number are local English-speaking seasonal or year-round workers and 25% are local Spanish-speaking seasonal or year-round workers. Almost 100% of the Spanish-speaking workers are from Mexico or of Mexican descent. A few HEP participants each year are H-2A workers who wish to obtain a high school equivalency and learn English. The peak participation period for HEP are the winter months, the off-season for most farm work.

The following characteristics of Louisiana NFJP participants for calendar year 2015 were provided by MET, Inc. and derived from MET's NFJP database:

"100% Seasonal Farmworkers, 66% Black, 28% White, 21% Hispanic, 10% born in Mexico, 88% born in USA, 216 Families and Individuals served, Average 142 Days Worked in Farm Work, 50% Female, 42% School Dropout, 2% Limited English, 2% Veteran, 47% Long-Term Agricultural Employment, 29% Reading Skill Below 8.9 Grade Level."

Both NFJP and HEP program operators stated that over 90% of their MSFW participants do not rely primarily upon agriculture for their income at the time of participation, but that agricultural work happens to be part of their past or present experience combined with work in other non-agricultural occupations. Of those that do rely upon agricultural income at the time of participation or within the two years before participation, very few regard

agricultural work as a vocation, but one of many different occupations they may work in the course of their careers, especially in rural labor supply areas.

Most participants in both NFJP and HEP utilize the One-Stop System to some degree. The most common needs of MSFWs are employment, increasing income, food assistance, transportation, and training.

As the above excerpts from four different reports indicate, the Louisiana Workforce Commission HiRE registration system and American Job Center intake processes were not adequately capturing MSFWs throughout the state. The SWA recognized that MSFWs were not being accurately recorded and has taken several steps to rectify the situation:

1. Hired a full-time State Monitor Advocate (SMA) November 14, 2017.

2. Is in the process of hiring two bilingual (English-Spanish) part-time outreach workers (one for the northern part of the state and one for the southern part of the state).

3. Modify the HiRE registration process to include questions about farm work.

4. Provide technical training to front-line staff on how to identify MSFWs.

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[1] Note: the figures included do not add up to 1500, but rather 1700, and it is unclear where these figures were obtained.

2. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

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

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

The LWC will attempt to employ a minimum of two bilingual (English-Spanish) outreach workers to communicate with MSFWs about the full range of workforce development services available through Louisiana's Comprehensive and Affiliate AJCs. One outreach worker will conduct outreach in North Louisiana and a second outreach worker will conduct outreach in South Louisiana. These outreach workers will communicate regularly with AJC managers and the highest ranking Wagner Peyser staff members domiciled in their assigned territories or, other Wagner Peyser staff members designated by the Office of Workforce Development's Director of Field Operations.

Louisiana's outreach workers will communicate with MSFWs about the Employment Service and Employment Law complaint system as well as a basic summary of farmworker rights. Outreach workers will strongly encourage MSFWs to visit one of Louisiana's Comprehensive Job Centers to access the full range of employment and training services provided by WIOA mandated partners.

If an MSFW cannot or does not wish to visit the Comprehensive AJC, the outreach worker will provide on-site the following:

• Assistance in the preparation of applications for employment services; • Assistance in obtaining referral(s) to employment opportunities; • Assistance in the preparation of either ES or employment law complaints; • Referral to supportive services and/or career services in which the individual or a family member may be interested; • Assistance in making appointments and arranging transportation for individual MSFWs or family members to and from AJCs • Observe the working and living conditions of MSFWs and report suspected violations to the highest ranking Wagner-Peyser staff member serving in the AJC in the territory in which the suspected violation occurred.

It is mandatory that outreach workers receive training in AJC procedures and in the services, benefits, and protections afforded to MSFWs by ES. It is also mandatory that outreach receive training on protecting farmworkers against sexual harassment and human trafficking.

Outreach workers will maintain complete records of their contacts with MSFWs and the services they perform. These records must include a daily log, which must be sent monthly to the Office of Workforce Development's Director of Field Operations or the Director's designee. At minimum, the log must include: the records of the number of contacts, the names of contacts, and the services provided. The outreach worker must distinguish between a service and complaint in the records. Outreach workers must also report services and complaints in the LWC's HiRE system as applicable.

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.

The SMA will work with LWC administrative and local One-Stop Center staff on issues of concern (identification of MSFWs, compliance with equivalency of service and equity indicators, reviving local interest, proper documentation of services, etc.). This technical assistance is provided to all One-Stop Center staff as needed, during field office visits, SMA monitoring reviews, and OWD state training seminars and conferences. Any deficiencies the SMA discovers during daily business or reviews will be addressed upon discovery. The primary emphasis will be placed upon properly identifying MSFWs, meeting the needs of MSFWs, and recording the services provided to them. The SMA will provide training and follow-up on the outreach and provision of services to MSFWs to One-Stop staff throughout the state. The staff will be encouraged to query clients to better identify MSFWs and record them in the HiRE system. Staff will provide the full range of One-Stop services, including the HiRE labor exchange system, of which the ARS is a part. The labor exchange system provides job openings in both agricultural and non-agricultural employment. Other services, such as training or supportive services, provide a pathway for MSFWs to transition to higher wage jobs & permanent year round employment in non-agricultural work. The

SMA, Outreach Workers, and front line staff at AJCs will all be provided with technical training from the DOL and the LWC.

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.

LWC utilizes a variety of methods for staff training for the delivery of core services. The most effective is through a combination of training seminars, group sessions, and the provision of self-paced training materials. Training on the identification of and the provision of services to MSFWs will be provided through a combination of training at annual state conferences, on-site training, webinars and conference calls, to be determined after an assessment of effectiveness and feasibility, with training to training to staff statewide by the end of PY2018. The training will be conducted in conjunction with WIOA training to as great a degree as possible, to foster a seamless delivery of services to MSFWs as compared to non-MSFW populations. MSFW partner organizations will be invited to participate so they may learn more about One-Stop services and develop more ways to coordinate services with the SWA. Likewise, partners will be invited to conduct training on their programs and services to promote and enhance coordinated to MSFW services.

MSFW outreach workers are required to spend a minimum of three months working in a Comprehensive One-Stop center to learn about all core programs including the Unemployment Insurance program. Through this pratical experience, outreach workers will develop awareness of UI eligibility issues.

Providing services to target groups, e.g., MSFWs or veterans, is incorporated into the training. The LWC University, a set of online staff training modules, is one method of self-paced training for the provision of services to MSFWs. Additionally the State of Louisiana provides an online platform Louisiana Employees Online (LEO), for Civil Service, programmatic, and professional training. LWC has professional training courses on LEO for each of its major programs and requires at least 20 professional training hours per year for each employee. Four MSFW training modules, provided by the U.S. Department of Labor National Monitor Advocate are included in the LWC University and on a Staff Online Services page in HiRE. The modules in HiRE are available to all SWA staff and partners. Additionally, the Staff Online Services page provides access to various other MSFW materials and information, e.g., ES Complaint System forms and instructions, posters, and the Migrant and Seasonal Protection Act. During training sessions, staff will be directed to these training modules for further training and encouraged to retake the training occasionally to refresh their knowledge.

The four modules are:

1. Agricultural Outreach Training

2. Business Service Representatives

3. State Monitor Advocates (Roles and Responsibilities)

4. Front-Line Staff Training on the Job Service Complaint System

For many decades, the state Unemployment Insurance (UI) program was co-located in offices that also provided Wagner-Peyser and WIOA services. This arrangement created a

situation where offices activities were dominated by UI activities, to the detriment of job training and placement services. This system also required UI claimants to travel, sometimes long distances, to an office for services.

In 2005, the LWC implemented a centrally operated UI system utilizing an online computerized system and a statewide Call Center. UI services have been removed from Louisiana One-Stop Centers to allow the Center staff to focus solely upon job training, job placement, and related career services. Since a claimant can gain access to the UI system from anywhere, the need for a local presence was no longer needed.

The UI system initially operated separately from the SWA labor exchange system, but continued the requirement that UI claimants register for work and conduct job search or engaged in training. For the last several years, LWC has been integrating UI and Workforce Development (WD) system services through the Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE) online labor exchange and training services system. Upon registering in HiRE, the WD and UI systems are tied into certain automated support activities. For example, upon registration, a UI claimant is automatically profiled for job matching (e.g., the last occupation) and a list of potential employment opportunities within a 25-mile radius is sent to them for consideration. This feature alone has resulted in an average shortened period of unemployment.

UI claimants may file online or by phone at One-Stop Centers. One-Stop Center staffs provide instruction to UI claimants on how to apply for UI services and assist claimants while filing their claims. Further UI services, such as eligibility issues, are provided through the UI Call Center. The online UI application system is available in Spanish. The UI Call Center has bi-lingual staff that offers translation services in Spanish.

All One-Stop staff and workforce partners have been thoroughly trained on the integrated HiRE system (OWD/UI). One-Stop workers regularly provide UI eligibility awareness and may incorporate UI claims income into their individualized service plans.

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 four MSFW training modules on the Intranet LWC University and on the Staff Online Resources page in the HiRE labor exchange system comprise part of the merit staff outreach workers' set of professional development tools. The LWC University is available to all LWC merit employees. The Staff Online Resources is available to merit staff and all partners. Additionally, other MSFW resources are available through the Staff Online Resources; Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA), the MSPA poster in English, Spanish and Vietnamese, CFR Part 653 — Services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers, TEGL 15-09 Job Service Complaint System, One-Stop Center Complaint Referral Record ETA Form 8429 and instructions. The SMA will attempt to include the four training modules in the training section of the Louisiana Employees Online (LEO) human resources services portal. State merit employees receive professional development credit for courses taken through LEO. The inclusion of the MSFW modules would provide an extra incentive for merit employees to take the courses. Additionally, the SMA will attempt to add online training on the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS).

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

The SWA has already begun a number of measures to increase outreach efforts to MSFWs, as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups, including:

1. A LWC MSFW policy has been written to assist staff in identifying MSFWs.

2. The HiRE system has been enhanced to include questions about farm work, so that the SMA and outreach workers can follow-up with eligible MSFWs for services.

3. A MOU has been written between the NFJP partner and the LWC to ensure better coordination between the two agencies, as well as providing coverage to MSFWs throughout the entire state. One new MET office will be co-located in the Houma Comprehensive AJC.

4. The SMA and the state director for MET discussed locations for additional MET offices to ensure outreach efforts on the parts of both agencies will meet the needs of the entire state.

5. Two part-time bilingual (English-Spanish) outreach workers will be hired in the up-coming months (one for the northern part of Louisiana and one for the southern part of the state).

6. An Employment Services (ES) Complaint policy is currently being written and should be disseminated within the next 90 days.

7. The SMA will visit all 62 AJCs by the end of 2018, including providing formal reviews once the MSFW and ES Complaint policies have gone into effect.

8. The SMA will attend the MAFO - A National Partnership of Farmworker and Rural Organizations conference in New Mexico in April 2018 to receive additional training and support to bring back to the SWA.

9. The SWA will provide technical training to the SMA, AJC staff and outreach workers. A formal MSFW training is currently being scheduled by the DOL for the region and will likely be held in August 2018 in Chicago.

10. The SMA is collaborating with the Foreign Labor team to ensure that H2A workers are visited upon arrival.

11. The SMA is developing resource materials about local services for MSFWs, and intends to prepare welcome packets for H2A workers, as well as for outreach workers to distribute to MSFWs when they are in the field.

12. The SMA has participated in several conferences specific to MSFW needs and will continue to participate in appropriate conferences as a participant and speaker.

13. The SMA has identified several organizations that work with MSFWs and begun collaborative efforts with them, including:

a. New Orleans Workers Center for Racial Justice

b. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

c. Migrant Education Program

d. National Guestworkers program

e. Farm Bureau

f. LSU Ag Center(s)

g. NOLO Consulting (Hispanic Farmer Outreach program)

h. MET (NFJP grantee)

i. Houma Nation

j. Farmer's markets in Baton Rouge

k. SeaGrant (LSU Ag Extension)

l. National Center for Farmworker Health

m. Catholic Charities

n. Alianza de Trabajadores de Marisco y Pescado (ATMP) (Seafood Processing Workers' Alliance)

14. The SMA has identified several organizations that are pertinent to the ES complaint and referral system and is building relationships with them:

TYPE	Agency/Name	Address	Telephone	Email/Webpage
MSFWs, Apparent Violations, H-2A & all elevated complaints SMA	State Monitor Advocate (SMA)/ Sefla Fuhrman	Sefla Fuhrman 1001 N 23rd Street, 3rd Floor AO Baton Rouge, LA 70802	(225) 342-2662	E-mail: sfuhrman@lwc.la.gov

TYPE	Agency/Name	Address	Telephone	Email/Webpage
DOL - W&H violations are: Wage & pay disputes. Child Labor violations. W&H	Louisiana Workforce Commission (Child Labor)	The Louisiana Workforce Commission has also compiled the Minor Labor Statutes and Administrative Rules regarding Minor Labor and has printed the same in an "Informational Booklet Concerning Employment of Minors," available online or by calling (225) 342-7824.	(225) 342-7824	
Wage and Hour Division-related violations are those dealing with wages, hours worked, Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, and temporary foreign farm workers. W&H	Wage & Hour Division	New Orleans District Office US Dept. of Labor Wage & Hour Division F. Edward Hebert Building 600 South Maestri Place, Room 615 New Orleans, LA 70130	(504) 589-6171 1-866-4-USWAGE (1-866-487-9243) 504.299.1491 (Voice and Facsimile) 504.939.9038 (Mobile)	https://www.dol.gov/whd/contact_us.htm E-mail: Mouton.troy@dol.gov

TYPE	Agency/Name	Address	Telephone	Email/Webpage
Wage and Hour Division-related violations are those dealing with wages, hours worked, Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, and temporary foreign farm workers. W&H	Escalated W&H from state level, or multiple states	Eden Ramirez Targeted Enforcement Coordinator U. S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division 525 S. Griffin Street, Room 800 Dallas, TX 75202	Phone/Fax: 214-749-2031	E-mail: Ramirez.eden@dol.gov
OSHA violations are those related to on-the-job safety & Whistleblower Protection.	OSHA	OSHA Area Office The federal OSHA office covers private sector employers and workers in Louisiana: Baton Rouge Area Office 9100 Bluebonnet Centre Blvd, Suite 201 Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809	(225) 298-5458 Fax: (225) 298-5457	www.osha.gov
OSHA violations are those related to on-the-job safety & Whistleblower Protection. OSHA	OSHA	Customer Information Officer	(225) 298-5458, ext. 122 1-800-321-OSHA	www.osha.gov

TYPE	Agency/Name	Address	Telephone	Email/Webpage
Discrimination & Disability Issues EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)	New Orleans Field Office Hale Boggs Federal Building 500 Poydras Street, Suite 809 New Orleans, LA 70130 Director: Keith T. Hill	1-800-669-4000 Fax: 504-595-2884 TTY: 504-595-2958 ASL Video Phone: 844-234-5122	www.eeoc.gov
Discrimination	Equal Opportunity & Compliance Division (EOCD)	Louisiana Workforce Commission Evella L. Quiett Compliance Programs Director P. O. Box 94094, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9094	(225) 342-3075 Fax: (225) 342-7961 TDD: (800) 259-5154	equiett@lwc.la.gov
Discrimination	Office of the Governor Louisiana Commission on Human Rights	Dr. Leah Raby Executive Director P.O. Box 94094 Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9094	225-342-6969 Fax: 225-342-2063	lraby@lchrgov.net https://www.Gov.Louisiana.gov
Human Trafficking	Office of the Governor Louisiana Commission on Human Rights	Dr. Leah Raby Executive Director P.O. Box 94094 Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9094	225-342-6969 Fax: 225-342-2063	lraby@lchrgov.net https://www.Gov.Louisiana.gov
Veterans	Veteran's Affairs	https://www.vetaffairs.la.gov/		
Disability Issues	Social Security Disability	Louisiana has 24 Social Security Field Offices, 2 Disability Determination Services offices and 4 Offices of Disability Adjudication and Review.	For a full list of offices and contact numbers, visit https://www.disability-benefits-help.org/social-security-disability-locations/louisiana	

TYPE	Agency/Name	Address	Telephone	Email/Webpage
Unemployment Insurance	Unemployment Insurance	1-866-783-5567	http://www.laworks.net/	
Worker's Compensation	Office of Workers' Compensation Administration	P.O. Box 94040 Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9040	(225) 342-7555 Fax: (225) 342-5665	owca@lwc.la.gov

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:

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

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

As previously stated, the One-Stop system has long utilized customer-based approach to services, offering the full range of available services to all customers and accommodating career goals as much as possible with the resources available. The services are described previously in this Louisiana Combined State Plan. All individuals who come within the One-Stop system are offered the same services at the same level, tailored to meet the customer's career goals. During intake and assessment, staff will ascertain whether the client is an MSFW. MSFWs will then be identified on their registration. The MWFW will be informed of the full range of one-stop services and a plan for services will be developed. MSFWs will also be informed of partners who provide MSFW services for which they may qualify. If the MSFW is put into intensive services, a service plan will be developed, incorporating partner organization services that may be used to enhance the individual's service plan.

Almost 100% of agricultural job orders placed in the One-Stop HiRE system are for H-2A employment. LWC is in the developing plans to make changes within HiRE for job orders marked as H-2A. The changes are intended to improve program record keeping, tracking, and reporting, and increase the number of domestic worker referrals to the job orders. By the end of PY2018, most of the changes should be in place. The plan involves moving parts of the H-2A housing inspection record keeping into HiRE. Currently, H-2A job orders are input into HiRE 75 to 60 days before the date of need, as specified in U.S. Department of Labor rules. This condition creates a disincentive for job seekers to accept the positions when offered, preferring immediate employment instead. Typically, job seekers peruse recent job orders rather than older "stale" job orders for employment. By the time the date

of need approaches, job seekers bypass H-2A job orders for "fresher" job orders. LWC is studying ways H-2A job orders can be "revived", i.e., brought to the front of the list, for active recruitment as the date of need approaches. The intent is to provide greater exposure of the job order with the hopes of increased referrals.

Regional Business Teams, as part of their regional service strategies, and the SMA and H-2 program operators will reach out to agricultural employers to inform them of One-Stop employer services, including the ARS, partner employer services, and services to employees. The Teams will encourage agricultural employer engagement in employment and training opportunities and Rapid Response services. The SMA and H-2 operators continually disseminate to agricultural employers and their agents information on One-Stop employment and training services to MSFWs, MSFW employment rights, worker safety and health, housing, and MSFW partner services.

Locally, One-Stop Centers will coordinate the services of one-stop partners, community based organizations, the state MSFW contacts, MSFW groups, state cooperative extension service, and parish (county) agents, and other agencies and organizations listed above to do the following:

1. Give local presentations on One-Stop services, including the My Life, My Way online self-assessment tool and the LWC Star Jobs portal, both accessible online and through smartphones,

2. Set up and utilize an integrated referral system to provide maximum services to MSFWs,

3. Inform agricultural employers of MSFW services and rights,

4. Encourage agricultural employers to utilize the Agricultural Recruiting System (ARS),

5. Promote the hiring of MSFWs to employers in all sectors, including agricultural,

6. Provide required employer posters and other handouts in the English language and in Spanish,

7. Meet on a regular basis to exchange information, discuss problems, and coordinate efforts,

8. Offer to distribute their information pamphlets during outreach contacts and provide materials for them to distribute to MSFWs,

9. Offer services that are relative to their needs, and

10. Advise them of all employment changes affecting their community.

Additionally, the SMA will continue an ongoing relationship with the LA Farm Bureau Federation and participate in its annual Mid-South Labor Seminar, providing materials or conducting presentations on agricultural labor issues.

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

The Employment Services (ES) Complaint System is being improved and a new policy and system is being developed. Once in effect, it should operate as follows:

Locally, One-Stop Centers display the ES Complaint System poster in the languages most likely spoken by the customers seeking workforce services. The public is also informed of the ES Complaint System during outreach events. The SMA keeps workforce partners informed of the service and coordinates complaint activities with them.

All complaints from MSFWs alleging violations of employment-related standards and laws shall be taken in writing by One-Stop Center staff and sent to the SMA. The staff will attempt a timely resolution of complaints from non-MSFWs, if possible. In the event the staffs are not able to resolve the complaint, the complainant will be timely referred, as appropriate, to agencies and organizations that may play a role in resolving the complaint. The complaint records will be reported quarterly to the SMA. One-Stop staff will consult the SMA in cases where they have questions on the proper resolution of complaints or factors of the complaint indicate the complaint may need the assistance or intervention by the SMA.

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

Annually, the Louisiana One-Stop system receives approximately one dozen non-H-2A agricultural job orders. Several of those tend to be permanent positions from university agricultural research departments.

Although offered to agricultural employers several times each year, none have expressed interest in the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) and prefer to search workers locally through the HIRE system. In the past five years, no agricultural employers have agreed to use the ARS.

Even considering this lack of interest, the SMA will continue to promote the ARS to both H-2A and non-H-2A agricultural employers and farmer organizations. The SMA will continue to encourage One-Stop staff to promote the ARS during their outreach to agricultural employers.

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).

As a non-significant MSFW state, the local One-Stop Centers cooperate and work closely with MET, Inc., and has developed a MOU for the coordinated provision of services. The coordinated services will focus upon:

- Coordinated outreach to MSFWs,
- Properly identifying MSFWs,
- Assessments of needs,
- Coordinated individual service plans designed to leverage funds from each program,
- Co-enrollment when appropriate and advantageous,
- Coordination and referrals to supportive services.

SWA staff and the SMA will maintain contact with the Migrant Education Program (MEP) to promote the program for the children of migrant parents (whether MSFWs or non-agricultural migrants) and to promote One-Stop services to the parents of MEP students and youths in the program. Likewise, the MEP operators may refer people to the One-Stop Centers.

The SMA has made contact with the Catholic Charities Louisiana Office for Refugees (LOR). Although their clients would rarely, if ever, qualify as MSFW, it is possible some may become eligible after resettlement. Also, some may be referred to agricultural employment. The LOR has expressed an interest in partnering with LWC to take advantage of the HiRE labor exchange system. By the end of PY2018, LWC plans to provide LOR staff access to HiRE and include local LOR staff, where appropriate, as partners.

The SMA will promote and encourage the provision and coordination of MSFW services to the One-Stop Centers with MET, Inc., state and local agricultural agencies, farm organizations, and other agricultural stakeholders. The SMA will encourage One-Stop Centers to engage in relationships with these organizations for outreach and the provision of services. In addition to the 25 organizations mentioned in 2(E) of this plan, the SMA will also reach out to the following organizations:

- Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry,
- Louisiana State University (LSU) AgCenter (other extension offices),
- American Sugar Cane League,
- the Louisiana Alligator Advisory Council,
- the Louisiana Crawfish Farmers Association,
- Latino Farmers' Cooperative of Louisiana, Inc.
- Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) Migrant Education,
- University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM) Continuing Education/Delta Community College DeltaLinc,
- Louisiana Community and Trade College System
- Louisiana Educational institutes and universities (e.g. Southern University, University of New Orleans, etc.)
- Louisiana Primary Care Association, Inc.,
- The Louisiana Association of Cooperatives,
- Legal aid organizations,
- Migration and refugee centers,
- Other service or advocacy organizations.

The SMA will continue to coordinate with the LWC Occupational Safety and Health Administration Consultation (OSHA Consultation) section to provide outreach and safety information and training to agricultural employers and employees. Some of the training may be provided either on the job site or in the local area. Safety information and resources will be provided to partners and organizations to hand out to their agricultural clients. LWC will continue to disseminate safety and employment related information through the agricultural network.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT.

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

The AOP and Combined State Plans were made available for public comment on February 14, 2018.

In addition to general comments from the public-at- large, LWC leadership sought input from the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council, The Local Workforce Development Boards, One-Stop Operators, M.E.T., and One-Stop Center staff.

There were no public comments received.

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.

The previous four Program Years (PY2011 - PY2014) were analyzed to determine whether LWC met its goals in the provision of quantitatively proportionate and qualitatively equivalent level of services to MSFWs compared to the whole population of LWC customers. LWC provided services to an average of 207 MSFWs each year. In PY2012, LWC only met two (2) of the five (5) Equity Ratio Indicators. The shortfall was attributable to the fact that during that year, MSFWs were not being properly identified and recorded. Thus the level of services provided to MSFWs was not properly captured in reports. Each year since that time, LWC has met or surpassed its goals for the Equity Ratio Indicators and Minimum Service Level Indicators.

A continuing challenge for the One-Stop staff is identifying who may be an MSFW. Considering that most in the state who may qualify as an MSFW do not consider farm work as their career, they tend to omit farming experience from their resumes, focusing instead upon more desirable occupations. It is suspected that some HIRE registrants qualify as MSFWs but are not identified in the system. Services are provided to them but the services do not count toward the Equity Ratio Indicators and Minimum Service Level Indicators. Simply identifying MSFWs and recording the services provided to them in HIRE should increase both indicators, while providing expanded options for service through partner MSFW programs.

The use of the ES Complaint System and reporting of complaints will be improved upon through new policies and a better defined complaint system. At present in many cases when a complaint arises, the issue is often resolved in-house or the complainant is referred to an organization that can assist in the complaint. With these cases the complaint and resolution or referral goes unrecorded. Further staff training and promotion of the use of the ES Complaint System as described in Outreach Activities (2)(B) above should improve or alleviate any weaknesses in these two areas. Additionally, the SMA will continue to train and encourage One-Stop staff in identifying and reporting MSFWs and services to MSFWs.

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.

According to the State Monitor Advocate (SMA) PY 2016 Annual Summary of services to MSFWs (the last PY for which an annual summary is available) Data: MSFW Accomplishments

During PY 2016, the SWA and its One-Stop partners contacted 271 MSFWs, a 27% increase from the previous year. The goal was a 5% increase, which indicates the SWA surpassed the goal. Of this number, 28 were referred to jobs, a 29% decrease from the previous year. Although undetermined, it is possible this decrease is related the effect of reduced oil prices on a general downturn in the Louisiana economy. A greater focus is being placed upon this indicator for PY 2016.

It is estimated there are approximately 920 MSFWs in Louisiana, with greater concentrations in the northeastern quadrant of the state and Tangipahoa Parish. It is estimated over 90% of these workers are U.S. citizens who are seasonal, non-migrant workers and whose primary language is English. On average 240 of the MSFWs in the state receive some kind of service from the One Stop system annually.

During PY 2016, all but one minimum service level were met each quarter, except two - Placed in a Job and Field Checks Conducted. Field checks are to be conducted on a certain ratio of agricultural job orders where domestic workers are hired. One indicator - Reviews of significant offices - is not applicable in Louisiana because Louisiana has no significant offices. Also, during PY 2016, no MSFW or MSFW-related complaints were received.

During PY 2016, MSFWs comprised 1.3% of the total number of job seekers served through the Louisiana One-Stop system. Five indicators are used to determine whether services to MSFWs are qualitatively equivalent to non-MSFWs. During PY 2016 LWC met one of the equity indicators.

Table 23: Program Year 2016 Equity Ratio Indicators

http://www.laworks.net/Images/WIOA/2018StatePlan-Table_23.jpg

While some of the goals of the previous AOP were achieved, and captured in SMA Summary reports, many were not. The main reasons why goals were not achieved were because the SMA's duties were combined with the H2A program, and the increasing demand for foreign workers overshadowed monitoring and advocacy activities. By hiring a full-time SMA, as well as 2 part-time bilingual outreach workers the goals of this AOP should be achievable.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

The SMA has played an active role in developing the AOP with the SWA.

Services Provided to Employers and MSFWs through the One-Stop System

The SMA will promote and encourage the provision and coordination of MSFW services to the AJCs with Motivation Education & Training Inc. (MET, Inc.) (the state WIOA Section 167, National Farmworker Jobs Program [NFJP] grantee), state and local agricultural agencies, farm organizations and other agricultural stakeholders. These organizations will include:

- Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry
- Louisiana State University (LSU) AgCenter
- Louisiana Farm Bureau
- American Sugar Cane League
- Louisiana Alligator Advisory Council
- Louisiana Crawfish Farmers Association
- Latino Farmers' Cooperative of Louisiana Inc.
- Louisiana Department of Education Migrant Education
- University of Louisiana-Monroe Continuing Education/Delta Community College DeltaLinc
- Louisiana Primary Care Association Inc.
- USDOL Wage and Hour Division
- USDOL Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- Louisiana Association of Cooperatives
- Legal aid organizations
- Migration and refugee centers
- Other organizations

The monitor advocate will continue to coordinate with the LWC Occupational Safety and Health Administration Consultation (OSHA Consultation) section to provide outreach and safety information and training to agricultural employers and employees. Some of the training may be provided either on the job site or in the local area. Safety information and resources will be provided to partners and organizations to hand out to their agricultural clients. LWC will continue to disseminate safety and employment-related information through the agricultural network.

Services Provided to Agricultural Employers and MSFWs through the ONE-STOP CENTERs

Efforts by LWC to promote and facilitate the provision of services to MSFWs and increase the number of MSFWs in labor exchange activities will be conducted through the AJCs. Locally, the centers will coordinate the services of One-Stop partners, community based organizations, the state MSFW contacts, MSFW groups, state cooperative extension service, parish (county) agents and other agencies and organizations listed above to do the following:

1. Give local presentations on AJC services, including the LWC Star Jobs portal, accessible online and through smartphones.

2. Set up and utilize an integrated referral system to provide maximum services to MSFWs.

3. Encourage employers to utilize the Agricultural Recruiting System (ARS).

4. Provide required employer posters and other handouts in the English language and in Spanish.

5. Meet on a regular basis to exchange information, discuss problems, and coordinate efforts.

6. Offer to distribute their information pamphlets during outreach contacts and provide materials for them to distribute to MSFWs.

7. Offer services that are relative to their needs.

8. Advise them of all employment changes affecting their community.

LWC has partnered with Motivation, Education and Training (MET) to assist Louisiana in providing increased services to MSFWs and farmworker employers. One MET, Inc. office is co-located in an AJC.

The SMA will work with LWC administrative and local office staff on issues of concern (compliance with equity indicators, reviving local interest, proper documentation of services, etc.) This technical assistance is provided to all AJC staff as needed.

The SMA will provide training and follow-up on the outreach and provision of services to MSFWs to AJC staff throughout the state. The staff will be encouraged to query clients to better identify MSFWs and record them in the HiRE system. Staff will provide the full array of employment services, including the labor-exchange system, of which the ARS is a part. The labor exchange system provides job openings in both agricultural and non-agricultural employment. Other services, such as training or supportive services, provide a pathway for MSFWs to transition to higher-wage jobs and permanent year-round employment in non-agricultural work.

All complaints from MSFWs alleging violations of employment-related standards and laws shall be taken in writing by the AJC staff, and referred to the SMA. The local staff will attempt a timely resolution of non-MSFW complaints, if possible. In the event the local staffs are not able to resolve the complaint, the complainant will be referred, as appropriate, to the USDOL Wage & Hour Division or other agencies and organizations that may play a role in resolving complaints. The complaint records will be reported quarterly to the SMA.

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)).

Effective July 1, 2016, the Louisiana Community and Technical College (LCTCS), WorkReady U (WRU) aligned the adult education content standards with the Louisiana College and Career Readiness Standards and the state-mandated, Academic Standards + Grade Level Expectations curriculum for public schools under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended [20 U.S.C. 6311 (b)(1)] through the adoption and implementation of the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for Adult Education. The standards alignment provides rigorous content standards that specify what learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition and also takes into consideration alignment with other standards, including high school equivalency, enrollment in non-remedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions and occupational and industry skill standards and certifications widely used and recognized by business and industry.

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.

Adult Education Funding>The Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), WorkReady U (WRU), is responsible for administering Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds to eligible providers and providing program/performance oversight to grantees. As the administrative/fiscal agency, LCTCS/WRU conducted a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP), Grant Application, process to provide funding to eligible local entities for the provision of adult education services as described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014: Title II: Common Elements under Distribution of Funds. The RFP was the statewide procurement method through which WRU identified, assessed and awarded three-year multi-year grants to eligible providers throughout the state for the delivery of adult education services that includes academic instruction and educational services to eligible individuals. An eligible individual, defined in WIOA, Title II, is an individual who has attained 16 years of age; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and who is basic skills deficient; who does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or is an English language learner, below the postsecondary level that increases the individual's ability to: • Read, write and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; • Transition to postsecondary education and training; and • Obtain employment.

The full and open competition was consistent with the standards of Subpart C, CFR 200.319. All activities funded under WIOA are authorized, approved and administered by the LCTCS, WorkReady U. WorkReady U ensured that all eligible providers had direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. The grant competition was publicized through a variety of print and electronic media throughout the state. Information was shared through the LCTCS communications office via posting on the LCTCS website, social media outlets and other means of available communication.

LCTCS used the same application process for all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243. This ensured that all applications were evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. LCTCS ensured that all eligible providers had direct and equitable access to apply for grants. See Title I, Common Elements, (III.b.5.B.ii) Direct and Equitable Access.

As required in Section 427 of GEPA, each applicant provided a description of the agency's process to ensure equitable access to and participation in, the WIOA Title II adult education

program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. LCTCS has approved state policies that provide for equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, accessibility to, participation in, treatment in or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. LCTCS approved state policies are mandates for the LCTCS state office and all programs and activities funded by LCTCS, inclusive of WIOA Title II grantees. LCTCS/WRU will monitor local program compliance for Section 427 of GEPA.

WIOA, Title II defines eligible provider as an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals and may include: • A local education agency. • A community-based or faith-based organization. • A volunteer literacy organization. • An institution of higher education. • A public or private nonprofit agency. • A library. • A public housing authority. • A nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and literacy services. • A consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries or authorities described above. • A partnership between an employer and an entity described above.

All applications received were evaluated using the 13 considerations in WIOA section 231(e). The evaluation of each grant application involved an intense assessment of the ability of the eligible provider to comply with the expectations and statutes described within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act inclusive of: (a) meeting the literacy needs of the area; and (b) demonstrating past effectiveness in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially those individuals who have low levels of literacy, participants with disabilities; refugees, dislocated youth and foster care youth, individuals with low literacy skills, displaced homemakers, ex-offenders, individuals with cultural barriers and individuals with a variety of barriers to employment. As a result of the evaluation process, LCTCS funded twenty-eight (28) eligible providers comprised of: (a) local educational agencies; (b) community colleges, (c) faith-based and community-based organizations, and (d) correctional facilities in fiscal year 2017-2018. The grant cycle is a minimum of three years, and all providers are subject to the same funding cycle: Year One — July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018; Year Two-July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019; Year Three-July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. Eligible providers applied to receive adult education funding for the delivery of any of the following adult education and literacy activities: • Adult education. • Literacy. • Workplace adult education and literacy activities. • English language and acquisition activities. • Integrated English literacy and civics education. • Workforce preparation activities. • Integrated education and training.

Federal Definitions and Allowable Services/Activities

In Louisiana, adult education means 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 recognized equivalent; transition to postsecondary education and training and obtain employment.

Literacy means an individual's ability to read, write and speak in English, compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual and in society.

Workplace adult education and literacy activities means adult education and literacy activities offered by an eligible provider in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an off-site location that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce through the improvement of literacy skills.

An English-language acquisition program is a program of instruction designed to help eligible individuals who are English-language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking and comprehension of the English language; that leads to attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and transition to postsecondary education and training or employment.

Integrated education and training (IET) means a service approach that provides three components simultaneously, concurrently, and contextually: (1) adult education and literacy (2) workforce preparation activities, and (3) workforce training. The IET must be a part of a career pathway with a single set of learning objectives for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement which may be any one of the approved WIOA training services defined in section 134(c)(3)(D) of the Act.

The Louisiana Career Pathway model provides a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that align with the skill needs of industries in the region. The model prepares adults for success by organizing education, training and other services to support their particular needs including: counseling to accomplish goals; educational training and workforce preparation that is offered simultaneously, concurrently and contextually with in specific occupation or occupational cluster; allowance for attaining a recognized high school equivalency credential; and entrance or advancement within a specific occupation or occupational cluster. Integrated education and training services will be of sufficient quality and intensity will be based on the most rigorous research available and will consist of the following services/activities: • a minimum of two career pathway programs enrolling students, by July 1, 2017, that provide the opportunity for students to earn college credit; • basic skills services that support concurrently integrated and contextualized with the workforce training program of study and aligned with a single set of learning objectives and specific integrated activities; • basic skills workforce preparation activities, workforce training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of that individual to the extent practicable; • include a logical progression/sequence of courses that are applicable to the target credential; • lead to the attainment of industry-based and/or academic credentials; • partnerships with business and industry as well as regional economic development partners in order to meet both current and future sector needs; and • multiple entry and exit points, flexible scheduling, alternative class times and locations, stackable and portable credentials and/or credit hours, and the innovative use of technology customized for the particular needs of adults.

Each funded program demonstrated a commitment to provide appropriate wrap-around support services to students enrolled in the IET program. These services will include, but are not limited to tutoring or other academic supports, college navigation support, and career planning,

Integrated English literacy and civics education (IELCE) means education services provided to English-language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults to achieve competency in the

English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English-language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and may include workforce training. See Title II — Adult Education and Literacy Programs (d) Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program.

Workforce-preparation activities means activities, programs or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into, completion of postsecondary education or training or employment.

Federal funds may be used to increase the level of non-federal funds that would be available in the absence of federal funds and, in no case, replace those non-federal funds. Federal funds must not be used for the purpose of supplanting, only for supplementing.

Louisiana is focused on performance to ensure that funds are used effectively to serve customers and produce positive results. WRU implemented a funding formula for state/federal adult education funds. The formula is designed to consider the scope of services provided in the local program and performance as compared to established benchmarks as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds. Performance benchmarks and performance standards were established with the expectation that grantees will maintain or exceed performance standards through effective service delivery and innovation.

Evaluating the RFP

The assessment of each grant application involved an intense evaluation of the ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy needs of the area, and to comply with the expectations and statutes described within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Application review consisted of a multi-tier process: (1) reviewers were comprised of at least one WRU state staff, representative(s) from core partner entities, internal/external reader(s) with adult education experience; and (2) local workforce development boards (LWDBs) reviewed the application to determine whether the activities in the application were consistent with and aligned to the approved local plan and provided recommendations to promote further alignment when applicable in accordance with Section 107(d)(11)(B)(i)(I, II) of WIOA and 34 CFR §463.21(b)(1, 2). Training and technical assistance were provided to each reviewer by the WRU staff. Each reviewer received the local application, access to the local and regional workforce development plan and scoring rubric to evaluate the applications. After the individual review period, all reviewers convened for a final group review at which time the local workforce development board application reviews were taken into consideration in the final determination.

All applications were scored based on the applicant's ability to comply with the expectations and statues described within the thirteen (13) federal evaluation factors required under WIOA and described in Title II, Sec. 231 (e) listed below:

1. The ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy and English-language needs identified for the population in the area, including individuals who have low levels of

literacy skills or who are English-language learners. Particular emphasis will be given to the provider's ability to provide targeted service to individuals with barriers to employment.

2. The eligible provider's ability to provide service to individuals with a (physical or learning) disability.

3. The eligible provider's demonstrated effectiveness in providing literacy instruction, including its ability to meet state-adjusted levels of performance and improve the literacy levels of eligible individuals.

4. The eligible provider's alignment with the WIOA local plan.

5. The depth, intensity and rigor of the programs and activities offered by the eligible provider. The proposed program must incorporate instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction. Attention will be given to the extent to which the eligible provider incorporates rigorous research for attaining substantial learning gains in the grant proposal and the development of the literacy program itself.

6. The extent to which the eligible provider's program is based on intense research, best practices and effective educational practice.

7. The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates the effective use of technology for instruction to include distance education toward students' improved performance.

8. The eligible provider's demonstrated integration of contextualized instruction to blend literacy skills and preparation for transition to post-secondary education or entry into the workplace. Particular attention will be given to activities that promote and lead to economic self-sufficiency and the ability to exercise the full rights of citizenship.

9. The qualifications and expertise of the eligible provider's instructors, counselors and administrative staff. All instructors must hold, at minimum, a post-secondary degree and participate in the WorkReady U instructor-certification program within one year of employment. The eligible provider must also demonstrate its ability and intent to provide high-quality professional development to instructors and staff toward the improvement of student performance.

10. The eligible provider's collaboration with other available education, training and social service resources in the community. Particularly, the eligible provider should have, or have the means to establish, meaningful partnerships with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, One-Stop Centers, job training programs and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries for the development of career pathways.

11. The flexibility of program scheduling offered by the eligible provider, including coordination (when available) with federal, state and local support services such as child care, transportation, mental health services and career planning.

12. The eligible provider's management information system; the expectation will be that the eligible provider will use the state-administered designated MIS for all grant related data collection and reporting.

13. The demonstrated need within the area occupied by the eligible provider for English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

LCTCS will 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.

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.

From funds made available under Section 222(a)(1), LCTCS, WorkReady U conducted a full and open competition specifically for Corrections Education funding (Section 225) that was consistent with the standards of Subpart C, CFR 200.319. All activities funded under WIOA are authorized, approved and administered by the LCTCS, WorkReady U. Applicants had to establish that Section 225 funds would be utilized to serve criminal offenders in a correctional institution as defined in WIOA: any prison; jail; reformatory; work farm;

detention center; halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center or any other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

WorkReady U ensured that all eligible providers had direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. See Title I, Common Elements, (III.b.5.B.ii) Direct and Equitable Access. The grant competition was publicized through a variety of print and electronic media throughout the state. Information was shared through the LCTCS communications office via posting on the LCTCS website, social media outlets and other means of available communication.

LCTCS used the same application process for all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243. This ensured that all applications were evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria.

As required in Section 427 of GEPA, each applicant provided a description of the agency's process to ensure equitable access to and participation in, the WIOA Title II adult education program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. LCTCS has approved state policies that provide for equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, accessibility to, participation in, treatment in or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. LCTCS approved state policies are mandates for the LCTCS state office and all programs and activities funded by LCTCS, inclusive of WIOA Title II grantees. LCTCS/WRU will monitor local program compliance for Section 427 of GEPA.

The review of proposals included rating responses to the 13 considerations in Title II of WIOA, in addition to the description of how programs will design academic programs to support the following services/activities:

(1) Adult education and literacy activities. See VI.b — Local Activities, Federal Definitions and Allowable Services/Activities.

(2) Special education. Funded programs will comply with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and partner with mandatory partners such as Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Rehabilitation and secondary partners, such as Louisiana Department of Education to eliminate barriers to education and/or employment.

(3) Secondary school credit. Title II resides under the jurisdiction of LCTCS while secondary school credit falls under the jurisdiction of the Louisiana Department of Education. LCTCS will partner with the Louisiana Department of Education and the Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) to ensure that all eligible students receive Title II educational services. Funded programs will provide instructional services/activities that will prepare students to earn a high school equivalency credential.

(4) Integrated education and training;

(5) Career pathways:

(6) Concurrent enrollment. See VI.b — Local Activities, Federal Definitions and Allowable Services/Activities

(7) Peer tutoring. Funded programs will provide training for specified offenders to serve as peer tutors in adult education and CTE classes.

(8) Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism. Allowable activities to assist with reducing recidivism may include: (a) providing educational counseling and/or case management; (b) developing plans for post-release education program participation; (c) assisting students in identifying and applying for participation in post-release programs; and/or (d) performing direct outreach to community-based program providers on behalf of re-entering students. Funds may not be used for cost for participation in post-release programs or services.

LCTCS will not use less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contacts under section 231 and to carry out section 225, Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals, of which not more than 20 percent of such amount shall be available to carry out section 225.

As a result of the evaluation process, there were six successful applicants under Section 225 that were funded to provide Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals as a result of the competitive, multi-year request for proposal using the process described in the Common Elements: Distribution of Funds; Title II. Through the RFP procurement process, the successful applicants demonstrated the ability to provide services that support correctional education activities as defined in WIOA.

Programs that do not meet established minimum standards in the first year will be expected to demonstrate and document substantial improvement toward meeting those standards. Using the approved statewide data management system, monitoring results, and other documentation, WRU will determine and apply requirements for program improvement in the subsequent grant cycles. Minimum standards will be determined initially based on data collected during the first year and will be raised with each new grant cycle. Programs that do not demonstrate and document substantial improvements during each year of the multi-year grant cycle may not be eligible to receive funding in subsequent years of the cycle.

Each eligible provider that receives funds provided under section 225 to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution shall give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five (5) years of participation in the program.

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.

WorkReady U established eight pilot programs under Section 243 of WIOA that offer Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Programs as a result of the competitive, multi-year request for proposal process specifically for integrated literacy and civics education funds using the process described in the Common Elements: Distribution of Funds; Title II. Through the RFP procurement process, the successful applicants

demonstrated the ability to provide integration and alignment of services that support the following literacy and English language acquisition activities:

• Civics education instruction that provides assistance to eligible students to become active and informed parents, workers, and community members; • Rights and Responsibilities of citizenship. • Integrated education and training that provides training opportunities to eligible individuals seeking workforce training for the workplace in combination with English Literacy instruction; and • Advanced English literacy instruction that provides training opportunities to eligible individuals seeking workforce training, including professionals with degrees and/or credentials from outside the United States. State-approved English Language Proficiency Standards will be utilized for literacy instruction.

WorkReady U made funds available under Section 211(a)(2)(b) for the delivery of integrated English literacy and civics education in combination with integrated education and training activities to adults seeking workforce training.

The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program will engage students in purposeful use of the language. The skills provided through this funding source will assist students in obtaining citizenship, achieve basic life skills needed to enhance employment, function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States.

Each funded program under this section is designed to provide the following services:

(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.

However, English language learners seeking English language proficiency and civics education but not seeking workforce training, should not be excluded or discourage from participation in the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program.

In the evaluation of the applications, WorkReady U considered whether an eligible provider demonstrated the need for these types of services in a designated service delivery area. Data sources could include tables from the US Census Bureau, reports from the Office of Immigration Services, documentation of prior participation in these types of services or other data.

The term “integrated English literacy and civics education” means education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and may include workforce training.

An evidence-based approach using the framework of Integrated Education and Training, Louisiana Career Pathways, will be used for those unskilled or under-skilled adults in our state who are non-native English language learners. Programs will identify instructors from ESL and Workforce programs that will engage in the instructional model to be used.

Eligible providers demonstrated in their application for section 243 funds the manner in which services will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities. These integrated education and training activities can be provided directly or through collaboration with Workforce programs or other community partners.

Funded providers serving eligible individuals for whom integrated English literacy and civics education and integrated education and training are appropriate have the flexibility to co-enroll the eligible individuals in other integrated education and training programs within the local or regional workforce development area funding through sources other than section 243.

English language learners seeking English language proficiency and civics education but not seeking workforce training, should not be excluded or discourage from participation in the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program.

Funded providers designed programs that deliver the activities under WIOA including the integration of literacy and English-language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers. Eligible providers must demonstrate their ability to prepare English-language learners for unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and how they will integrate the program with the local workforce development system to carry out the activities of the program.

The English Literacy and Civics Program is designed with the purpose of improving the productivity and obtaining gainful employment through the improvement of skills of non-native English learners. Working with employers throughout their community, programs will know the in-demand industries and occupations that can lead to economic self-sufficiency.

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.

LCTCS required all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243 to use the same application process. This process ensured that all applications were assessed using the same evaluation criteria.

LCTCS' full and open competition was consistent with the standards of Subpart C, CFR 200.319. All eligible providers had direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. See Title I, Common Elements, (III.b.5.B.ii) Direct and Equitable Access.

The grant competition was publicized through a variety of print and electronic media throughout the state. Information was shared through the LCTCS communications office via posting on the LCTCS website, social media outlets and other means of available communication.

LCTCS used the same application process for all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243. This ensured that all applications were evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria.

As required in Section 427 of GEPA, each applicant provided a description of the agency's process to ensure equitable access to and participation in, the WIOA Title II adult education program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. LCTCS has approved state policies that provide for equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, accessibility to, participation in, treatment in or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. LCTCS approved state policies are mandates for the LCTCS state office and all programs and activities funded by LCTCS, inclusive of WIOA Title II grantees. LCTCS/WRU will monitor local program compliance for Section 427 of GEPA.

LCTCS used the 13 considerations specified in section 231 of WIOA to fund eligible providers by incorporating each of the considerations into the narrative portion of the application. Successful applicants provided a narrative that demonstrated the program design and service delivery model to deliver each consideration.

Funds are being used to support the operational expenses of the local IELCE programs, including teacher salaries and benefits, classroom supplies, textbooks, and other AEFLA allowable expenditures, to carry out instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation all in combination with integrated education and training. LCTCS will has issued guidance and technical assistance to funded providers to assist in ensuring that all required components as set forth in 34 CFR Part 463 Subpart G of the regulations are included in the program's design.

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.

WorkReadyU reserves the right to use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) for the permissible state leadership activities outlined in Section 223 (such as the support of state or regional networks of literacy resource centers, the development and implementation of technology applications or the development and dissemination of curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction). Not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds made available will be used to carry out these adult-education and literacy activities to develop or enhance the adult-education system of the state.

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

LCTCS will use a strategic approach to designate State Leadership funds to develop and enhance the adult-education system of the state. Funds made available under adult education and literacy activities, AEFLA §223, for state leadership activities will support local program implementation and continuous improvement, innovation, integration and alignment of services with the workforce system, employers and postsecondary education and training. State leadership activities are critical to system enhancement and capacity

building to support transformation into a fully integrated component of the Louisiana workforce system. State leadership funds will be used to support the following activities:

A) The alignment of adult-education and literacy activities with other core programs and One-Stop partners, including eligible providers, including the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.

WorkReadyU will work collaboratively with other core programs and partner agencies to provide comprehensive and wraparound services to program participants. Collaboration with multiple partners at both the state and local level supports service expansion for the adult learners, prevents duplication of services, and enables partners to provide added value to participants through service alignment.

B) The establishment and operation of high quality professional development programs through the WRU Regional Resource Centers (RRC) to improve the instruction provided pursuant to required local activities, including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel and dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs.

WRU will continue to dedicate funds to the RRCs to provide targeted professional development based upon a statewide needs assessment, research regarding best practices and federal recommendations. WorkReadyU will survey local providers to determine areas in which there may be a gap in knowledge or a need for improvement. From these results, WRU will coordinate and execute broad-based training through a variety of modalities to assist program leaders and teachers in areas such as program improvement, instructional techniques, integrated education and training, college and career readiness standards, transition to postsecondary education and employment and the infusion of technology into instruction. Professional development may include:

• An annual administrators meeting, wherein local program administrators are given an overview of changes in policy and related practices, budget management and reporting requirements; • An annual statewide professional development conference for a variety of adult-education personnel; • Regional institutes to address instructional needs in the areas of adult education and literacy, ELA, Integrated Education & Training, Integrated EL/Civics and more and • Webinars/teleconferences.

C) The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult-education and literacy activities receiving funds under this title, including: 1. The development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English-language acquisition programs, distance education and staff training; 2. Strengthening partnerships at the local level to provide access to employment, education and training services and 3. Assistance in the use of technology to improve system efficiencies.

WorkReadyU will deliver technical assistance to eligible providers to enhance program effectiveness, increase the ability of providers to meet established performance standards and fulfill obligations associated with being a One-Stop partner. WorkReadyU will provide

professional development/technical assistance via phone, webinar, teleconference and on-site trainings. Targeted technical assistance will focus on recruitment and intake, student engagement, data management and reporting, testing procedures, and transition to postsecondary education and employment. To ensure that local providers are adequately prepared to foster continuous improvement and maintain an ability to meet the needs of Louisiana's workforce, WorkReadyU will:

• Deliver technical assistance to increase the ability of instructors to provide impactful instruction and obtain desired results in key areas including reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English-language acquisition programs and distance education. Technical assistance will incorporate techniques gleaned from contemporary research and resources related to best practices in andragogy. Topics may include integrated education and training and college and career readiness standards.

• Provide state and local-level information regarding the role of adult education as a key component in the delivery of One-Stop Center services. Training will include resources to enable a local provider to establish, build upon or maintain effective relationships with other core providers within the local area. Topics may include referral systems, data sharing/reporting, integrating education with occupational training and transition strategies for post-secondary enrollment or employment.

• Provide training related to the use of technology to improve classroom effectiveness and program outcomes. Training may focus on National Reporting System (NRS) processes and the effective use of the statewide data system in order to maintain accurate student data. WorkReadyU may also provide technical assistance to prepare instructors and program administrators to identify and utilize technology to enhance classroom experiences.

D) The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the state.

Evaluation of provider services is a key priority for the state. WorkReadyU staff has developed a strategic evaluation and monitoring process that draws from best practices. The multiphase evaluation process maintains oversight of local adult education providers and measures effectiveness of the adult education and literacy activities to optimize the return on investment of state/federal funds for the adult education and literacy activities. WorkReadyU will utilize the following process for monitoring and evaluating program improvement measures:

1. Desk Monitoring: WRU-designated staff conducts quarterly desk reviews of local program data using the approved statewide data management system. Areas of review include overall performance and outcomes, assessment data, attendance and compliance. Targeted technical assistance will be determined from desk monitor results in an effort to address the specific needs of any programs in need of improvement.

2. Programmatic/Fiscal On-site Monitoring: WRU will conduct on-site reviews of twenty percent of grant recipients each fiscal year. Programs are identified for on-site monitoring through a comprehensive risk analysis based on the following factors: (1) desk monitoring; (2) the need to verify data quality and program expenditures; (3) consistent low performance on NRS indicators in several categories; (4) prospective noncompliance with grant requirements identified through review of programmatic and fiscal reports, or

ongoing communications with the program; (4) unresolved audit findings; (5) ongoing lack of progress in resolving required actions from prior monitoring visit; (6) significant staff turnover in the program and (7) recent or newly-established programs. Compliance with Section 427 of GEPA will be included in the on-site review process. A formal written report will be provided, and each program will be required to respond to areas that need improvement. Technical assistance, professional development and other support will be provided until support is no longer needed.

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.

Local providers are accountable to LCTCS, WorkReady U to meet the standards of quality for administration and instruction as outline by WorkReady U. Program effectiveness, services and activities of local recipients of funds will be assessed through systematic evaluation of local programs. Performance outcomes for each provider will meet or exceed the established levels of performance for each core measure each fiscal year to ensure the highest quality service to adult learners who participate in WorkReady U programs. WRU will assess the quality of providers of adult-education and literacy activities through data reviews and on-site program reviews.

Performance Accountability assesses the effectiveness of grantees in achieving continuous improvement of adult education and literacy activities. The performance outcome measures shall consist of the following core indicators:

1. Measurable Skills Gains (MSGs);

2. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

3. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;

4. The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

5. The percentage of program participants who obtain either a recognized postsecondary

credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year of exit from the program;

6. The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or

training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who

are achieving measurable skill gains towards such a credential or employment; and

7. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause (iv).

Setting Performance Targets

Each fiscal year Louisiana negotiates proposed target percentages for each of the core indicators of performance with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE). Each local eligible program is responsible for meeting or exceeding the negotiated performance targets. Each program shall analyze progress towards meeting the targets on an ongoing basis. Each program must utilize the Louisiana approved standardized assessments which provide the framework needed to measure program effectiveness.

Data Collection and Analysis

Local programs are required to collect data on the program's performance and are required to analyze it to determine progress towards meeting the targets and areas of improvement. Analysis should include a review of academic, employment, secondary credential, and postsecondary measures. Local programs must assure that National Reporting System of Adult Education data quality standards are met.

Program Evaluation

The State will evaluate annually the effectiveness of the adult education and literacy activities, based on the core performance measures, through activities and processes listed below. Strategies, processes and barriers to attaining the performance levels will be reviewed, as well as qualitative and quantitative data. The annual evaluation will address the extent to which local providers implement the activities specified in Section 225, 231 and 243 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The purpose of these activities, strategies and processes is to assess the effectiveness of the State to achieve continuous improvement of adult education and literacy activities and to optimize the return on investment of Federal funds in adult education and literacy activities. The results of the valuation will provide relevant information to determine achievement of levels of performance for each of the core indicators for the local providers.

a. Data Collection. The state-approved MIS system shall be used by all eligible entities receiving funds under this title. Providers shall enter data monthly during a program year. Data will be reviewed for compliance with performance measures and expectations for the delivery of services as approved in the individual application. LCTCS and Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) will data match placement/wage data for students entered in the state-approved MIS system.

LCTCS has instituted a comprehensive data system, Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP), for all colleges. The ERP System will provide the capability to match data from disparate sources and produce analytical and actionable information to drive programmatic decisions.

b. Review Process.

Desk Monitoring: Desk monitoring is conducted twice a year, at a minimum, by WRU staff. Desk monitoring relies primarily on data that is collected and reported by the local programs in the statewide approved data management system. Using a structured format, local programs provide monthly data to the state office where state staff can review the data to guide program review activities, inform technical assistance, identify risk-assessment

areas, and promote program improvement. The system is able to produce a series of reports that allow WRU staff to examine demographic, assessment, and academic information.

Programmatic/Fiscal Onsite Monitoring: WRU staff will conduct formal monitoring visits of funded programs on a prescribed schedule each year. Programs are identified for onsite monitoring through a comprehensive risk analysis based on the following factors: (1) desk monitoring; (2) need to verify data quality and program expenditures; (3) consistent low performance on core indicators in several categories; (4) prospective noncompliance with grant requirements identified through review of programmatic and fiscal reports, or ongoing communications with the program; (4) unresolved audit findings; (5) ongoing lack of progress in resolving required actions from prior monitoring visit; (6) significant staff turnover in the program; and (7) recent or newly established programs.

The goal for State onsite monitoring visits are to: (1) ensure that implementation of the program service/activities as outlines in the RFP have been fully executed; (2) ensure that programs meet AEFLA requirements; (3) improve the quality of federally-funded activities; (4) provide assistance identifying and resolving accountability problems; (5) ensure the accuracy, validity, and reliability of data collection and data reporting as well as policies and procedures for program accountability; and (6) compliance with Section 427 of GEPA.

Corrective Action Plan

Upon completion of the review, a formal written report will be provided to the program administrator. If a program fails to meet performance goals or other state and/or federal programmatic requirements, a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) will be required to outline the course of action for program improvement. The local program will be given a period of 30 days to respond in writing to the findings. WRU will provide technical assistance throughout the corrective process and by the end of a designated timeframe, programs should be able to correct the identified issues, end their respective CAP and improve the quality of the program. WRU will provide ongoing technical assistance, professional development and other support until the required steps of the plans are completed.

Programs that fail to comply with grant requirements and regulations may not be eligible to receive funding in subsequent years of the cycle and/or funds may be terminated.

Evaluating Professional Development

LCTCS, WorkReady U provides varied professional development opportunities through the:

(1) Regional Resource Centers (RRC);

(2) Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) Conference; and

(3) Louisiana Association for Public, Community, and Adult Education (LAPCAE) Conference

Regional Resource Centers

In order to advance the WorkReady U (WRU) mission, promote learning communities, and pursue high quality adult education practices, the Regional Resource Center (RRC) regions have been aligned with the Louisiana Workforce Development Board (LWDB) regions. Regional Resource Centers will: (1) facilitate professional development (PD) opportunities; (2) provide resources and support; and (3) offer technical assistance (TA) to increase student performance and program enrollment.

Targeted trainings based upon needs assessments are beneficial to an individual's professional growth, a program's improvement, and core partner relationships. WRU prefers a three-pronged approach to PD in which participants are provided with material beforehand, training occurs, and then there is follow-up after the training in the form of Communities of Practice, or Training of Trainers.

Each year's focus areas arise from national trends and challenges, state goals, and program/partner needs in an effort to better prepare our students, staff, partners, and programming for the new landscape in adult education.

Professional development activities focus on:

(1) aligning adult education and literacy activities with core partners and program services

(2) improving the overall service delivery to students, including -

(a) online instructor courses

(b) teacher observation/evaluation training

(c) teacher-leader cohorts working with national experts to capture research-based best practices for instruction

(d) supervisor training

(e) support staff (including data entry and intake/orientation employees)

(3) improving adult education and literacy activities, with regard to—

(a) the development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training;

(b) strengthening partnership at the local level to provide access to employment, education, and training services;

(c) effective uses of technology to improve system efficiencies; and

(d) effective IET and IELCE models.

(4) training on the monitoring and evaluation of program quality and adult education and literacy activities

(5) certification and recertification on administration of NRS approved assessments adopted in the WRU Assessment Policy guide.

(6) WRU Recipient Grant Management Handbook

(7) collecting and disseminating best practices both at onsite meetings and virtually via -

(a) online forums/discussion boards

(b) virtual meetings/calls

Participant evaluations are collected for all professional development activities. Participants respond to items regarding:

(1) the training as a whole - objectives, materials, environment, presentation; (2) the immediate application in classrooms, programs, workforce

State staff, along with RRC leads, review this information to plan for future trainings and potential technical assistance. The team looks at: cost effectiveness; return on investment; transferability of skills/knowledge; and benefit of students/clients from Professional Development outcomes.

LCTCS and LAPCAE Annual Conferences

WorkReady U supports both annual conferences geared towards adult education in Louisiana. Professional development opportunities for instructors (full-time, part-time and/or volunteers), supervisors, partners, and employers consist of:

- development and implementation of technology applications, and/or distance education, including support the use of instructional technology
- development and dissemination of curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction for adult learners
- development of contextualized curricula and effective models for integrated education, training and career pathways
- development and implementation of a comprehensive model that assists in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education
- integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers
- activities to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities
- identifying curriculum frameworks and aligning rigorous content standards that specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition, taking into consideration the following:

o College and Career Readiness Standards, English Language Proficiency Standards; OCTAE Employability Framework;

o The current adult skills and literacy assessments used in the State;

o The primary indicators of performance described in section 116 of WIOA;

o Standards and academic requirements for enrollment in nonremedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education supported by the State; and

o The content of occupational and industry skill standards widely used by business and industry in the State.

- development and pilot of strategies geared to improving teacher quality and retention
- development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners based on valid research

Each conference committee collects evaluations from participants to:

- guide the direction and focus of the following year's event; and
- inform state staff of underlying needs.

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 **Louisiana Community and Technical College System**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Dr. Monty Sullivan**

Title of Authorized Representative: **President**

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.

As required in Section 427 of GEPA, each applicant provided a description of the agency's process to ensure equitable access to and participation in, the WIOA Title II adult education program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. LCTCS has approved state policies that provide for equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, accessibility to, participation in, treatment in or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. LCTCS approved state policies are mandates for the LCTCS state office and all programs and activities funded by LCTCS, inclusive of WIOA Title II grantees. Compliance with Section 427 of GEPA will be included in the on-site review process.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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 Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC), which is the state rehabilitation council, met with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) quarterly as a part of the council meeting. During these meetings, LRS provided quarterly updates, and LRC provided input and recommendations to LRS. The LRC incorporates public forums, consumer/counselor interviews, etc., to ensure the services provided by LRS meet the needs of Louisiana's citizens with disabilities. The LRC uses a committee structure to provide focused review and comment to LRS. These committees are: the Executive committee; the Eligibility and Planning committee; the Employment committee and the Transition committee. Much of the interaction included exchanges of information in order to achieve greater clarity and understanding. While the detail work is done in the committee structure, all comments and recommendations are made from the full LRC.

The following is a list of activities and accomplishments of LRC for the period from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017:

- The LRC produced the annual report which included its accomplishments, as well as consumer success stories.
- Council members received an agency report from LRS Director at each regularly scheduled LRC meeting. Council members asked questions and were provided direct input from the LRS Director and other State Office staff.
- The LRC completed a Consumer Satisfaction Survey in April 2017. The satisfaction rate was 76.5%. LRS consumers that requested to be contacted by a LRC Council member were contacted.
- The Office of Workforce Development Director addressed the Council and discussed re-planning and integration within the organization, making sure the One Step Centers are fully educated about LRS and providing quality services.
- The LRC developed Member Roles and Responsibilities which include visiting at a One Stop Center in their area each year to become familiar with their services to individuals with disabilities and provide feedback to LRS as needed.
- LRS implemented a Council recommendation and included a substance abuse screening tool as a resource in the counselor's online toolbox and training on the tool was provided to the counselors.
- The LRC continued to provide a forum for consumers and the public the opportunity to openly discuss LRS services and to offer suggestions for improved service delivery. The Council provided feedback to LRS on these ideas and concerns.
- The LRC provided feedback and input regarding the Comprehensive Needs Assessment..

- The Louisiana Workforce Commission webpage continued to be utilized to distribute information about Council activities to include quarterly meeting locations and public forums.
- Regional LRS Offices invited VR consumers to speak to the Council to discuss their experiences regarding Vocational Rehabilitation service provision.
- Council members continued to monitor legislative action for potential impact to the VR program and individuals with disabilities in Louisiana.
- The LRC educated State Legislators during the 2017 Legislative Session on the VR program and the services that benefit the State of Louisiana and its citizens with disabilities.
- Council members are active with other boards and groups statewide that include, but are not limited to, the Statewide Independent Living Council, Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs, Families Helping Families, Developmental Disability Council, Workforce Investment Council, Special Education Advisory Panel, Brain Injury Association of Louisiana, Metropolitan Human Services District, Developmental Disabilities Regional Advisory Council, Traumatic Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund, Blind Vendor Trust Fund Advisory Board, Louisiana Association for Public, Community and Adult Education, etc.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

The following is a summary of the input and recommendations made from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017. Recommendations are transmitted to LRS both verbally at LRC meetings and in writing throughout the year by committee reports and the LRC minutes.

LRS appreciates the input, partnership, and ongoing dialogue with LRC throughout the year, and will continue to provide updates to LRC on progress made toward implementation of recommendations.

LRC Input: LRC commends the collaboration LRS has demonstrated with providers/partners and the improvement of service delivery as evident in the state plan materials and policies in a number of areas benefiting Louisiana citizens with disabilities.

Recommendation: LRC requested LRS provide statistical information for the Council to develop a fact sheet to be presented to 2017 Legislative session to emphasize the importance of continued appropriation of funds to the VR program.

Response: The LRC developed a fact sheet showing the return on investment based on a study completed by the LSU Public Policy Research Program which found that for every $1 spent in VR, the return over a 5 year period is $16.99.

Recommendation: LRC assessed the benefit of developing a report card system to evaluate vendors and recommended that LRS create a vendor information sheet that could be shared with consumers to further support informed choice.

Response: LRS is evaluating the cost benefit of supplying consumers with separate vendor data sheets in addition to the vendor manual, which they currently review as part of informed choice.

Recommendation: LRC recommended that a substance abuse screening tool be added to the Counselor Toolbox on the web based share drive.

Response: LRS implemented the Council's recommendation and included the substance abuse screening tool as a resource in the counselor's online toolbox and training on the tool was provided to the counselors.

Recommendation: In addition to the Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) service provided at every meeting, the LRC recommended that Sign Language Interpreters attend every meeting for at least a two hour minimum and on call for the rest of the meeting in the case a deaf individual requests that accommodation without providing prior notice.

Response: LRS Director agreed and approved the cost of having Sign Language Interpreters attend every meeting for a two hour minimum and be available on call for the rest of the meeting.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

None of the LRC's recommendations were rejected.

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;

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services is requesting approval for a waiver of statewideness in accordance with 34 CFR Section 361.26 for the following Third Party Cooperative Arrangements:

LRS and Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) continue a third party arrangement to provide a post-secondary vocational training program to only those students (consumers) with disabilities who are applicants for or recipients of LRS services. The "Program for Successful Employment" (PSE) will be designed to increase the number of consumers with disabilities completing high school through dual enrollment opportunities located on a college campus leading to competitive employment. Once exited from the local education agency, consumers will complete their courses on the BPCC campus. PSE will provide career guidance, vocational sampling and training, and job placement opportunities for those consumers in the Shreveport Region.

LRS has six Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCAs) established with separate School Districts in Grant, Bossier, Evangeline, Orleans, Natchitoches and Franklin Parishes as well as with Sci Academy and GW Carver. Through these TPCAs, a Transition Specialist

provides workplace readiness training including self-advocacy, work-based learning experiences, and identification of employers who will host students for work-based learning. Virtual Academy of Lafourche has hired a transition specialists, through a TPCA, to provide workplace readiness training including self-advocacy, work-based learning experiences, and identification of employers who will host students for work-based learning.

LRS has a TPCA with LSU HDC Pay Check to hire an Employment Liaison and a Transitional Employment Coordinator to help identify employers for students with developmental disabilities and mental illness.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

By entering into a contractual agreement in which LRS has approved each proposed service, the TPCA Contractors are assuring they will provide the non-federal matching funds. All vocational rehabilitation services provided under this waiver are provided under approved services listed in the specific TPCA and authorized by the consumer's VR counselor.

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.

The TPCA Contractors assure that all State Plan requirements, including the Pre-Employment Transition Services or Order of Selection will apply to all individuals receiving services through the agreement.

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

LRS has appropriate cooperative arrangements with, and uses the services and facilities of, various federal, state, and local agencies and programs. LRS coordinates with other agencies and programs to ensure individuals with disabilities receive appropriate services. These agencies and programs include:

- Department of Education, Division of Special Populations
- Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Behavioral Health
- Department of Veteran Affairs
- Louisiana Workforce Commission, Office of Workforce Development
- Louisiana Workforce Commission, Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program (WOTC)

- Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD)
- Office of Disability Affairs
- Department of Children and Family Services, Office of Disability Determination
- Department of Children and Family Services, Office of Family Support, Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP)
- Social Security Administration
- Social Security - Bendex (2002)
- Central Louisiana Intertribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Title 121)
- United Houma Nation (Title 121)
- U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workers' Compensation Program

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

LRS partners with the Louisiana Assistive Technology Access Network (LATAN) under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 to provide client referral to their Assistive Technology Market Place, peer-to-peer information sharing, and information and referral for other assistance such as the secured loan financing program that helps consumers obtain financing for assistive technology.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

At this time, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) is not aware of any interagency cooperation on the utilization of services and facilities of the programs carried out by the Undersecretary for Rural Development of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Please be advised, that if such agreements are initiated, LRS will amend this section.

4. NONEDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

At this time, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) is not aware of any interagency collaboration with non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth. However, LRS will be determining potential collaboration with the local career solution centers who are serving out-of-school youth to assist with increasing successful employment outcomes within the state for youth with disabilities.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

At this time, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) is not aware of any interagency collaboration on the utilization of services and facilities of the programs carried out by State Use contracting programs. Please be advised, that if such agreements are initiated, LRS will amend this section.

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.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) continues to provide transition or post-school training services for those youth with disabilities leaving the secondary education system and who are pursuing employment opportunities in adult life. This is accomplished by reviewing, updating, and renewing the formal interagency agreement between LRS and the Department of Education (DOE) as needed based upon both agencies' policy and/or procedure changes; ongoing collaboration; joint development and evaluation of goals, and specialized training for both LRS and DOE agency staff.

LRS policy requires the development and approval of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for eligible students who have official transition plans in place with the state education system. The IPEs are to be developed as early as possible in the transition process, but at the latest, by the time each Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) eligible student leaves the high school setting.

The formal interagency agreement provides for initial contact to be made with the transition student as early as age sixteen. This is accomplished by the development of criteria and timelines for an effective and efficient referral process; provision of orientation and information sessions for students and their families; and LRS counselors determining transition students' eligibility for VR services within the timelines established by agency policy.

For each student determined eligible for services, every effort will be made to ensure those who are in an Order of Selection (OOS) Category currently being served by LRS leave the school system with an approved IPE in place that incorporates appropriate segments of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and projected employment needs, as applicable.

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;

LRS continues to renew and revise existing local cooperative agreements, as applicable, with the 70 school districts and 146 Charter Schools in Louisiana.

Consultation and technical assistance is provided to educational agencies in a variety of ways. VR Counselors attend IEP meetings to provide recommendations/guidance on adult services available to transitioning students, provide information relative to the VR process, and relay information regarding various training options available within the community.

The State Office Transition Program Coordinator provides consultation and technical support statewide to the field Transition VR Counselors in a variety of methods - to include information on webinars, conference calls, and video conferences - updates of best practice techniques gathered from WINTAC and Transition Core Team meetings.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

The Program Coordinator works collaboratively with DOE Transition Coordinator in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities including VR services. Both agencies share responsibility to coordinate the provision of services, conduct outreach, and identify financial responsibility as needed. The DOE will assure that all students with disabilities and their families have knowledge of LRS policies and services including brochures and promotional information supplied by LRS. Information dissemination begins with the writing of the transition service page and continues through referral to LRS. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) also invite LRS representatives to IEP meetings at the students' request, when a transition service page is being written for a student with a disability who may be eligible for and/or interested in VR services;

- facilitate appropriate orientation meetings among LRS staff, student and family members;
- provide time for LRS staff to meet with teachers, guidance counselors, and other appropriate personnel for such purposes as information sharing/gathering at both the individual and agency levels; and
- assist in the development, provision, and evaluation of interagency vocational assessment processes and functional vocational transition programs.

School Districts that have entered into a third party cooperative arrangement with LRS for a Transition Specialist will have direct services provided to students with disabilities who are applicants and eligible LRS. LRS collaborated with LSU HSC Pay Check, Bossier Parish Community College, Grant, Franklin, Evangeline, Orleans Parish School Systems, Sci Academy, GW Carver and Virtual Academy of Lafourche in the implementation of third party cooperative arrangements to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services and, in the case of LSU HSC Pay Check and Bossier Parish Community Collge, to also provide employment related services to LRS eligible students with disabilities in order to increase successful employment outcomes for transition aged youth with development disabilities and individuals with mental illness. All of these TPCAs are still active.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

Current LRS policy and guidelines address the allocation of 15% of State's VR allotment for the provision of services of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to high school

students with disabilities between the ages of 16 - 21 who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. The required activities of Pre-ETS are workplace readiness training, job exploration counseling; work-based learning experiences; counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary education programs at institutions of higher education; and instruction in self-advocacy. LRS assigned vendors to work with each high school across the state to make Pre-ETS services available to students who receive IDEA funds or students who are an individuals with a disability for the purposes of section 504 of the Act (29 U.S.C.794).

LRS will use agency funds for the provision of Pre-ETS and VR services on the approved IPE that relates directly to the achievement of the agreed upon vocational goal, which is not the responsibility of the education system. The DOE will use agency funds for the provision of educational services on the approved IEP that relates directly to the achievement of the agreed upon educational goal.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

Outreach is conducted by VR Counselors to identify students with disabilities through the following methods:

LRS Transition Counselors in each region meet with a school liaison, usually the guidance counselor, to provide information regarding LRS services. The school liaison relays the information to students with disabilities and coordinates the student's initial meeting with the LRS Transition Counselor.

LRS Transition Counselors conduct outreach by hosting transition meetings at area high schools to provide information about VR services and to accept referrals. Information disseminated at these meetings includes agency brochures, client handbooks describing the VR processes/services, and referrals to other community resources students may need to access. Counselors work with the students, parents and educators to plan services needed for successful transition from school to work from the point that the student with a disability is identified.

Counselors attend "Career Days" at the high schools to share information with transition students on available services that may identify career goals and to share information regarding services available to assist them in reaching their goals.

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.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) establishes fee-for-service cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers and/or Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) through a vendorship approval process. This process is initiated at the Regional Office level when it is determined the services are needed in the region.

The potential service provider is given a copy of the CRP standards and vendorship approval guidelines and must agree to comply with these guidelines. The guidelines include

adherence to 504 and 508 Accessibility, education and training certifications and other procedural standards related to quality services and payment for services. The application for vendorship is submitted to State Office by the Regional Manager, along with a recommendation of approval or disapproval of the program.

The need for new, improved or expanded services is identified through a variety of methods. These include needs identified through the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, regional shortages of service providers, increases in specific service needs, and needs identified as a result of changes in agency processes.

All rates are set by a rate-setting process in the fiscal section, are consistent statewide, and are reimbursed through a fee-for-service.

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.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) will maintain cooperative agreements on file with the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) and Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), which ensures proper utilization of resources under the Title VI, Part C Program. These agreements are written to comply with the content requirements in 34 CFR 363.50(b) outlining each agency's responsibility in reference to the supported employment program.

A description of each agreement follows:

OFFICE OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (OBH)

LRS and the OBH are jointly responsible for meeting the needs of consumers with mental illness, including youth with the most significant disabilities, for whom supported employment is the most appropriate service. LRS will fund the Job Coach Model and Evidence-Based Employment Service Model for the chronically mentally ill to provide supported work services to assist these consumers in achieving competitive integrated employment. These services will be provided, either directly or through a service provider, as time-limited vocational services to these individuals and will include: (1) short-term evaluation (any evaluation must be supplementary to an evaluation of rehabilitation potential done under the regular program), (2) job development and job placement, (3) intensive training, (4) intensive follow-along, and (5) extended follow-along. LRS is working with partner agencies to amend and update agreements.

Approximately three hundred and fifty (350) consumers could be referred for supported employment services during each fiscal year. Once eligibility for supported employment services has been established, LRS continues to collaborate with OBH to ensure that services are provided in a timely manner and to assure the development of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The IPE shall specify the responsibilities of all

parties involved in the supported employment program for the individual and shall include reporting requirements for both agencies.

During the operational phase, LRS is responsible for the provision of services as outlined in the agreement. The LRS vendor (service provider) is responsible for actual placement, training and supervision. Any problems which might impact the ultimate success of the job placement shall be immediately brought to the attention of LRS and the OBH. LRS shall maintain an open, active case on each consumer in accordance with definitions and guidelines which have been accepted for each of the program models.

LRS agrees to re-open a consumer's case at any point where additional long-term intensive training is needed, (i.e. consumer loses job and must be retrained, consumer promoted or consumer assigned new responsibilities).

OFFICE OF CITIZENS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (OCDD)

LRS and the OCDD are jointly responsible for meeting the needs of consumers with developmental disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, for whom supported employment is the most appropriate service. LRS will fund the Job Coach Model to provide supported work services to assist these consumers in achieving competitive integrated employment. These services will be provided, either directly or through a service provider, as time-limited vocational services to these individuals and will include: (1) short-term evaluation (any evaluation must be supplementary to an evaluation of rehabilitation potential done under the regular program), (2) job development and job placement, (3) intensive training, (4) intensive follow-along, and (5) limited follow-along.

The OCDD will provide extended services for consumers whose services are funded through contractual agreement with private providers. For consumers whose services are funded through a residential facility, extended services shall be provided by or through that facility.

Approximately three hundred (300) consumers could be referred for supported employment services during each year. Once eligibility for supported employment services has been established, LRS will collaborate with OCDD to ensure that services are provided in a timely manner and to assure the development of an IPE that includes extended services. If extended services are not confirmed, there must be a reasonable expectation that supports, including natural supports will become available. The IPE shall specify the responsibilities of all parties involved in the supported employment program for the individual and shall include reporting requirements for both agencies.

In the initial phase of a supported employment placement, the LRS counselor, the service provider, and the consumer are principal participants in initiating the services. OCDD is available for consultation and referral, etc. The LRS counselor will attend Person-Centered Planning meetings as needed.

During this phase, LRS is responsible for the provision of services as outlined in the agreement. The LRS vendor, or service provider, is responsible for actual placement, training and supervision. The service provider shall immediately bring any problems, which might impact upon the ultimate success of the job placement, to the attention of LRS and OCDD.

LRS agrees to re-open a consumer's case at any point where additional intensive training is needed and is justified in writing, subject to availability of funds. LRS is working with partner agencies to amend and update agreements.

MONITORING AND EXPANSION

84. LRS will monitor the services provided within the guidelines of the existing cooperative agreements and evaluate if modifications will be needed when they are renegotiated.

85. LRS will endeavor to provide access to these individuals by establishing agreements with non-profit organizations and/or community or state agencies including the following:

    - Social Security Administration
    - Department of Education
    - Office of Workforce Development
    - Employment Network of Louisiana
    - Associations for Citizens with Disabilities
    - Title VII, Independent Living Centers
    - Other volunteer organizations and/or resources

86. LRS will work towards establishing relationships with employers through the National VR Business Network, Community Rehabilitation Program - Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program, Business Advisory Committees, Business Leadership Networks, other Networks, and Councils to establish collaboration with businesses and corporations in order to facilitate natural supports at the job site.

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

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services will continue to uphold the achievement of competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. Our Vocational Rehabilitation Program sets out to accomplish this task by building relationships with employers in the communities and various cities in the state of Louisiana. In order to form these connections, LRS Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS) continue to build these relations by first gaining an understanding of what the business and workforce needs are in each area of the state. This is done by expanding our outreach to the business community and then by referring or recommending those clients that will fit their workforce needs.

LRS REDS are involved with the WIOA Board meetings and have formed relationships with LWCs' Industry Coordinators which helps to identify workforce needs in various sectors. The Industry Coordinator analyzes and acquires knowledge about the full range of existing

business solutions and identifies and defines talent pipelines and skill paths to promote sector employment to job seekers. The Program Coordinator over employment initiatives provides further technical assistance to the REDs to assist them in outreach efforts to businesses and their Human Resource Management Teams. Outreach efforts include attendance at local and regional job fairs, Chamber of Commerce meetings and the Society of Human Resource Management monthly meetings. REDS also contact numerous employers every month in an effort to identify workforce needs and determine if we have consumers that are job ready and meet the qualifications for positions available. After the REDS or the Employment Specialists place the consumers in competitive and integrated employment, they continue to work with the business and the consumer, ensuring the employment opportunity is a good fit for both.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

LRS has five Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCAs) established with separate School Districts in Grant, Bossier, Evangeline, Orleans and Franklin Parishes as well as with Sci Academy and GW Carver. Through these TPCAs, a Transition Specialist provides workplace readiness training including self-advocacy, work-based learning experiences, and identification of employers who will host students for work-based learning.

Bossier Parish Community College has a program called Program for Successful Employment (PSE) funded through a TPCA with LRS to provide job readiness to students with disabilities, work with employers to help find job placement and provide follow up. Virtual Academy of Lafourche has hired a transition specialist, through a TPCA, to provide workplace readiness training including self-advocac, work-based learning experiences, and identification of employers who will host students for work-based learning.

LRS has TPCA with LSUHDC Pay Check to hire an Employment Liaison and a Transitional Employment Coordinator to provide employment related services for students with developmental disabilities and mental illness.

LRS assigned Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) to each public high school across the state, including Charter schools, to make Pre-ETS services available to students who receive special education services through IDEA funds or students who are considered individuals with disabilities for the purpose of section 504 of the Act (29 U.S.C. 794). Assigned CRPs provide work readiness and identify employers in the area to give students opportunities for work-based learning experiences.

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;

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) works collaboratively with the State Medicaid Plan housed within the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH). LRS will maintain a

memorandum of understanding with LDH in order to ensure proper utilization of resources and continue to explore all available opportunities for employment in integrated settings.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) works collaboratively with the Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) housed within the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH). LRS will maintain a memorandum of understanding with LDH in order to ensure proper utilization of resources and continue to explore all available opportunities for employment in integrated settings.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) works collaboratively with the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) housed within the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH). LRS will maintain a memorandum of understanding with LDH in order to ensure proper utilization of resources and continue to explore all available opportunities for employment in integrated settings.

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;

This section describes Louisiana Rehabilitation Services' (LRS') procedures and activities to ensure an adequate supply of qualified professionals and paraprofessionals to provide Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services statewide. The Louisiana Rehabilitation Council can review and comment on the agency's Re-Training Plan upon request.

In order to assess the need for qualified personnel, LRS has developed and maintains a database which includes information on the number of rehabilitation personnel providing VR services, and the ratio of the number of personnel needed by the agency to adequately provide VR services statewide.

LRS is geographically divided into eight (8) regions within the state; each region has one designated transition counselor, one counselor for the deaf and one counselor for the blind. In PY 2017, LRS had a staff of 188, of which 77 were Rehabilitation Counselors with an average caseload size of 148 consumers. LRS provided services to 18,460 VR and 4,036 Pre-

ETS consumers. Of the individuals receiving services, the Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS), who have varying caseload sizes, provided direct job placement services to 94 consumers. Eight thousand, seven hundred and eighty-one consumers received services from Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) staff and Evaluators. As a result, 1,834 consumers exited the VR program achieving an employment outcome in PY 2017. This does not include Pre-ETS consumers.

ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

At this time, in an effort to adequately serve and meet the needs of consumers in all Order of Selection categories currently being served, LRS needs additional staff that would consist of 35 Rehabilitation Counselors and 5 REDS. LRS is currently assessing human resources available to determine most effective structure to meet the service needs of individuals with disabilities statewide.

LRS will need to increase its staff statewide to be able to meet the growing needs of individuals with disabilities in the coming five years. Currently, LRS has 35 Rehabilitation Counselor vacancies, an additional 9 who are eligible for retirement and has identified 17 more that will be eligible for retirement in the next five years. Also, Rehabilitation Counselors may be promoting to higher positions within LRS and their vacancies will need to be filled.

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.

Row	Job Title	Total Positions	Current Vacancies	Projected Vacancies over the next 5 years
1	Rehabilitation counselor	112	35	26
2	Rehabilitation employment development specialists (REDS)	8	5	2
3	Support staff/paraprofessionals (client services)	69	27	17
4	Field managers (client services)	8	0	6

Row	Job Title	Total Positions	Current Vacancies	Projected Vacancies over the next 5 years
5	District supervisors (client services)	23	9	5
6	Evaluators and other CRP staff	0	0	0
7	Administrative staff (administrative and executive)	21	4	7
8	Support staff/paraprofessionals (administrative and executive)	9	2	3
9	Randolph Sheppard management analyst	5	0	0

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;

Louisiana has two universities with CORE accredited graduate programs in rehabilitation counseling; Southern University (SU) in Baton Rouge, a Historically Black University and Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center (LSUHSC) in New Orleans. SU offers an undergraduate rehabilitation counseling program. Neither SU nor LSUHSC offers a doctoral degree at this time.

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

As noted in the following table, a total of 17 students graduated with a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling during the previous year from the two institutions listed above.

Row	Institution	Students Enrolled	Employees sponsored by Agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by Agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
1	Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA Undergraduate	158	0	0	30
2	Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA Graduate	37	0	22	10

Row	Institution	Students Enrolled	Employees sponsored by Agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by Agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
3	Louisiana State University Health Science Center, New Orleans, LA Graduate	19	0	15	7

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.

All graduates from the Master's program at both of the institutions are eligible to meet the national certification requirement and sit for the national licensure of Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC).

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.

RECRUITMENT

LRS continues to be committed to the development and continued growth of professional staff members. In an effort to meet the current and projected needs for qualified personnel, the following process and activities are utilized. All strategies noted below for LRS' Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) program encourages the hiring of staff members from minority backgrounds and individuals with disabilities.

In an effort to work cooperatively with institutions of higher education in the area of recruitment, the agency participated in Career Day activities at Southern University. To ensure recruitment of individuals from minority backgrounds, LRS works closely with SU, a Historically Black University. Students are provided information on the application process for employment and information regarding advancement opportunities with the agency. LRS provides internship opportunities for graduate students in both assessment and counseling settings. In addition, brochures about the rehabilitation counseling profession are available in Spanish for staff members to distribute to consumers and at functions statewide.

The universities provide program updates throughout the year, which are shared with agency staff members. Notification of agency professional position vacancies is provided to department heads at the universities to assist graduates pursuing employment.

As a method of recruiting individuals with disabilities, Rehabilitation Counselors advise consumers about the career opportunities in the field of rehabilitation. LRS also utilizes cross-training of our Workforce Partners to assist in providing information to potential

candidates regarding careers in the field of rehabilitation. LRS works with the State Civil Service and universities to notify potential candidates of vacancies in the field of rehabilitation services.

PREPARATION

Annually, LRS maintains a Re-Training Plan to monitor the number of Rehabilitation Counselors who do not meet the highest CSPD qualifications. To encourage LRS' Rehabilitation Counselors meet the higher CSPD requirements, LRS continues the strategies noted below:

- When hiring new staff members who do not meet the highest guidelines for "qualified" personnel, the agency encourages the individual to commit to pursuing the higher educational requirement.
- LRS' CSPD Re-Training Plan is maintained by the Training Section. This plan is utilized to track LRS' progress toward meeting the highest CSPD requirement which is closely monitored and updated annually. All professional staff members listed on the Re-Training Plan who do not have a master's degree in rehabilitation or a degree in a closely related field are considered to be in a "re- training priority" category. LRS has established two categories - higher and lower priority groups for re-training. The lower priority group consists of the "non-masters degreed" employees that are either currently eligible for retirement or within five years of retirement eligibility. The higher priority group consists of the remaining "non-masters degreed" employees on the re-training list.
- The Program Manager responsible for coordination of the CSPD initiative assists the "non- masters degreed" employees to address and resolve any barriers that may be preventing them from pursuing the Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling degree.
- LRS has procedures in place for the funding of academic course work, textbooks, and when necessary, travel and educational leave for Rehabilitation Counselors to be retrained in accordance with the agency's CSPD Re-Training Plan. This policy prioritizes funding for staff members in the high priority re-training group.
- LRS staff members participate in training annually, such as are presented by the National Council on Rehabilitation Education (NCRE), Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR), and Technical Assistance Centers, to obtain information and professional training to meet the standards for CSPD. Professional and paraprofessional staff members also regularly attend training workshops delivered by other agencies, state universities, (including the two state universities offering degrees in rehabilitation counseling), and organizations for service providers promoting the enhancement of employment for persons with disabilities. LRS encourages professional development of all staff members through community involvement and membership in state associations such as the Louisiana Rehabilitation Association (LRA), a chapter of the National

Rehabilitation Association (NRA), and the Clerical Association of Louisiana (CAL).

The LRS Program Coordinator, Program Manager and/or Bureau Administrator serve on university advisory committees, including the SU Rehabilitation Advisory Council and the LSUHMC Department of Rehabilitation Counseling. The universities are notified annually of LRS' recommendations for improving their training so that graduates may better compete for agency employment. Universities are offered suggestions based on the agency's needs to strengthen academic preparation and ensure that curriculums develop the necessary job-related competencies of their students.

LRS collaborates with the universities to support their research efforts in an attempt to obtain information to improve rehabilitation services and service delivery. This allows staff members to participate in studies that may bring more effective practices to the field.

RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

To provide opportunities for advancement and encourage retention of qualified personnel, LRS provides professional and paraprofessional staff members the opportunity to promote. For professional staff, promotions are based on work performance and the attainment of specific job-related competencies.

Positions that are promotional opportunities include Master Counselor and Master Evaluator. In order to qualify for these positions, professional staff members must possess a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, Evaluation, or a closely related field. If administrative opportunities are desired, professional staff may apply for positions to include District Supervisor, Regional Manager, and various State Office level positions.

Paraprofessional staff who desire to promote within the agency, can apply for the Rehabilitation Counselor Assistant position once specific competencies have been achieved. This position works closely with the Rehabilitation Counselor in managing caseload activities and in provision of services to consumers.

To retain qualified staff members, LRS coordinates training with local universities, business professionals and professional associations to assist in obtaining training and the necessary continuing education units (CEUs) required for maintenance of certification and licensure. The LRS training section is certified by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) to provide CEUs for qualifying training events coordinated or conducted by LRS.

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

LRS' continues to encourage professional staff to attain the highest CSPD standard for qualified rehabilitation professional, a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a related field. This is in accordance with the academic degree requirement for the national CRC licensure offered by CRCC.

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.

To ensure Rehabilitation Counselor positions have an adequate background to successfully enter the profession, LRS requires the following minimum qualifications:

87. A baccalaureate degree plus one (1) year of professional level experience in social services, teaching, vocational counseling, employment counseling, psychiatric counseling, social services counseling, guidance and counseling, rehabilitation counseling, personnel, nursing, recreation therapy, music therapy, physical therapy, art therapy, rehabilitation instruction, rehabilitation evaluation, worker's compensation dispute resolution, or worker's compensation rehabilitation dispute resolution.

88. A baccalaureate degree in rehabilitation counseling or master's degree in any field may substitute for the one (1) year of required experience.

LRS decided not to change the qualification requirements for the entry-level Rehabilitation Counselor positions as there are only two universities in Louisiana that have accredited rehabilitation programs. Changing the entry-level Rehabilitation Counselor qualification requirements would have dramatically affected the ability to fill these positions, particularly those located in more rural areas.

Rehabilitation Counselors at the highest priority for retraining are encouraged to achieve the agency's CSPD standard per 34 CFR 361.18(c)(1)(ii)(B).

The following depicts the educational breakdown of Rehabilitation Counselors and Evaluators on board as of June 30, 2017:

Rehabilitation Counselors - 77

- Has a Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling or a related field - 51
- Lower priority for retraining - 10
- Higher priority for retraining - 9
- Currently enrolled in a Master's Program - 1
- Those needing to begin training - 8
- Percent of Counselors at higher priority for retraining not currently enrolled - 12%

The agency recognizes that some employees in the higher priority retraining group will not be able to either pursue their master's degree or complete all requirements of a master's degree program. These individuals will not be eligible for advancement to the Master

Counselor positions. In addition, to recruit individuals meeting the highest standard, vacancy announcements are shared with local universities and posted on the State Civil Service website. Universities frequently refer students to LRS for internships that may lead to full-time employment and to apply for vacant Rehabilitation Counselor positions.

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

LRS utilizes several methods of identifying training needs of professional and paraprofessional staff members, to include a Training Needs Assessment form which is available online. In addition, Regional Managers and State Office Program staff members may identify and request training. The Quality Assurance staff members may also request training when trends are noted during the case review process. All agency training ends with the completion of an evaluation form which allows for comments and/or to request further training.

LRS staff members take advantage of training opportunities provided through webinars and teleconferences as well as on-site training. Numerous types of training and support continue to be provided and/or coordinated by State Office Program staff members to support the field staff. Such Training for PY 2017 included PEPNET, Travel Training, TBI Conference, Deaf Counselor Training, Ethics Symposium at Southern University, AWARE, Case Management, CATS, Share Point, Pre-ETS, Regional Manager and District Supervisor training.

Additionally, the agency has specific monthly in-service training requirements (4 hours per month), which are conducted by the regional field offices to ensure continuous education for all professional and paraprofessional staff members. This training is provided by experienced staff members or by knowledgeable community providers who specialize in the area of training required. Rehabilitation Counselor Associates (RCAs) are required to attend all in-service training with the Rehabilitation Counselors and also attend separate training as needed. Examples of training topics include assessment, guidance and vocational counseling, eligibility, planning, disability related issues, assistive technology, disability services at colleges and universities, ethics, community-based employment outcomes, mental health, and employment related issues.

Career Enrichment/Development

The Bureau of Program Planning/Resource Development researches, develops, implements, and maintains standards to ensure staff development. Chapter 9 of LRS' Technical Assistance and Guidance Manual is maintained by the Bureau, provides formal procedures

to promote the development of qualified rehabilitation staff members as the key to quality service delivery.

Classes are offered through the Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP) to all state employees at all levels to further enhance their professional skills and development. Through this program, specialized training is available in areas such as management development, supervisory techniques, skill training for non-supervisory personnel, web-based computer skills and professional development training. LRS encourages all agency staff members to participate in applicable CPTP training classes.

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.

For the most up-to-date information, all staff members have computers on their desk with access to the Internet to be used for research purposes. Information received on various rehabilitation topics are forwarded to staff statewide for their use.

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.

Each office is authorized to obtain the services of a foreign language interpreter/translator as the need arises (i.e. LRS has consumers who speak Spanish, French, and Vietnamese). LRS has several staff members who are bilingual. In instances where bilingual staff members are not available, translators/interpreters are secured through community resources.

In order to insure that individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing or blind are able to access services and offices, LRS has the following procedures:

- Receptionists, Specialists for the Deaf statewide, and some Specialists for the Blind are equipped with TDD's and video phones. Appropriate staff members have been trained in the use of this equipment.
- Specialists for the Deaf must be skilled in sign language.
- All Specialists must attend a graduate program, Northern Illinois University, Western Oregon University, University of Arkansas, San Diego State University or other applicable program approved by the agency. There they learn about hearing loss and the Deaf culture, and are taught basic sign language skills, if needed.
- Specialists must attend an annual 2 - 3 day training related to deafness sponsored by the agency.
- Specific needs are assessed on an individual basis and appropriate training is obtained for each Specialist in their respective region.

- Sign language skills of the Specialists for the Deaf are evaluated through the applicable evaluation instrument as approved by the Program Coordinator for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services.
- The agency has implemented a series of coursework for the Specialist for the Deaf position, which requires the completion of specific training for advancement.
- To move to the Specialist 2 level, an individual must have obtained sign language skills equivalent to a minimum of the intermediate level on the applicable evaluation instrument approved by the agency, OR interpreter certification equivalent to a minimum of the state's Level 3 certification, AND attend one of the Orientation to Deafness training programs available at the University of Tennessee, Northern Illinois University, Western Oregon University, San Diego State University or other applicable program approved by the agency.
- To advance to the Master level Specialist for the Deaf, an individual must have a Master's degree plus sign language skills equivalent to a minimum of the advanced level on the applicable evaluation instrument approved by the agency, OR interpreter certification equivalent to a minimum of the state's Level 4 certification, and a minimum of nine hours of specialized college course work in deafness or deaf-blindness related areas approved by the agency.

In order to ensure that individuals who are blind or visually impaired are able to access services and offices, LRS has the following procedures:

98. Braille printers and Braille translation software is available to produce Braille translation in- house. Agency publications can be provided in alternative formats upon request.
99. Specialists for the Blind complete introductory course work in Braille and continue to receive training in this area. The agency has a series of training for the Blind Specialist position, which requires the completion of specific training for advancement. To move to the Specialist 2 level, an individual must complete Braille Literacy - Grade 1 and Introduction to Orientation and Mobility.

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.

LRS continues to collaborate with the Department of Education (DOE) to jointly provide staff training for effective provision of transitional services for those youth with disabilities leaving the secondary education system and pursuing successful employment opportunities in adult life. This is accomplished through LRS/DOE's formal interagency agreement which includes specialized training for both LRS' and DOE's staff members.

LRS' Program Coordinator for Transition and DOE's Program Manager collaborate on joint agency training and meetings throughout the year to network and share information. They are also responsible for assisting in the coordination and provision of transition services

within each agency to assure effective service provision and training through the support of local interagency core teams, cross-agency training, outreach, and other needed activities; capacity building of young adult and family outreach efforts; and continuous provision of information and technical assistance.

Some examples of collaborative efforts include Transition Core Team meetings held statewide attended by the DOE, the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, Families Helping Families, and other interested individuals. These meetings are held to assist agencies who serve transition students as they exit from school to work.

LRS has a Program Coordinator specializing in Assistive Technology who conducts in-service training annually to keep field staff members abreast of the most recent technology available to assist individuals with disabilities.

Specialized training is provided to our staff members working with low-incident disabilities to include such training as orientation to deafness, mobility training, sign language coursework, deaf-blindness training, and graduate level training specific to working with low-incident populations (i.e. visual impairment/hearing impairment/significant cognitive impairment).

Local Education Agencies work with LRS staff members to:

• provide training on the Individual Education Plan document;

• facilitate appropriate orientation meetings among LRS staff members, students and family members;

• provide time for LRS staff members to meet with teachers, guidance counselors, and other appropriate personnel for such purposes as information sharing/gathering at both the individual and agency levels.

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;

Frequency of Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment: The LRS CSNA is conducted every three years. The most recent CSNA was completed in FY 2017

Current Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment:

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) assists eligible individuals with disabilities to prepare for, achieve, and retain employment in an integrated community setting. LRS administers the general Vocational Rehabilitation program in Louisiana for the Rehabilitation Services Administration. This comprehensive needs assessment focuses on the Vocational Rehabilitation program and the needs of individuals eligible for those services.

The purpose of the statewide comprehensive assessment, conducted jointly with the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC), is to describe the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within Louisiana, particularly the vocational rehabilitation service needs as outlined in the 34 CFR 361.29:

1. Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
2. Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this part;
3. Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system as identified by those individuals and personnel assisting those individuals through the components of the system; and
4. Youth with disabilities, and students with disabilities, including their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services; and an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services provided under this part are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in order to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.
5. Assessments of the need to establish, develop, or improve Community Rehabilitation Programs within the State.

This assessment is in response to the requirements of 34 CFR 361.29 that includes statewide assessment, annual estimates, annual state goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports. As mandated, LRS and the LRC jointly planned and conducted this Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The findings and results of this assessment will assist LRS with planning and developing the agency's strategic goals and objectives.

METHODOLOGY

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) utilized a variety of modalities and methodologies to research and collect data to assess and identify the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities, as well as the need to establish, develop, or improve Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs).

Data from consumers, staff members, workforce partners/stakeholders, Title 121 and the public at large was obtained. Survey Monkey, accessible survey software available through the internet, was used for all surveys. Surveys in hard copy and alternate languages were also available upon request. The use of on- line surveys assisted LRS in keeping the cost of conducting the needs assessment within budget.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission's (LWC) Communications Section solicited participation in LRS' statewide needs assessment surveys utilizing social media. The survey link was published in the Governors Office for Disability Affairs' newsletter. An email account was set up to monitor any questions or comments provided. This email account was monitored by a designated LRS employee.

LRS stakeholders, consumers, staff members, Workforce Partners, and Title 121 were emailed a link inviting participation in the survey. All respondents were ensured of the confidentiality of information provided.

In addition to the surveys conducted by LRS, data was accessed from a wide range of publicly available resources including the United States Census Bureau, the American Census Surveys (ACS), the Disability Compendium, and reports provided by Community Rehabilitation Programs.

Six hundred twenty-five survey responses were received. In addition, eighty-three LRS employees responded to total seven hundred and eight survey respondents.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC) Joint Collaboration

In order to collaborate with the state rehabilitation council on the completion of the survey, LRS staff attended LRC meetings where the Council provided input including assisting with the development of the survey questionnaires, recommending methods of distribution of surveys and in the distribution to potential respondents statewide. As detailed results are compiled and distributed, the council will continue to assist in determining actions needed based on the assessment results.

The LRC/LRS liaison participated in the development of the questionnaires. Once the surveys were developed, the liaison distributed the draft survey instruments to LRC members soliciting their input. Comments and suggestions received contributed to the final development of the survey. As exhibited above, the CSNA is the result of a joint effort between LRS and the LRC.

Target Populations

The CSNA survey link was emailed to consumers, staff members, Workforce Partners, Community Rehabilitation Programs, customers of CRPs, Title 121and stakeholders. The survey link was provided for access by the public through the Louisiana Workforce Commission and Governor's Office for Disability Affairs social media sites and newsletters. LRS solicited and received feedback from these target populations.

Consumer Surveys

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services emailed survey links to 5,607 VR and Pre-ETS applicants and consumers statewide. The survey links were sent to individuals from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds, unserved/underserved populations and individuals with the most significant disabilities. Surveys were also sent to youth and students with disabilities to determine their specific needs.

Surveys included an introduction explaining the purpose and an invitation to participate. Recipients were ensured of confidentiality of all information submitted.

The consumer survey instrument was designed to:

- Be easily read and understood
- Be accessible
- Be completed by the individual or parent/guardian/advocate

- Encourage completion (online survey)
- Provide anonymity

Questions on the survey were developed with input from the LRC to access the needs of individuals with most significant disabilities, the unserved/underserved, those being served through workforce partners and to determine the need to establish, develop, and expand CRPs within the state.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Consumer Surveys

LRS received 316 responses. Seventy percent of respondents identified themselves as individuals with disabilities; 19% were identified as a parent or guardian of an individual with a disability answering on behalf of the minor; and 13% were a youth or student with a disability.

Forty-eight percent of respondents were male and 52% were female. Five percent identified themselves as veterans. Sixty percent of respondents identified themselves as Caucasian; 36% percent as African-Americans; and the remaining four percent as American Indian, Hispanic, Native Pacific Islander or Other.

The predominant age of respondents was between the ages 18 - 25 years (30%); followed by the ages of 41 - 50 (17%); ages 31 - 40 years (16%); ages 51 - 60 (14%); ages 26 - 30 (12%); ages 61 - 70 (7%); under 18 years of age (3%); and ages 70 and over (1%).

Thirty-nine percent of respondents indicated living with parents or guardians; 23% lived alone; 17% percent of respondents indicated living with a partner or spouse; 13% lived with their children; 10% with a roommate or other adult.

The top disability categories respondents reported were: Mental Illness (19%); Hard of Hearing (12%); Psychological/Behavioral (11%); Intellectual Disability (10%); Orthopedic/Mobility (10%); Specific Learning Disability (9%); Autism (9%); and Blindness (9%).

Educational levels of respondents were as follows: 26% had either a high school diploma or a GED; 25% had some college training; 21% had a 4 year degree; 12% had a 2 year degree/technical college; 10% indicated that they did or have not completed high school, and 6% had either a master's or doctoral degree.

Thirty-three percent of respondents indicated being employed, 29% were out of work/looking for work, 38% were students and 7% noted that they are unable to work.

The primary source of income reported included SSI/SSDI (45%); own employment (30%); parent/guardian's income (19%), and public assistance (6%).

Thirty-four percent of respondents reported an average household yearly income of less than $10,000; 18% reported receiving $10,001 - $15,000; 16% reported an income of $50,000 and over; 13% received $15,001 - $25,000; 6% received $40,001 - $50,000; 6% received $25,001 - $35,000; and 5% received $35,001 - $40,000.

When asked why they wanted to work, 77% of respondents stated that they want to support themselves or their family, 58% wanted to better their lifestyle, 53% to be a contributing member of society, and 30% to have medical insurance.

When asked "If employed, are you earning minimum wage or above?" 111 skipped the question and 205 responded. Of respondents, 55% stated they earned above minimum wage and 45% stated they earned below minimum wage.

Workforce Partner Agencies, Stakeholders & Title 121

LRS solicited input from identified workforce partners, stakeholders and the liaison with Title 121. One hundred individuals completed the online survey.

Sixty-eight percent of respondents were service providers, 20% were advocates, and 11% reported having a disability themselves. Seventy-four percent had never received services from Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, 15% had previously received services but were not receiving them currently.

The gender of survey respondents were 58% female and 42% male. Seven percent indicated being veterans. When asked about their race/ethnicity, 70% identified themselves as Caucasian; 31% as African American; 5% Hispanic or Latino and 2% as American Indian or Alaskan Eskimo. Multiple races were selected for some.

Twenty-four percent of respondents were between the ages 51 - 60 years; 21% were between 61 - 70 years old; 20% were between 31 - 40 years old; 18% were between 41 - 50 years old; 8% were between 18 - 25 years old; 3% were between 26-30 and 3 % were under 18 years of age.

The current living situation of respondents are as follows: 59% reported living with a spouse or partner; 21% live with children; 14% live with a parent or guardian; and the remainder live alone, with a roommate, are homeless or institutionalized.

Educational levels of respondents with a master's or doctoral degree was 45%; a 4 year college degree were 22%; 12% had either a high school diploma or a GED; 10% indicated that they did not complete high school; 9% had some college training; and 2% had a 2 year associates or technical college degree.

Seventy-three percent of respondents indicated that their primary source of income is employment; 11% indicated receiving SSI/SSDI; 10% rely on their spouse's wages; and 10% rely on the income of a parent/guardian.

The average household yearly income received was $50,001 and over for 51% of respondents; $40,001 - $50,000 for 11%; less than $10,000 for 11%; $10,001 - $15,000 for 7%; $15,001 - $25,000 for 6%; $25,001 - $35,000 for 6%; and $35,001 - $40,000 for 7%.

LRS Employee Surveys

LRS sent survey links via email to all agency staff members (173) including administrative, support, and direct service delivery. The online surveys ensured staff of confidentiality and anonymity.

Eighty-three LRS employees from offices statewide responded to surveys. Of the respondents, 37% have worked for the agency from 11 - 10 years; 27% have worked for the

agency over 20 years; 27% have worked for the agency for 6 - 10 years; 12% have worked for the agency for over 25 years and 9% have worked for the agency for less than 5 years.

Fifty-two percent of respondents have their Master's degree; 22% have their Bachelor's degree; 11% have some college; 9% have a two year associates or technical college degree and 3% have a Doctoral degree 3% have their high school diploma or GED.

Primary respondents were Rehabilitation Counselors (44%); Counselor Associates, Rehab Secretaries and Receptionist (15%); and District Supervisors (10%).

Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services:

Survey respondents universally stated that training should be provided to LRS staff, vendors and legislators regarding the vocational rehabilitation program, service provision and budgetary needs; that more staff should be hired to increase capacity to serve; and that more vendors are needed. Respondents indicated that more consumers need LRS services and could be served if additional state dollars could be secured to match the federal funding available to the state.

Upon reviewing survey information of individuals receiving SSI/SSDI, the top needs identified by respondents included job placement (46%); job coaching (30%); benefits planning (30%); transportation (29%); job readiness skills (28%); and vocational guidance and career counseling (27%). They identified barriers to employment as being the fear of losing their government benefits (52%), lack of employer acceptance of their disability (44%), adjustment to disability (32%); lack of transportation (38%); lack of public services (36%); the slow job market (36%); and lack of medical insurance (27%).

Respondents receiving supported employment services identified the following as needs not being met, job placement (23%); training/tuition assistance (21%); transportation (21%); room & board (15%); mental health counseling (14%); post-employment services (14%); benefits planning (13%); and equipment for work (13%).

The barriers to employment identified by respondents receiving supported employment services included the fear of losing government benefits (40%); lack of transportation (39%); employer acceptance of their disability (36%); their personal adjustment to the disability (29%); lack of public resources (29%); the slow job market (21%); and the lack of medical insurance/care (20%).

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

To assess the needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities, unserved or underserved, LRS extracted information from various surveys including LRS consumers, Workforce Partners/Stakeholders/Title 121 and LRS employees.

When asked about barriers to employment, respondents reported the following needs:

Comprehensive services are needed for individuals who have psychological disabilities, who are and ex-felons with disabilities. Services are needed for individuals living in rural areas, individuals in order of selection categories not currently being served and those not meeting the agency's economic need criteria.

It was noted that LRS needs to do more outreach to rural communities, students and employed individuals who may need accommodations such as assistive technology devices. Transportation and job opportunities continue to be a need in rural communities.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Needs identified by unserved/underserved respondents were much the same as those who identified themselves as being a minority. These individuals can be living in rural areas, be in an Order of Selection Category not currently being served, and/or not meet the agency's economic need criteria. CRPs were identified as being needed in rural areas to assist individuals in preparing for and obtaining employment.

Transportation also continues to be a need in rural communities.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

Respondents from other components of the statewide workforce investment system were given survey links to complete the survey online.

Needs identified by respondents included transportation; benefit planning; job coaching; post- employment services; transition from school to work; assistive technology devices/services; and job placement.

The primary barriers identified by respondents included the lack of medical insurance/care; adjustment to disability; fear of losing government benefits; lack of public resources; lack of employer acceptance of an individual's disability; and the lack of transportation.

Fifty percent of LRS employees responding noted that they are satisfied or very satisfied when working with the Business and Career Solution Centers (BCSC). Thirty-eight percent noted that they have not worked with a BCSC. Thirty nine percent used a BCSC in the last month to access/provide services to individuals with disabilities. Eighteen percent utilized the BCSC in the last three months. Seventy-four percent of staff are familiar with services available through their local BCSC.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

The primary needs of youth and students who are most significantly disabled were identified by responses of those receiving SSI/SSDI and those receiving supported employment services. Primary needs identified included Pre-ETS Job Exploration Counseling (17%); other services needed to assist in transitioning from high school to employment (17%); and job readiness skills such as resume writing, interview practice, work behaviors (17%).

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

LRS received comments from the public, workforce partners/stakeholders and agency staff members to determine the need to establish, develop, or improve CRPs within the state.

The LRS employee survey revealed that 47% of respondents felt that new CRPs were needed to adequately serve consumers and 36% felt that the current CRPs should be improved or expanded. Forty percent of LRS employees felt that the CRPs present in their region did not provide an adequate range of services to meet the needs of their consumers. Fifty-two percent indicated that CRP staff needed more education/training to effectively serve individuals with disabilities.

Additionally, 48% of counselors indicated that the quality of services provided to meet the needs of consumers could be improved. Seventy percent of staff responding felt that more CRPs are needed in their area to serve specific services or to serve specific disability populations. Populations that were identified as needing further CRPs to serve include the deaf, deaf-blind and blind/visually impaired, felons/ex-felons with disabilities, individuals with cognitive impairments/intellectual disabilities, autism, mental illness, paraplegic/quadriplegic, and traumatic brain injuries. In addition, it was noted that more CRPs are needed to provide services to transition students, to provide services such as supported employment in rural areas, job readiness/placement, sign language interpretation, assistive technology services and training, training, and customized employment.

Eighty-six percent of respondents to the public survey indicated that more CRPs are needed to provide services and 66% of existing CRPs need improvement. Some populations identified as needing more services include those having intellectual disabilities, autism, psychological disabilities, those who are blind/deaf-blind, deaf/hard-of-hearing. In addition, it was noted that CRPs are needed to provide particular services such as those needed by students transitioning from high school into employment and to individuals with disabilities exiting the correctional facilities and have felonies.

A need for additional vendors who provide specific services to individuals who are blind or have low vision, to include orientation & mobility assessments, low vision assessments, and vocational assessments was also noted.

Additional CRPs who provide job placement services, including supported employment, are needed in the regions serving rural areas as some areas do not have CRPs that are conveniently located for consumers' participation.

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 .

Sixty-nine percent of youth and students with disabilities who responded were receiving services from LRS. Most frequent disabilities indicated were specific learning disabilities (15%), psychological/behavioral (13%), mental illness (11%), and autism (10%). Fifty-two percent of respondents were male and 48% female. Sixty-two percent of respondents indicated that they were Caucasian; 32% Black/African American; 3% Asian, and 3% Hispanic/Latino.

Needs that were identified as not being met for this population include training/tuition assistance (24%); job placement (22%); job readiness skills such as resume writing,

interview practice, work behaviors (22%); benefits planning (20%); and other transition services to assist with transitioning from school to work (20%).

Eighty-two percent indicated wanting to work to support themselves or their families; 55% want to work to have a better lifestyle; 49% to be a contributing member of their community; and 27% to have medical insurance.

Lack of transportation was noted as a significant barrier by 33% of respondents; while 27% feared losing their government benefits; and 26% felt that employer acceptance of disability is a significant barrier.

Students noted that more advertisement and information needs to be provided to let people with disabilities know about services available through LRS. More counselors are needed to reduce wait times for services and to allow counselors to spend more time with the students they are working with.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are many people in Louisiana with disabilities that could benefit from vocational rehabilitation services designed to help them achieve and retain employment in integrated community settings. To meet this need, LRS maintains eight regional offices located statewide; employs a skilled workforce to help individuals plan services needed; utilizes community rehabilitation programs to deliver services; and collaborates with multiple agencies and community businesses to promote employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Common trends discovered in this needs assessment included the necessity for more agency and CRP staff, more CRPs, provision of skills training to work with specific disability populations, more funding to serve individuals with disabilities not currently being served, and provision of alternate methods of outreach.

LRS will continue to analyze the findings from this Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and use it as a tool to help develop the agency's strategies. The data will continue to be used to drive agency goals and initiatives. The agency will continue to work with staff members and the LRC to establish measurable timelines and tracking mechanisms to ensure that strategies are accomplished. In addition, LRS will continue to collaborate with other key workforce partners serving individuals with disabilities to determine improvements that can be achieved through collaboration and partnerships.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES;

Per the 2017 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium, approximately 384,377 individuals with disabilities ages 18-64 are living in Louisiana. To qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, individuals with disabilities must be interested in obtaining or maintaining employment. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2017 the unemployment rate for persons with disabilities was 10.5%. To be included in this rate, the person with a disability was unemployed, available for work and was actively looking for a job in the 4

weeks prior to the survey. Although, it would be difficult to determine how many individuals with disabilities would be eligible, based on these statistics, 10.5% or 40,360 of these individuals would be actively seeking employment and could potentially be eligible for VR services.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) estimates that it will serve 9,260 individuals with in the vocational rehabilitation program during FFY 2019 & FFY 2020. This includes all those clients with existing plans and those expected to be served under new plans/IPEs. In addition, LRS anticipates serving 5,300 students with disabilities through the Pre-ETS program offered separately from the VR program. See following charts with a further breakdown of eligible individuals who will be served.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

Of the estimated 9,260 individuals receiving services, approximately 1,420 will receive supported employment services through funds provided under Title I and through Title VI program funds.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION;

Projections for Fiscal Year 2019		
Order of Selection Priority Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Number to be Served
Category I - Most Significantly Disabled (MSD)	I	8,422
Category I - Most Significantly Disabled (MSD)	VI	391
Category II - Most Significantly Disabled (MSD)	I	291
Category II - Most Significantly Disabled (MSD)	VI	59
Category III - Significantly Disabled (SD)	I	75
Category IV - Significantly Disabled (SD)	I	20
Category V - Non Significantly Disabled (NSD)	I	2
Totals	I & VI	9,260

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

The number of consumers on the waiting list by Order of Selection Category follows:

- OOS Category I - 0
- OOS Category II - 395
- OOS Category III - 211
- OOS Category IV - 135
- OOS Category V - 28
- Total - 769

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.

Cost for the VR Program in the Fiscal Year 2019:

LRS is projecting that the VR Program will need $48,946,122 to provide services to eligible consumers. Projected revenue is State General Funds of $7,399,887 and Federal Section 110 Funds of $41,546,235.

Projected cost to serve individuals with existing Individualized Plans for Employment:

State General Funds: $1,827,377

Federal Section 110: $6,751,860

Total: $8,579,237

Projected cost for determining eligibility of new applicants:

State General Funds: $192,739

Federal Section 110: $712,137

Total: $904,876

Projected revenue State General Funds is $7,399,887 and Federal Section 110 Funds of $41,546,235:

Amount of State General Funds recommended in the 2018/2019 budget to match Section 110 Federal Funds is $7,339,887

Amount of Section 110 Federal Funds is $41,546,235

Total Available Budget $48,946,122

Less projections of $48,946,122

For a difference of $0

ORDER OF SELECTION

Estimates of costs of services for each Order of Selection category are in the chart that follows entitled Projections for Fiscal Year 2018-2019. LRS began serving only Order of Selection Category I effective November 8, 2017. Order of Selection Categories II through V remain closed. LRS will continue to provide services to those with plans of service in place as long as funding allows. Consumers reflected in chart below are those continuing to receive services as a result of "continuity of services."

Projections for Fiscal Year 2019				
Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to be Served	Average Cost of Services
OOS Category I	I	$15,667,852	8,422	$1,861.54
OOS Category I	VI	$303,515	391	$776.25
OOS Category II	I	$1,779,058	291	$6,113.60
OOS Category II	VI	$45,468	59	$770.64
OOS Category III	I	$175,000	75	$2,333.33
OOS Category IV	I	$19,066	20	$953.30
OOS Category V	I	$41	2	$20.50
Totals	I & VI	$18,000,000	9,260	$1,943.84

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.

The goals and priorities below were jointly developed, reviewed, revised and agreed upon by Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) and the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC) in order to carry out the vocational rehabilitation program and supported employment services.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.

Goal & Priority I: To maximize opportunities for individuals with disabilities in achieving employment and independence.

Goal & Priority II: To ensure that Louisiana Rehabilitation Services has necessary and qualified rehabilitation personnel, both professionals and paraprofessionals, to provide the

myriad of vocational rehabilitation services necessary to meet the employment and independence needs of eligible individuals.

Goal & Priority III: To maximize resources by operating Louisiana Rehabilitation Services in an efficient and effective manner to ensure quality services that lead to successful employment outcomes and pursue innovative means to leverage the state's full federal VR grant allotment.

Goal & Priority IV: To provide vocational rehabilitation services that result in individuals with disabilities achieving quality employment outcomes by reaching the established performance indicators.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

The goals and priorities were based on an analysis of needs identified in the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, the SRC recommendations and performance accountability measures identified in WIOA.

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

The goals and priorities were based on an analysis of needs identified in the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, the SRC recommendations and performance accountability measures identified in WIOA.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

LRS is negotiating the following performance measures with CORE partners and will continue developing systems of tracking data for measures required per 116 of WIOA in the upcoming year.

111. Percent of program participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

112. Percent of program participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;

113. The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program; (baseline first year)

114. Percent of program participants obtaining a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program; (subject to clause (iii) Indicator relating to credential…program participants who obtain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent shall be included in the percentage counted as meeting the criterion under such clause only if such participants, in addition to obtaining such diploma or its recognized equivalent, have obtained or retained employment or are in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within 1 year after exit from the program.)

115. Percent of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and

116. Determine the indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause [(iv) Indicator for services to employers - Prior to the commencement of the second full program year after the date of enactment of this Act, for purposes of clauses (i)(VI), or clause (ii)(III) with respect to clause (i)(IV), the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education, after consultation with the representatives described in paragraph (4)(B), shall jointly develop and establish, for purposes of this subparagraph, 1 or more primary indicators of performance that indicate the effectiveness of the core programs in serving employers.])

LRS has identified in (o) State Strategies the strategies that will be used to meet these identified Goals and Priorities.

Refer to (p) Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals for performance on standards and indicators.

Agency goals focus on improving opportunities for individuals with disabilities and improving satisfaction of LRS consumers through participation in an effective and efficient system of workforce investment. These goals will be pursued in a manner that enables individuals with disabilities to make informed choices.

These goals are compatible with the vision of LRS in regards to serving individuals with disabilities, which is, "To be the most effective and efficient agency providing employment services for persons with disabilities in Louisiana."

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.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration completed a monitoring report for Louisiana Rehabilitation Services on September 24, 2013. This report can be found at the following web address:

https://rsa.ed.gov/about-your-state.cfm?state=Louisiana

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES.

The Order of Selection (OOS) assures that individuals with the most significant disabilities receive priority for VR services. After determination of eligibility for VR services, each

individual will then be classified by placement into one of the five following priority categories:

OOS Category I (Severe limitations in four or more functional capacity areas): An individual who has been determined eligible for VR services and:

117. Who has a significant physical or mental impairment which seriously limits four or more functional capacities (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, motor skills, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and,

118. Whose VR can be expected to require *multiple VR services over an *extended period of time; and

119. Who has one or more physical or mental impairments resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental illness, mental retardation, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia, other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another impairment or combination of impairments determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and VR needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitations.

An individual's placement in the Order of Selection shall not be based upon residency requirements; economic status; type of disability; age, sex, race, color, creed, or national origin; source of referral; or expected employment outcome.

*Definitions of terms in 2 above:

Multiple VR Services - are defined as vocational counseling and guidance and at least one other service needed to obtain, maintain, or advance in employment.

Extended Period of Time - Means that the individual requires VR services that are anticipated to extend three months or longer.

Order of Selection Category II (Severe limitations in three functional capacity areas): An individual who has been determined eligible for VR services and:

1. Who has a significant physical or mental impairment which seriously limits three functional capacities (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, motor skills, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and,

2. Whose VR can be expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time; and,

3. Who has one or more physical or mental impairments resulting from amputation arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental illness, mental retardation, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia,

other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another impairment or combination of impairments determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and VR needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitations.

An individual's placement in the Order of Selection shall not be based upon residency requirements; economic status; type of disability; age, sex, race, color, creed, or national origin; source of referral; or expected employment outcome.

Order of Selection Category III (Severe limitations in two functional capacity areas): An individual who has been determined eligible for VR services, and:

1. Who has a significant physical or mental impairment which seriously limits two functional capacities (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, motor skills or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and,

2. Whose VR can be expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time; and,

3. Who has one or more physical or mental impairments resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental illness, mental retardation, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia, other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another impairment or combination of impairments determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and VR needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitations.

Order of Selection Category IV (Severe limitations in one functional capacity area): An individual who has been determined eligible for VR services and:

1. Who has a significant physical or mental impairment which seriously limits one functional capacity (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, motor skills or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and,

2. Whose VR can be expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time; and,

3. Who has one or more physical or mental impairments resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental illness, mental retardation, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia, other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another impairment or combination of impairments determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and VR needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitations.

Order of Selection Category V: An individual with a physical or mental disability:

1. Who has been determined eligible for VR services; and

2. Who does not meet the criteria of an individual with either a “most significant” or “significant” disability as defined in Categories I - IV above.

An individual's placement in the Order of Selection shall not be based upon residency requirements; economic status; type of disability; age, sex, race, color, creed, or national origin; source of referral; or expected employment outcome.

Individuals shall be classified in the highest priority category for which they are determined qualified. Upon placement into a priority category, individuals shall be notified in writing of the priority categories, which category they have been placed in and their right to appeal their category assignment.

LRS shall provide for continuity of services once an otherwise eligible individual is selected for services and has begun to receive services under an IPE, irrespective of the severity of the individual’s disability. LRS will continue to provide needed VR services to all individuals with an existing Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

All services, including post-employment services, shall be available to individuals receiving services under an Order of Selection insofar as such services are necessary and appropriate to the individual's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in order to ultimately place them in successful employment.

All Agency policies and procedures governing the expenditure of funds, consumer financial participation, and use of comparable services and benefits are applicable to individuals receiving services under an Order of Selection.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER.

The diminished funding available from the state to match the federal dollars allotted has impacted the agency’s overall ability to effectively serve many individuals with disabilities in Louisiana who could potentially become employed.

The loss in funding corresponded to a decline in agency staffing, resulting in reduced capacity to administer the program and serve consumers. In 1988, when the Order of Selection (OOS) was implemented, LRS had approximately 565 staff members on hand to administer the programs under the auspices of LRS. In 2017 this number declined to 177 (69% decrease). Specifically, Rehabilitation Counselors have decreased by 46% over the last sixteen years (from 142 in 2002 to 77 in 2018). The agency goal as positions have been lost due to budget cuts, has been to maintain counselors above all other positions as indicated by the slower decline in counselor numbers as compared to other staff.

On March 20, 1988, LRS moved to providing Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services statewide through an OOS. This enabled the agency to continue providing services to those eligible, preserve its ability to accept applications, to provide diagnostic studies, to provide trial work experiences/extended evaluations and to determine placement in the OOS.

Effective July 20, 1999, LRS served all current consumers and new applicants determined eligible and placed in OOS Category I due to decreased funding. OOS Category II was opened in February of 2000. On March 9, 2001 LRS moved from three OOS categories to five OOS categories. In August of 2002, LRS opened OOS Category III and it was closed again in August of 2003.

OOS Category III was opened again in December 14, 2005 and in January 10, 2006, due to a waiver of the state match approved by Congress to assist the state in its recovery efforts after hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma, all OOS categories were opened. Due to this waiver, LRS was able to serve all five OOS categories from January 10, 2006 through April 13, 2009. From April 14, 2009 through September 30, 2010, LRS served OOS Categories I & II. Effective October 1, 2010, LRS began serving OOS I only. On January 1, 2014 LRS began serving individuals on the waiting list in Order of Selection Category II. On July 1, 2014 OOS Categories II and III were opened and individuals on the waiting list in Category IV were served. LRS served individuals determined eligible and placed in Categories I - III through February 29, 2016 at which time Categories I - III were closed. On June 3, 2016, Category I was opened and individuals on the Category II waiting list were served. On February 22, 2017, Category I was closed so all categories remained closed. On July 3, 2017 1,007 were served from the Category I waiting list. On September 1, 2017 1,019 were served from the Category I waiting list. On October 16, 2017 605 were served from the Category I waiting list. On November 8, 2017, LRS fully opened Category 1 and served the 795 on the waiting list. Funding remains unavailable to serve new applicants and eligible individuals placed in Categories II - V at this time. LRS will continue to provide services to those with plans of service in place as long as funding allows.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS.

LRS anticipates serving all individuals with existing plans of service. LRS served new consumers determined eligible and placed in Order of Selection Categories I effective November 8, 2017. Order of Selection Categories II -V remain closed.

Estimated Number of Individuals with Existing Plans of Service in the Next Fiscal Year:

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services estimates that it will serve 13,843 individuals during fiscal year 2019 in the vocational rehabilitation program. This number includes approximately 9,260 cases that are expected to receive services under an IPE. The estimated number of individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services is 1,283. The estimated number of individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services is 1,609. In addition, approximately 5,300 students with disabilities will be served through the Pre-Employment Transition Services program.

Projected Cost for the Vocational Rehabilitation Program in the Next Fiscal Year:

LRS is projecting that the VR Program will need $48,886,122 to provide services to newly eligible consumers in OOS Category I, those with plans of service in place in all five categories and to potentially eligible students receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS). Projected revenue is State General Funds of $7,399,887 and Federal Section 110 Funds of $41, 546,235.

D. THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER.

Priority Category	Number of Individuals to be Served	Estimated Number of Individuals Who Will Exit With Employment After Receiving Services	Average Number of Days Service Provided for Individuals Exiting With Employment	Estimated Number of Individuals Who Will Exit Without Employment After Receiving Services	Average Number of Days Service Provided for Individuals Exiting Without Employment	Time Within Which Goals are to be Achieved	Cost of Services
OOS 1	8,813	1,120	732	1,400	546	FY 2019	$15,981,367
OOS 2	350	145	1521	175	1,060	FY 2019	$1,824,526
OOS 3	75	15	1405	30	720	FY 2019	$175,000
OOS 4	20	3	2760	3	662	FY 2019	$19,066
OOS 5	2	0	3602	1	1,693	FY 2019	$41
TOTAL	9,260	1,283	-	1,609	-	FY 2019	$18,000,000

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

All individuals within a higher priority category for services shall be served before individuals in the next lowest priority category are served. When it is impossible to serve all individuals within a priority category, individuals shall be placed on a deferred services waiting list and served in chronological order based on the date of application. In the event that the Order of Selection is rescinded, individuals on deferred services waiting lists and in unserved categories will be contacted and served.

The number of consumers on the waiting list by Order of Selection Category follows:

- OOS Category I - 0
- OOS Category II - 395
- OOS Category III - 211
- OOS Category IV - 135
- OOS Category V - 28
- Total - 769

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.

Due to budgetary restrictions, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services does not elect, at this time, to serve eligible individuals in Order of Selection Categories not currently being served to assist them in maintaining employment. If additional funding should be received, this option will be revisited.

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.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) will provide and improve the quality of supported employment services through the Title VI program to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, through a project designed to improve outcomes for all supported employment consumers.

Description

The Order of Selection assures that individuals with the most significant disabilities receive priority for vocational rehabilitation services. Supported employment services will be provided to individuals with most significant disabilities in the following categories:

Order of Selection Category I - Severe limitations in four or more functional capacity areas.

Order of Selection Category II - Severe limitations in three functional capacity areas.

The goals and plans of the program will be:

1.) To ensure the quality of supported employment services provided to eligible consumers by monitoring the vendors. The monitoring will utilize site reviews and include quality indicators to evaluate the assessment of employment outcomes and an evaluation of the provision of services. The monitoring will be carried out by the state and field office staff.

2.) To investigate, purchase or provide technical assistance and training opportunities for state office and field office staff to improve the supported employment service delivery system. The field staff will receive supported employment training directed at case management and quality supported employment services.

3.) To coordinate with the Department of Health & Hospitals (Office of Behavioral Health, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities - Support Waivers Program, and Medicaid Purchase Plan), the Louisiana Chapter of the Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE), LSU Health Science Center Human Development Center, and the Louisiana Work Pays Consortium in order to provide input to vendor agencies providing supported employment services and to solicit input from these agencies in the planning and implementation of quality supported employment services.

4.) To coordinate with other agencies (public and private), employers and advocates to establish multiple options for extended services, including the use of natural supports, to ensure more successful supported employment outcomes.

Supported Employment Models Used by LRS:

LRS used and Individual Job Coach model. It is estimated that approximately 450 individuals will be provided supported employment services with the funding available through the Title VI program in FY 2018. Individuals with the most significant disabilities and who have a plan prior to March 1, 2018 will be eligible for this service.

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

LRS will provide ongoing support services, including customized employment and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain youth with most significant disabilities, to work toward competitive integrated employment; beginning at Job Stabilization / Transition to Extended Services.

Purchased supported employment services (Milestones) are identified and listed on the IPE and must be obtained through an approved Supported Employment CRP and generally cannot exceed 24 months or four years for youth with disabilities (ages 14-24). If a Consumer requires longer than 24 months in reaching job stabilization or four years for youth with disabilities, the LRS Counselor can extend the service in accordance with Plan guidelines.

In rare and unusual circumstances LRS will provide extended services for a period of not more than 48 months or 25 years of age to youth with most significant disabilities. The pay rate will be $25.00 per hour for a maximum of 2 hours per month. Supported employment services may be provided as post-employment services that are unavailable from an extended services provider following transition services.

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.

LRS will continue to collaborate with the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities and Office of Behavioral Health to identify funding sources for extended services.

O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

Goal I: To maximize opportunities for individuals with disabilities in achieving competitive integrated employment and promote self-sufficiency.

Objective A. Provide quality vocational rehabilitation services leading to employment outcomes for 2000 eligible individuals with disabilities annually through PY 2020.

Strategy 1. Evaluate and monitor case record documentation to maintain at least a 90% average level of compliance with agency policy and procedures.

Strategy 2. Explore opportunities for consumers to participate in Telework in order to increase employment outcomes.

Strategy 3. Identify and collaborate with employers to provide job development, work based learning experiences and job placement.

Strategy 4. Increase Counselor presence in secondary education settings in order to improve provision of vocational rehabilitation services to transition students.

Strategy 5. Coordinate with employers on transition services for youth and students with disabilities.

Strategy 6. Increase resources for assistive technology assessments and devices to improve employment outcomes.

Strategy 7. Make all agency documents available in accessible formats.

Strategy 8. Ensure LRS office buildings are 504 compliant.

Strategy 9. Expand employment opportunities though improved interfaces with professional organizations focused on employment.

Strategy 10. Increase outreach to targeted populations who are identified by the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment as being unserved/underserved, including those needing supported employment.

Strategy 11. Explore options for collaboration to provide transportation to consumers in rural areas.

Strategy 12. Explore options for collaboration to provide services to specific disability populations including those diagnosed with developmental/intellectual disabilities, autism, mental illness or addictive disorders, blindness/deaf-blindness, deafness/hard-of-hearing or individuals who are students in transition.

Strategy 13. Explore potential of establishing a program to provide training to individuals with autistic spectrum disorders.

Strategy 14. Explore how to determine if vocational training programs for industry-based certifications are qualified or certified to provide quality vocational training that results in competitive integrated employment outcomes.

Strategy 15. Collaborate with LDH to determine if individuals interested in competitive employment and in Sheltered Workshops are eligible for VR services.

Objective B. To expend a minimum of 15% of LRS federal funding to make available Pre-Employment Transitions Services (PETS) to applicants and potentially eligible students with disabilities.

Strategy 1. Perform comprehensive statewide needs assessment to determine needs of students with disabilities.

Strategy 2. Expand outreach to students with disabilities to make them aware of VR services including PETS.

Strategy 3 Monitor the provision of PETS services to determine effectiveness and possible improvement to service delivery process.

Objective C. Increase the number of Randolph-Sheppard Managers earning at least $25,000 annually by expanding opportunities and enhancing consumer service delivery in the Randolph-Sheppard Program.

Strategy 1. Monitor all legislation, which might impact the program's preference (first choice at selecting to occupy available locations).

Strategy 2. Expand training opportunities for licensed blind managers to enhance skills, entrepreneurial abilities, and quality of service to customers.

Strategy 3. Consider merging locations with annual earnings below $25,000.

Strategy 4. Identify opportunities for new assigned and unassigned locations, including a staff position.

Goal II: To ensure that Louisiana Rehabilitation Services has necessary and qualified rehabilitation personnel to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to achieve competitive integrated employment and self-sufficiency.

Objective A. Provide training resources to 100% of agency staff in order to increase their efficiency in service provision through PY 2020.

Strategy 1. Implement upgrades to the Accessible Web-based Activity and Reporting Environment System (AWARE) software.

Strategy 2. Identify alternative methods of succession training for staff members interested in pursuing leadership positions.

Strategy 3. Provide in-service training to regional staff annually through a variety of methods as identified by training needs assessments/surveys and quality assurance reviews.

Strategy 4. Provide support for professional staff to obtain a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling.

Strategy 5. Develop and implement methods to increase recruitment and retention of qualified staff.

Strategy 6. Provide LRS staff with disabilities, written or electronic communication in accessible format(s) or provide other reasonable accommodations.

Goal III: To maximize resources and pursue innovative means to leverage the state's full federal VR grant allotment.

Objective A. Work collaboratively with Partners to leverage funding in order to ensure that services to consumers with disabilities are accessed and utilized to the utmost extent by PY2020.

Strategy 1. Explore and utilize web-based networks in order to improve consumer employment outcomes.

Strategy 2. Continue collaboration with the Second Injury Fund (SIF) and request increase in funding to assist consumers in obtaining or maintaining employment.

Strategy 3. Explore and implement third party cooperative arrangements with public entities and/or establishment projects with Community Rehabilitation Programs and/or public/private non-profit entities based on the needs identified in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.

Strategy 4. Explore options to increase the number of Counselors dedicated to providing services to transition students.

Strategy 5. Collaborate with Veterans program and Apprenticeship program at LWC to determine methods to increase outreach and successful employment outcomes.

Objective B. Monitor and evaluate 100% of the Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) for quality and cost effectiveness of service provision in order to assure compliance with agency standards through PY 2020.

Strategy 1. Monitor and evaluate CRPs through a Regional Triennial Renewal Process.

Strategy 2. Monitor and evaluate the cost effectiveness of service provision by reviews of a sample of CRPs through site visits on an annual basis.

Strategy 3. Annually measure consumer satisfaction with CRP services through agency survey instrument.

Strategy 4. Conduct outreach to determine potential vendors who can collaborate to serve targeted populations in rural areas including, but not limited to, those who are veterans, mentally ill, ex-felons, recovering from addictive disorders or homeless.

Strategy 5. Explore the use of a vendor quality instrument and/or questionnaire for counselors/consumers to be used to provide informed choice.

Objective C. Explore the use of technology to increase agency efficiencies in processes to realize cost savings.

Strategy 1. Explore requirements to upgrade AWARE to paperless system.

Strategy 2. Explore options to increase functionality of LRS staff in the community by utilizing Telework, new technologies, and complementary work processes.

Goal IV. Investigate the transfer Independent Living Program to LDH to align with the federal program transfer.

Strategy 1. Discuss with administration of LDH, LWC and stakeholders.

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.

In 2018 the AT Program Coordinator is working with Fiscal, Planning, and the CRP Bureau Administrator to update approved Rehabilitation Technology and Assistive Technology professionals, providers and vendors listed in our Technical Guidance and Assistance Manual. For fee-for-service assessments and evaluations statewide.

LRS continues to coordinate with Louisiana Assistive Technology Network (LATAN) on an expanded program, funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to provide statewide demonstration, learning, lending, and purchasing assistance of assistive technology. LATAN is an approved vendor for providing a device rental service so consumers may have a more realistic trial use of an AT device before requesting that LRS provide them with said device. LATAN is adding a leasing & lease-to-own program as an added option to the loan financing program. LATAN is a VOAD agency and a member of the Louisiana emergency preparedness and response network for persons with disabilities known as Emergency Management for Disabled and Aging Coalition (EMDAC). They conduct training to assist individuals with their personal planning for evacuations and participate in table-top exercises with First Responders (Fire and Police personnel who are part of search and rescue units)

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.

LRS Counselors are required to conduct outreach to faculty and students statewide at high schools and colleges to educate consumers with disabilities, who are unserved or underserved, regarding available VR services. In addition, outreach is conducted at prisons for individuals in pre-release programs and at community functions regarding available services.

In rural areas, the counselors travel to meet with applicants/consumers in a convenient location to provide services and work with them to obtain employment.

Based on needs identified in the needs assessment for transition students, outreach to local school districts continues to be conducted to identify those districts who are interested in a Third Party Cooperative Arrangement for transition services to increase success and improve post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities.

LRS maintains a strong collaboration with the Office of Behavioral Health, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities and the Office of Aging and Adult Services to identify potential sources of referrals.

LRS works collaboratively with Section 121 VR programs to ensure that any service needs to Native Americans with disabilities are addressed. A Program Coordinator is assigned to provide technical assistance to the field concerning outreach to this population. Outreach is performed through presentations at events sponsored by Section 121 groups and at functions attended by Native Americans. A representative from Section 121 VR programs is on the State Rehabilitation Council and acts as a liaison between the two programs.

4. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES).

LRS is continues to review proposed ideas and initiatives for Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).

LRS has designated VR counselors to work with Pre-ETS only cases across the state. LRS is working with a technical advisor to develop innovative and progressive systems and regulations for Pre-ETS services.

The following strategies will expand and improve VR services for students and youth with disabilities who are transitioning from high school to postsecondary education and/or employment, and improve coordination with state and local secondary and postsecondary educational entities:

- Continue to evaluate, revise, and develop policy, procedures, and staffing strategies to improve consistency and increase effectiveness in the provision of transition services.
- Continue to expand and increase partnerships with schools to facilitate the coordination and provision of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities.
- Continue to expand and increase partnerships with state and local secondary and postsecondary educational institutions and organizations to facilitate the identification of best practices, leveraged resources, and improved coordination.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

LRS monitors and evaluates 100% of the CRPs triennially for quality and cost effectiveness of service provision to determine what improvements may be needed as well as to assure compliance with agency standards.

Based on the results of the triennial statewide needs assessment, LRS identified areas of the state where CRPs are unable to meet the current need or are not present to provide services. This information is used to explore funding options, facility and staffing needs to establish, develop or improve CRPs.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

Strategies to improve performance are listed in the section above entitled "(1) The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities."

LRS is negotiating performance measures with CORE partners and will be developing strategies to improve performance per 116 of WIOA.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

LRS continues to collaborate with LWC in identifying effective ways to integrate services in the Career Solution Centers and to be involved with the Workforce Commission and its

fifteen (15) Workforce Development Areas. LRS is represented on each of the 15 boards and attends meetings as scheduled. There are fifteen (15) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established with each of the 15 Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). Within the 15 Workforce Development Areas, 62 Career Solution Centers have been established. Fifteen cost allocation plans have been completed by the WDBs, and approved by all parties. LRS has a good working relationship with the Career Solution Centers and continues to pay expenses to the local Career Solution Centers for our participation, as per the local cost allocation plans. To improve knowledge regarding assistive technology and address other accessibility issues, LRS' Program Coordinator for Rehabilitation Technology continues to provide consultation to the Career Solution Centers. In addition, our agency's REDS serve as the LRS liaison for all Career Solution Centers within their region and include providing "LRS Public Awareness" as well as services to consumers such as job seeking skills techniques and employment development. LRS and LWC are committed to the success of the Career Solution Centers and work collaboratively to serve individuals with disabilities at assigned Centers.

LRS continues to renew and revise existing local cooperative agreements, as applicable, with the 70 school districts and 146 Charter Schools in Louisiana. The LRS Transition Program Coordinator continues to collaborate and partner with DOE, OCDD, Work Incentive Planning Program, Office of Community Services, LWC, and the Office of Youth Development in an effort to network, share information and utilize comparable benefits to enhance VR services to transition students. The primary focus of LRS' collaboration is to identify and address barriers (e.g. policies, eligibility process, resource allocation); assure effective service provision through the support of local interagency core teams, provide cross-agency training, outreach, engage in capacity building of young adults and family outreach efforts; provide continued support of innovative models and practices related to transition; and provide information and technical assistance. The Program Coordinator provides guidance and information to the Rehabilitation Counselors regarding specific transition issues. The Program Coordinator worked collaboratively with WINTAC's Coordinator using conference calls, to discuss transition topics and provide information to LRS' field offices. The Training Unit developed a School-to-Work Job Readiness curriculum and has trained staff to implement the curriculum with eligible students. Training will continue to be provided statewide. VR Counselors are encouraged to provide services at least once a month, when feasible, to students determined appropriate for job readiness training.

As LRS continues to focus on increasing/enhancing quality employment outcomes, every Regional Office now has a REDS position or an Employment Specialist that provides job development/placement assistance to consumers. This assistance may include direct job placement, job shadowing, work experience, on the job training, or custom solutions.

In addition, a State Office position coordinates employment activities statewide. The Employment Initiative Program Coordinator serves as LRS' direct contact to the VR Business Network and distributes job leads and information to the regional offices. In FY 2015, the VR Business Network provided job leads from all over the country. Some of the job leads were from the following companies: Walgreen's, Lowe's, TJX Companies, Office Max, Wells Fargo, DOL, Manpower, Inc., USDA, Marriott International, and many others.

LRS continues to participate with Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) in the "Employment First" initiative, which was designed to provide employment as

a first option for persons with developmental disabilities, as an alternative to institutionalization, and to provide integration/independence in the community.

LRS participates in roundtable discussions hosted by OCDD to inform their staff and providers of new requirements related to integration of individuals with developmental disabilities into their communities as a result of new Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) rules, as well as how to better collaborate with LRS to achieve goals set forth in WIOA.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

LRS will use goals and strategies in this State Plan to determine staffing for initiatives, funding appropriations, and address the VR needs identified in the triennial needs assessment to improve services to consumers with disabilities. The agency will appoint staff members to coordinate and conduct activities to achieve identified goals and strategies.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

LRS will continue to explore opportunities to incorporate innovative methods of service deliver to improve consumer employment outcomes and expansion of opportunities. LRS will continue to utilize I & E funds for the SRC and SILC in PY 2019 & PY 2020.

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.

Strategies to improve access include evaluation of all LRS offices, publications and all other electronic media utilized by consumers. LRS uses information from the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, as well as consumer, staff and vendor input to identify areas where access can be improved.

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 following summarizes the agency objectives/goals and the progress that has been made toward reaching them for Federal Fiscal Year ending 2017. State VR agencies submit a state plan annually to RSA to identify the goals and priorities of the state in carrying out the program.

Goal I: To maximize opportunities for individuals with disabilities in achieving competitive integrated employment and promote self-sufficiency.

Objective A. Provide quality vocational rehabilitation services leading to employment outcomes for 2,000 eligible individuals with disabilities annually through FY 2020.

Strategy 1. Evaluate and monitor case record documentation to maintain at least a 90% average level of compliance with agency policy and procedures.

Progress: LRS quality assurance staff randomly selected and reviewed 270 consumer service records during the 2017 review cycle (January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017). Samples were drawn statewide from records in *Service* and *Closed Rehabilitated* statuses to review the following areas of casework for compliance: Application, Eligibility, Assessment, IPE, Supervision, Closed Rehabilitated, and Fiscal. The statewide rate of counselor compliance with agency documentation requirements delineated in the QA-1 monitoring form was measured at 95.9% (≥ 90% is considered "Satisfactory") for the 2017 review cycle. This compliance rating represents a decrease (.5%) from the 2016 review year which was measured at 96.4%. The sample size for the 2017 review year was in compliance with RSA recommendations (2%) based on total consumer population.

Each of the eight regions achieved a "Satisfactory" rating during the 2017 review cycle for casework documentation compliance measured by the monitoring form. Regional scores ranged from 93% to 98%. Corrective action recommendations resulting from QA monitoring activities for the 2017 review year have been implemented. The QA-1 monitoring form was revised to incorporate changes in LRS guidelines implemented over the past 12 months.

Two Master Rehabilitation Counselor reviews were conducted by the Quality Assurance Unit during the 2017 review year. Each of the caseloads reviewed for promotion to Master Rehabilitation Counselor status exceeded the 90% compliance level required.

Strategy 2. Explore opportunities for consumers to participate in Telework in order to increase employment outcomes.

Progress: Telework employment options are considered for consumers when appropriate.

Strategy 3. Identify and collaborate with employers to provide job development, Work-Based Learning Experiences and job placement.

Progress: Through collaboration with the LRS Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS) and local businesses throughout the state, 115 jobs were developed leading to successful job placements. Additionally, LRS vendors work with businesses throughout the year in developing jobs and placing consumers.

Strategy 4. Increase Counselor presence in secondary education settings in order to improve provision of vocational rehabilitation services to transition students.

Progress: Pre-ETS counselors have been assigned to all public schools throughout the state.

Strategy 5. Coordinate with employers on transition services for youth and students with disabilities.

Progress: Pre-ETS counselors and REDS have identified employers and placed students with disabilities into Work-Based Learning Experiences.

Strategy 6. Increase resources for assistive technology assessments and devices to improve employment outcomes.

Progress: Two additional, out-of-state vendor/providers have been vetted, and added to provide rehabilitation driving assessments and training on a fee-for-service basis, to include vehicle modification specifications for LRS consumers. A contractual agreement to hire a Physical Therapist and Rehabilitation Engineer through LSU Health Sciences Department was negotiated and approved. These professionals will conduct seating and positioning assessments, wheelchair and personal mobility evaluations, home modifications for accessibility evaluations, job accommodations assessments, and other rehabilitation engineering field services as required. The state-approved list of assistive technology and rehabilitation technology providers/vendors has been updated, and referral forms made available to the regional offices.

Strategy 7. Make all agency documents available in accessible formats.

Progress: All documents can be provided in alternative formats, such as braille, large print, etc. upon request.

Strategy 8. Ensure LRS office buildings are 504 compliant.

Progress: 504 audits of the LRS buildings and facilities are on-going.

Strategy 9. Expand employment opportunities through improved interfaces with professional organizations focused on employment.

Progress: The Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists and Employment Coordinator participate in the Diversity Job Fairs, Society of Human Resource Managers, Mayors Commission on Disability, Business Service, Louisiana Diversity Council and Chamber of Commerce meetings. The Employment Coordinator collaborates with veterans groups including site visits with employers and quarterly training events. In 2017, the Louisiana Diversity Council will be adding a chapter in the Baton Rouge area. This will expand opportunities for employment.

Strategy 10. Increase outreach to targeted populations who are identified by the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment as being unserved/underserved, including those needing supported employment.

Progress: The Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment is being conducted in 2017 for submission in the State Plan updates completed in 2018.

Strategy 11. Explore options for collaboration to provide transportation to consumers in rural areas.

Progress: A three-year relationship with the Tangipahoa Voluntary Council on Aging (TVCOA) resulted in a proposal to the Transportation Research Board (TRB) to

network seven para-transit equipped vans between businesses along the Highway 51 corridor between the cities of Amite, Hammond and Ponchatoula. The strategies behind this proposal will provide a reliable round-trip option for non-driving job-seekers, via Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) planning.

In Evangeline Parish the Council-on-Aging is planning to provide transit services for an LWC-sponsored apprenticeship training program proposal to begin training technical skills at the Vocational Technical School in Ville Platte.

As a result of WIOA-initiatives to increase collaboration between services agencies (LWC, LRS, VA, CAA and FITAP) at the local level, a JARC initiative to link job-training and development programs between St. Landry and Evangeline parishes with Lafayette is underway from the Business and Career Solutions Center in Opelousas. The JARC program will build on their current fleet of five, USC-49 5310 (Elderly and Disabled) program vehicles.

Moreover, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) of Lafayette, Louisiana has working plans to link urban transit services with rural communities such as Carencro and Breaux Bridge, LA. The LRS Regional Manager of the Lafayette office is an active participant in this planning process.

Strategy 12. Explore options for collaboration to provide services to specific disability populations including those diagnosed with developmental/intellectual disabilities, autism, mental illness or addictive disorders, blindness/deaf-blindness, deafness/hard-of-hearing or individuals who are students in transition.

Progress: LRS has two Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (Bossier Parish Community College and LSU-Human Development Center) that work specifically with the autistic and developmental/intellectual disability populations of students to offer college experiences while providing Pre-Employment Transition Services. LRS also has a fee-for-service agreement with Nichols State University to provide services to autistic and developmental/intellectual disability populations.

Strategy 13. Explore potential of establishing a program in Baton Rouge mirroring Café Reconcile.

Progress: LRS investigated establishing this program in the Baton Rouge area and determined that a similar program was already established. Continued investigation will reveal other areas of the state where this type of program will be of benefit.

Strategy 14. Explore potential of establishing a program to provide training to individuals with autistic spectrum disorders.

Progress: LRS has developed a fee-for-service agreement with Nicholls State University and a contract with Bossier Parish Community College to provide services primarily to consumers with autism.

Strategy 15. Explore how to determine if vocational training programs for industry-based certifications are qualified or certified to provide quality vocational training that results in competitive integrated employment outcomes.

Progress: This will be explored in FY 2018.

Strategy 16. Collaborate with Louisiana Department of Health to determine if individuals interested in competitive employment and in Sheltered Workshops are eligible for VR services.

Progress: LRS is in the process of updating our Memorandum of Understanding with the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities to ensure a seamless referral process to LRS for individuals interested in competitive integrated employment. LRS also implemented WIOA's subminimum wage regulations and developed guidance for staff statewide to aid in implementation.

Objective B. To expend a minimum of 15% of LRS federal funding to make available Pre-Employment Transitions Services (Pre-ETS) to applicants and potentially eligible students with disabilities.

Strategy 1. Perform comprehensive statewide needs assessment to determine needs of students with disabilities.

Progress: The needs assessment is scheduled to be conducted in calendar year 2017 for submission in the State Plan submitted in 2018.

Strategy 2. Expand outreach to students with disabilities to make them aware of VR services including Pre-ETS.

Progress: Pre-ETS counselors throughout the state attend IEP meeting, career fairs, and other school functions to make them aware of LRS services.

Strategy 3 Monitor the provision of Pre-ETS services to determine effectiveness and possible improvement to service delivery process.

Progress: Pre-ETS counselors monitor vendor activities in the schools to ensure delivery of appropriate services and determine any improvements needed.

Objective C. Increase the number of Randolph-Sheppard Managers earning at least $25,000 annually by expanding opportunities and enhancing consumer service delivery in the Randolph-Sheppard Program.

Strategy 1. Monitor all legislation, which might impact the program's preference (first choice at selecting to occupy available locations).

Progress: This is monitored annually during the legislative session.

Strategy 2. Expand training opportunities for licensed blind managers to enhance skills, entrepreneurial abilities, and quality of service to customers.

Progress: Managers are provided upward mobility training annually. In addition, regional training is conducted to address specific problems.

Strategy 3. Consider merging locations with annual earnings below $25,000.

Progress: As managers exit existing facilities, a systematic evaluation of the facility and potential for earning $25,000 or higher is undertaken. For those facilities that are not deemed to fall within that category, opportunities for merging with existing facilities and/or converting them to unassigned vending locations are investigated.

Strategy 4. Identify opportunities for new assigned and unassigned locations, including a staff position.

Progress: We will continue to pursue this goal pending availability of funds and positions.

Goal II: To ensure that Louisiana Rehabilitation Services has necessary and qualified rehabilitation personnel to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to achieve competitive integrated employment and self-sufficiency.

Objective A. Provide training resources to 100% of agency staff in order to increase their efficiency in service provision through FY 2020.

Strategy 1. Implement upgrades to the Accessible Web-based Activity and Reporting Environment System (AWARE) software.

Progress: LRS continues to upgrade AWARE as new enhancements are published. Upgrades are vital to the implementation of WIOA guidelines and RSA 911 reporting. We are on target to implement all needed upgrades.

Strategy 2. Identify alternative methods of succession training for staff members interested in pursuing leadership positions.

Progress: Succession training is provided through the State's Comprehensive Public Training Program, mentoring the agency provides and the National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute. Staff members participate based on interests and career advancement goals.

Strategy 3. Provide in-service training to regional staff annually through a variety of methods as identified by training needs assessments/surveys and quality assurance reviews.

Progress: LRS is currently providing video training recorded, archived and accessed on the internal Share drive. Staff members also participate in real time web training and/or in-person training. Video training has allowed the flexibility to reach staff across the state on a more frequent basis without requiring state travel. As funding permits, staff members still have the option to attend live training. New technology options have improved communication statewide and reduced travel cost.

Strategy 4. Provide support for professional staff to obtain a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling.

Progress: Staff is advised of training opportunities and universities that offer financial assistance. Educational leave can be provided upon request if meeting predetermined criteria. All professional level staff is encouraged to obtain their Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling.

Strategy 5. Develop and implement methods to increase recruitment and retention of qualified staff.

Progress: LRS continues to offer educational leave, assistance with books and supplies and a variety of training opportunities to improve competencies and skill

level of staff. In addition, continuing education units can be provided by the agency for internal training events to assist staff with maintaining certifications. The agency hosts interns from local universities and attends career days at high schools and universities to recruit.

Strategy 6. Provide LRS staff with disabilities, written or electronic communication in accessible format(s) or provide other reasonable accommodations.

Progress: Provision of materials via recording, in braille, or in other alternate formats are provided upon request.

Goal III: To maximize resources and pursue innovative means to leverage the state's full federal VR grant allotment.

Objective A. Work collaboratively with Partners to leverage funding in order to ensure that services to consumers with disabilities are accessed and utilized to the utmost extent by FY 2020.

Strategy 1. Explore and utilize web-based networks in order to improve consumer employment outcomes.

Progress: LRS Counselors utilize the LWC Hire database to assist consumers in locating employment. In addition, various web-based sites with job postings are utilized.

Strategy 2. Continue collaboration with the Second Injury Fund (SIF) and request increase in funding to assist consumers in obtaining or maintaining employment.

Progress: During State Fiscal Year 2017, the agency served 688 consumers with SIF funds and spent the total amount allotted of $2,205,035. The agency remains in constant communication with the SIF Board and continues to request an increase the amount allotted to LRS.

Strategy 3. Explore and implement third party cooperative arrangements with public entities and/or establishment projects with Community Rehabilitation Programs and/or public/private non-profit entities based on the needs identified in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.

Progress: LRS has negotiated Third Party Cooperative Arrangements with twelve entities throughout the state including school boards, charter schools, and other public entities to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Strategy 4. Explore options to increase the number of Counselors dedicated to providing services to transition students.

Progress: LRS has approximately 17 rehabilitation counselors assigned to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services statewide.

Strategy 5. Collaborate with Veterans program and Apprenticeship program at LWC to determine methods to increase outreach and successful employment outcomes.

Progress: The Program Coordinator for Employment Development works closely with her counterpart at the state Veterans program.

Objective B. Monitor and evaluate 100% of the Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) for quality and cost effectiveness of service provision in order to assure compliance with agency standards through FY 2020.

Strategy 1. Monitor and evaluate CRPs through a Regional Triennial Renewal Process.

Progress: The Bureau of Community Rehabilitation Programs completed programmatic reviews of CRP's across the state. Of those found to have deficiencies, feedback was provided regarding non-compliant areas and corrective action was taken to enable the CRP to become compliant. The triennial review process is near completion. Non- compliant vendors were required to take corrective action prior to renewal.

Strategy 2. Monitor and evaluate the cost effectiveness of service provision by reviews of a sample of CRPs through site visits on an annual basis.

Progress: LRS reviews rates for services when it appears that a rate is too low or if a request for review is received.

Strategy 3. Annually measure consumer satisfaction with CRP services through agency survey instrument.

Progress: The CRP satisfaction survey is administered annually. The most recent survey completed indicated an approval rating of 77% for the CRPs.

Strategy 4. Conduct outreach to determine potential vendors who can collaborate to serve targeted populations in rural areas including, but not limited to, those who are veterans, mentally ill, ex-felons, recovering from addictive disorders or homeless.

Progress: Regional Managers determine areas of service in which vendors are needed within the regions that they serve. In the event that a shortage of service providers is identified within a region, the manager will conduct outreach to determine interest by the public or local service organizations qualified to provide the targeted services.

Strategy 5. Explore the use of a vendor quality instrument and/or questionnaire for counselors/consumers to be used to provide informed choice.

Progress: LRS has considered the use of a "report card" for vendors and continues to explore this option.

Objective C. Explore the use of technology to increase agency efficiencies in processes to realize cost savings.

Strategy 1. Explore requirements to upgrade AWARE to paperless system.

Progress: LRS has implemented the first stages of a paperless system and staff have the capabilities to attach documents in AWARE. Additional equipment will be needed to fully utilize a paperless system. Purchase of this equipment will be considered when necessary funding is received.

Strategy 2. Explore options to increase functionality of LRS staff in the community by utilizing Telework, new technologies, and complementary work processes.

Progress: LRS has considered options to allow counselors to fully work from outside/community locations but does not currently have the appropriate equipment to access the AWARE case management system and capture consumer's signatures. Laptops, scanners and signature pads will be required. Signature pads have been tested to determine what will function best with AWARE.

Goal IV. Investigate the transfer Independent Living (IL) Program to the Louisiana Department of Health to align with the federal program transfer.

Strategy 1. Discuss with administration of the Louisiana Department of Health, LWC and stakeholders.

Progress: Discussions were held and it was decided that the Independent Living Program will remain with LWC at this time. The IL Centers and their stakeholders have an excellent relationship with LWC and are satisfied with the current placement.

EVALUATION AND REPORT OF PROGRESS FOR STANDARDS AND INDICATORS

Employment Outcomes

The Federal Performance Indicators were affected by the following:

- **State budget deficits leading to mid-year cuts in the LRS budget**
- **Cuts in LRS staff/positions and hiring freezes**
- **Lack of funding to serve new consumers determined eligible and placed in Order of Selection Categories not being served.**
- **Reserve of 15% federal funds to provide Pre-ETS services.**

Performance Indicator 1.1: The number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period compared to the number of individuals who exit the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period.

One thousand eight hundred and thirty-four (1,834) consumers exited the VR program having achieved an employment outcome in FY 2017. LRS had 2,346 consumers who exited the VR program in FY 2016 with a successful employment outcome. LRS saw a decrease in successful closures in 2017 as compared to 2016.

Performance Indicator 1.2: Of all individuals who exit the VR program after receiving services, the percentage that are determined to have achieved an employment outcome.

A total of 5,668 consumer cases were closed after receiving services in FY 2017. Consumer's cases closed as achieving an employment outcome was 1,834. Consumer success rate for FY 2017 was 32.36%. This is a decrease in the percentage with employment outcomes from the previous year.

Performance Indicator 1.3: Of all individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, the percentage that exit the VR program in competitive, self-employment, or Blind Enterprise Program (BEP) employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

In FY 2017, 1,834 consumers exited the VR program in competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment having achieved an employment outcome; which resulted in 81.57% or 1,496 consumers earning at least Louisiana's minimum hourly wage of $7.25.

Performance Indicator 1.4: All individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-employment or BEP employment with earning equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities.

In FY 2017, 1,496 consumers exiting the VR program in competitive, self-employment or BEP employment earned a wage greater than or equal to the $7.25 minimum hourly wage. Of the 1,496 consumers 1,492 or 99.73% were significantly disabled.

Performance Indicator 1.5: The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment with earning levels equivalent to at least the minimum wage as a ratio to the state's average hourly earnings for all individuals in the state who are employed.

The average hourly earnings of individuals exiting the VR program in competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment for FY 2017 was $12.47, which is a ratio of .59 to the state average hourly wage earnings of $21.13 for all individuals in the state who are employed. As a result, this indicator was met and LRS continues to meet this indicator.

Performance Indicator 1.6: Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-employment or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they apply for VR services.

In FY 2017, 1,496 individuals exited the VR program in competitive, self-employment or BEP employment earning at least minimum wage. At application 331 or 22.12% reported their own income as the largest single source of support. At closure, this number increased to 1,401 or 93.62% for a positive difference of 71.52. As a result this indicator was met and LRS continues to work diligently to meet this indicator.

Performance Indicator 2.1: The service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all non-minority individuals with disabilities.

In FY 2017, Louisiana had 4,268 non-minorities exiting the VR program; 2,654 non-minorities received services, for a service rate was 62.18%. Minorities exiting the VR program equaled 4,992 with 3,014 minorities receiving services with a rate of 60.38%; this is a .971 ratio. It is anticipated that the LRS' VR Program will achieve results in line with those indicated in this performance standard area.

THE FOLLOWING IS A REPORT OF PROGRESS FOR SPECIFIC AGENCY ACTIVITIES:

Second Injury Fund: In 2017 (July 2016-1 July 2017) $2,205,035. SIF program funds were spent by LRS on 537 consumers who were successfully employed in that year. At the closing of the year, there were 151 consumers in open IPE's being served. In 2018, two hundred (200) consumers have successfully been employed, with three hundred sixty-two cases in service status, with $1,250,555.75

spent to date.

Transportation Initiative: The AT Program Coordinator continues to work with agencies providing transportation related services to increase accessibility and availability of transportation for individuals with disabilities in the state.

Recently, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) release guidelines showing how their funding could be used to match with USC 49 Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) funds requested from the federal partners. To maximize flexibility and improve transportation coordination, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) has clarified and publicized the ability of grantees to use Older Americans Act Title IIIB Supportive Services Funds to match to specific FTA programs.

The AT Program Coordinator has worked closely with the Regional LRS Managers and the Regional and Metropolitan Planning Organizations to network these proposals in such a way that LRS Counselors will have these transportation assets available for their consumers in job seeking and employment services. Several JARC's are already in operation in East Baton Rouge, the River Parishes, and the parishes surrounding New Orleans.

This bodes well for increased leverage for poorer, smaller, rural parishes in helping them serve our non-driving job-seekers.

Employment Initiatives: Throughout the regions in this state, LRS continues to focus on business engagements which focuses on connecting with various employers and thereby increasing employment outcomes with people with disabilities. Our Employment Specialists, REDS, and our Program Coordinator persists in educating employers on the advantages on hiring people with disabilities and the financial incentives such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program (WOTC) that they may be able to receive. During Disability Awareness Month, (October) job fairs are held across the state which enables our consumers to make solid connections with employers that could lead to employment opportunities. Our Employment Specialist and REDS continue to provide job development/placement assistance to our consumers. This assistance may include direct job placement, job shadowing, work experience, on the job training, or custom solutions.

Four years ago, a State Office position was hired to coordinate employment activities statewide. The Employment Initiative Program Coordinator serves as LRS' direct contact to the VR Business Network and distributes job leads and information to the regional offices. The Program Coordinator continues to network by means of attending the Society of Human Resource Management monthly meetings, WIOA board meetings and monthly meetings with the Louisiana Diversity Council. The Program Coordinator continues to work closely with the Veterans personnel related to business engagement as employers often group veterans and people with disabilities as one group.

The Louisiana Rehabilitation Council also has an employment committee that focus on strategies used to increase business engagement as well as various approaches that we can use when working with our consumers to increase their own potential to employment. These committee members consist of Employment Specialists, HR managers from businesses, Representatives from Independent Living Council and former recipients of vocational rehabilitation services. The committee focuses on establishing best practice models to improve services and employment outcomes for LRS consumers.

Ticket-to-Work: LRS continues to network and collaborate with MAXIMUS, as well as many other agencies in the state, to ensure Ticket-to-Work is successful in Louisiana. LRS continues to maintain a statewide 1-800 Ticket Hotline number for individuals interested in learning more about their Ticket and how LRS would be able to assist them.

In FY 2017, LRS received $1,163,021.25; this amount was a slight decrease from FY 2016's $1,488,446.32 which was received from the Social Security Administration's (SSAs) reimbursement program. The Program Coordinator continues to work closely with SSA to insure all documentation is submitted properly so that claims can be processed.

Collaboration with Title 121 Programs: LRS and the Tribal programs continue to provide coordinated services under the collaborative agreement to make the rehabilitation process more responsive to the needs of American Indians with disabilities. The collaborative agreement allows for mutual acceptance of eligibility decisions, the provision of services through concurrent (joint) cases, the sharing of resources, and to continue cross-training opportunities to facilitate the development of staff persons.

Due Process: LRS had seven scheduled Fair Hearings during FY 2017. Of the seven fair hearing requests, three were resolved prior to the actual fair hearing; four (4) went to a fair hearing.

Impartial Hearing Officers and Mediators are initially provided training on LRS Policy and Technical Assistance and Guidance manual materials. Copies of revised policy and technical assistance manual material is provided to the Impartial Hearing Officers/Mediators, if needed, training is provided.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

LRS continues to be unable to obtain the state match to access full federal funding available to the state. The decline in funding continues to limit services and increase staff reductions.

LRS began serving only Order of Selection Category I effective November 8, 2017. Order of Selection Categories II through V remain closed. LRS will continue to provide services to those with plans of service in place as long as funding allows.

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.

Two thousand one hundred and ninety (2,190) individuals with disabilities received supported employment services in FY 2017. The supported employment goals and plans are identified in sections

(n) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI Funds and (q) Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services.

It is estimated that approximately 450 individuals will be provided supported employment services with the funding available through the Title VI, Part B program in FY 2017. Individuals with the most significant disabilities in Order of Selection Categories I and II will be served under this program.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

Due to the economic recession and continued state budget cuts, LRS is unable to obtain the state match to access full federal funding available. The decline in funding continues to limit services and staffing.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

LRS is collecting baseline data and reporting its performance through the required RSA-911 reports. Negotiations will be held with RSA to determine performance measures.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED.

During FY 2017, LRS used the following innovation and expansion funds per allowable expenditures identified in the federal regulations 34 CFR 361.35 to support the salaries, travels, and activities of the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council staff person and it members, the Statewide Independent Living Council, as well as the AWARE case management system:

Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC): $11,806.66

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC): $92,559.90

Total: $104,366.56

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.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services will provide and improve the quality of supported employment services through the Title VI Program, and the Title I, Vocational Rehabilitation Program to individuals with the most significant disabilities through the use of fee-for-service reimbursement, or LRS funded grants and/or contracts awarded to supported employment providers.

THE GOALS OF THE PROGRAM WILL BE:

129. To fund the vendors necessary to provide supported employment services to eligible consumers. These vendors will provide services to a diverse population of individuals with significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

130. To ensure the quality of supported employment services provided to eligible consumers by monitoring the vendors. The monitoring will include an evaluation of the provision of services according to the most recent technology in supported employment and to identify training and technical assistance needed.

131. Provide technical assistance and training opportunities to state office and field office staff to improve the supported employment service delivery system. The field staff will receive supported employment training directed at case management and quality supported employment services.

132. To work cooperatively with other agencies (public and private), employers and advocates to assist in developing employment opportunities and multiple options for extended services to ensure more successful supported employment outcomes.

133. To coordinate with the Department of Health & Hospitals (OBH and OCDD - Support Waivers Program, and Medicaid Purchase Plan), University of North Texas Workplace Inclusion and Sustainable Employment (UNTWISE), the Louisiana Chapter of the Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE), LSU Health Science Center Human Development Center, and the Louisiana Work Pays Consortium in order to provide input to vendor agencies providing supported employment services and to solicit input from these agencies in the planning and implementation of quality supported employment services.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT MODELS USED BY LRS:

LRS uses an Individual Job/Job Coach model. It is estimated that at least 1,420 individuals can be provided supported employment services.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

The time required for transition to extended services is as follows:

1. Supported employment models:

Individual Placement Model - Under the individual placement model, stabilization occurs when the consumer has made substantial progress toward meeting the hours per week goal indicated on an IPE and has reached a point where intervention is no more than 25% of the consumer's normal work time and the individual has maintained at least ninety (90) days of consecutive employment after stabilization occurred.

2. Extended Follow-along (transition):

The consumer must meet the following requirements before the Counselor can provide for the transition of the consumer from LRS to the provider of extended services:

a. Job placement is stable for the consumer;

b. The consumer has substantially met the goal for number of hours of employment as indicated on an IPE; and,

c. The Supported Employment Provider agency has committed to arrange for, or develop, on-going support needed to maintain the consumer's employment. This includes the development of natural supports including the provision of extended services for youth with most significant disabilities occuring no more than 24 months after services begin.

CERTIFICATIONS

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate **Louisiana Rehabilitation Services**

Name of designated State agency **Office of Workforce Development (OWD)**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Shannon Joseph**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Assistant Secretary, Louisiana Workforce Commission**

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 **Louisiana Rehabilitation Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Shannon Joseph**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Assistant Secretary, Louisiana Workforce Commission**

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 **Louisiana Rehabilitation Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Shannon Joseph**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Assistant Secretary, Louisiana Workforce Commission**

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 **No**

D. DETERMINE WHETHER COMPARABLE SERVICES AND BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE INDIVIDUAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

E. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

F. COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE PROVISIONS OF INFORMED CHOICE FOR ALL APPLICANTS AND ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(D) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

G. PROVIDE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES TO AMERICAN INDIANS WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING IN THE STATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(13) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

H. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF SEMIANNUAL OR ANNUAL 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,

CXXXIV. 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

CXXXV. 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:

CXXXVI. 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

CXXXVII. 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

In reference to 4.c. the agency is under an order of selection and only serving category 1 at this time.

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.

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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.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

States that include TANF in the Combined State Plan must outline how the State will meet the requirements of section 402 of the Social Security Act including how it will:

A. CONDUCT A PROGRAM DESIGNED TO SERVE ALL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS IN THE STATE (NOT NECESSARILY IN A UNIFORM MANNER) THAT PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES WITH (OR EXPECTING) CHILDREN AND PROVIDES PARENTS WITH JOB PREPARATION, WORK, AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO ENABLE THEM TO LEAVE THE PROGRAM, SPECIFICALLY CASH ASSISTANCE, AND BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(I) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT).

The Louisiana TANF programs are administered and supervised by the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services.

Needy families with, or expecting children, will be provided financial assistance and/or other services to include education, job preparation, work and support services under Louisiana's Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP), Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP), and Strategies to Empower People (STEP) Program. A needy family is defined as a family residing in the state who meets the eligibility requirements listed below for FITAP and KCSP respectively.

For FITAP eligibility a dependent child must be:

Under 18 years of age, or

18 years of age and enrolled in a secondary school or its equivalent. For KCSP eligibility, a dependent child must be under 18 years of age. Unborn children are not eligible for FITAP. A pregnant woman who has completed the fifth month of pregnancy may be certified if otherwise eligible (unborn is not eligible). To qualify for cash assistance, a child must reside in the home of a parent or other qualified relative who is responsible for the day-to-day care of the child. The following relatives are qualified relatives:

Grandfather or grandmother (extends to great-great-great);

Brother or sister (including half-brother and half-sister);

Uncle or aunt (extends to great-great);

First cousin (including first cousin once removed);

Nephew or niece (extends to great-great);

Stepfather or stepmother;

Stepbrother or stepsister.

These may be biological or adoptive relatives.

Resources are assets or possessions that a household can convert to cash to meet needs. All resources are excluded when determining eligibility.

Income is any gain or benefit to a household that has monetary value and is not considered a resource. All income is counted when determining eligibility and payment amounts.

Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP)

Income is any gain or benefit to a household that has monetary value and is not considered a resource. All income is counted when determining pretest eligibility. In order to meet this requirement, the gross countable income of the caretaker relative's KCSP income must be less than 150% of the federal poverty threshold for the family size.

For purposes of this pretest, the caretaker's KCSP income unit is defined to include the child, the caretaker relative, and anyone residing in the home for whom the caretaker relative claims financial responsibility.

For purposes of this pretest, income is defined as countable income belonging to any member of the KCSP income unit.

Income After Pretest

The child is determined eligible for KCSP if the child's countable income is less than $222. If the child's income is $222 or more, the child is ineligible.

Payment amount is $222 a month for each eligible child. A child who receives federal or state foster care payments or SSI is not eligible to receive KCSP benefits.

Strategies to Empower People (STEP) Program

To assist Louisiana families in becoming economically self-reliant so that their dependence on government benefits for basic needs is minimized, the department implemented the STEP program so that cash assistance recipients, with certain exceptions, are actively engaged in meaningful activities designed to enable their transition from cash assistance to self-reliance. It is further intended that cash assistance recipients demonstrate active and diligent personal responsibility in achieving self-reliance through employment and increased workplace literacy. All appropriate state agencies responsible for employment, training, and educating Louisiana's citizens are expected to cooperate in the pursuit of this goal.

Once an applicant is certified for eligibility, a comprehensive assessment will be conducted and include workplace literacy, basic skills and educational attainment, interests and aptitude related to employment, barriers to employment, need for education, supportive services such as child care and transportation, and other supportive services. Specialized assessments can occur for issues that arise after an initial assessment has been completed and could include substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health screening, or others as determined by the department.

Supportive services provided to clients include but are not limited to:

A full range of case maintenance and case management services designed to lead to self-sufficiency;

Transportation assistance;

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits;

Medicaid;

Child care; and

TANF-funded services and other services necessary to accept or maintain employment.

Services may be provided to persons participating in the Family Assessment and to persons referred by the analyst to other activities, such as drug counseling, prior to their participation in a work activity.

It also includes providing services to FITAP recipients participating in approved activities necessary to meet exemptions to the FITAP time limits. In addition, although participation in the FITAP DRUG Testing Program is not countable as a STEP activity, appropriate supportive services may be provided to FITAP recipients to facilitate attendance in these activities. Appropriate supportive services may also be provided to allow participation in educational activities for FITAP recipients who are exempt from STEP.

B. REQUIRE A PARENT OR CARETAKER RECEIVING ASSISTANCE TO ENGAGE IN WORK (DEFINED BY THE STATE) ONCE THE STATE DETERMINES THE PARENT OR

CARETAKER IS READY TO ENGAGE IN WORK, OR ONCE HE OR SHE HAS RECEIVED 24 MONTHS OF ASSISTANCE, WHICHEVER IS EARLIER, CONSISTENT WITH THE CHILD CARE EXCEPTION AT 407(E)(2) (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(II) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

To assist Louisiana families in becoming economically self—reliant so that their dependence on government benefits for basic needs is minimized, the department implemented the STEP Program effective October 1, 2003, so that all cash assistance recipients, with certain exceptions, are actively engaged in meaningful activities designed to enable their transition from cash assistance to self—reliance. It is further intended that cash assistance recipients demonstrate active and diligent personal responsibility in achieving self—reliance through employment and increased workplace literacy. All appropriate state agencies responsible for employment, training, and educating Louisiana's citizens are expected to cooperate in the pursuit of this goal.

Work-eligible members of cash assistance programs are required to participate in STEP activities.

Work-eligible recipients shall participate in appropriate work activities as agreed upon in the Family Success Agreement. Work-eligible is defined as families containing an adult under 60 years of age, or teen head of household that is not disabled, incapacitated, or caring for a family member who is disabled or incapacitated as documented by a medical expert to which the status of disability is clearly established and explained. Work-eligible excludes cases in which only the child portion of need that is unrelated to a sanction or penalty, known as a child only case, is considered in determining eligibility.

The work activities may include but are not limited to:

Unsubsidized employment;

Subsidized employment;

Unpaid work experience;

On-the-job training;

Job search/job readiness;

Vocational education;

Satisfactory attendance at a secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of recipients who have not completed secondary schools or received a certificate;

Education directly related to employment, in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or certificate of equivalency;

Job skills training directly related to employment;

Community service; and

The provision of child care to an individual who is participating in community service. Participants who are found not to possess basic workplace or basic literacy skills, as

determined by an assessment, shall combine employment and job readiness and job search activities with activities designed to increase their basic and workplace literacy skills.

C. ENSURE THAT PARENTS AND CARETAKERS RECEIVING ASSISTANCE ENGAGE IN WORK IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 407 (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(III) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Work-eligible recipients shall participate in appropriate work activities as agreed upon in the Family Success Agreement. Work-eligible is defined as families containing an adult under sixty years of age, or teen head of household, that is not disabled, incapacitated, or caring for a family member who is disabled or incapacitated as documented by a medical expert to which the status of disability is clearly established and explained. Work-eligible excludes cases in which only the child portion of need that is unrelated to a sanction or penalty, known as a child-only case, is considered in determining eligibility. The work activities may include but are not limited to: Unsubsidized employment, Subsidized employment, Unpaid work experience, On-the-job training, Job search/job readiness, Vocational education, Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of recipients who have not completed secondary schools or received a certificate, Education directly related to employment, in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or certificate of equivalency, Job skills training directly related to employment, community service, and The provision of child care to an individual who is participating in community service. Participants, who are found not to possess basic workplace or basic literacy skills, as determined by an assessment, shall combine employment and job readiness and job search activities with activities designed to increase their basic and workplace literacy skills.

D. TAKE SUCH REASONABLE STEPS AS THE STATE DEEMS NECESSARY TO RESTRICT THE USE AND DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION ABOUT INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES RECEIVING ASSISTANCE UNDER THE PROGRAM ATTRIBUTABLE TO FUNDS PROVIDED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(IV) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Client information may only be used for the administration of the program. Use and disclosure of information will be restricted in accordance with all applicable state laws and federal regulations. Use of information for commercial, personal, or political purposes is prohibited.

E. ESTABLISH GOALS AND TAKE ACTION TO PREVENT AND REDUCE OUT-OF-WEDLOCK PREGNANCIES, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON TEENAGE PREGNANCIES (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(V) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Through an agreement with the Department of Education, DCFS will fund the Jobs for America's Graduates Louisiana (JAG-LA) Program to keep in school those students at risk of failing in school, to capture out-of-school youth in need of a high school education, to provide an avenue for achieving academically, and to assist students in ultimately earning recognized credentials that will make it possible for them to exit school and enter post-secondary education and/or the workforce. Services provided will meet TANF Goal 3 to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies by providing intervention and improved life prospects for students who show evidence of failing, dropping out or

engaging in negative behaviors that can lead to dependency, out-of-wedlock births, imprisonment, and/or other undesirable outcomes which may lead to the detriment and impoverishment of youth. Eligible participants in the JAG-LA Program shall be 12-22 years of age and must face at least two designated barriers to success that include economic, academic, personal, environmental, or work related barriers.

F. CONDUCT A PROGRAM DESIGNED TO REACH STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS, THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, AND RELEVANT COUNSELING SERVICES, THAT PROVIDES EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON THE PROBLEM OF STATUTORY RAPE SO THAT TEENAGE PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROGRAMS MAY BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE MEN (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(VI) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

The department provides services for victims of domestic violence and their children, including rural outreach and community collaboration training for the purpose of educating attendees about domestic violence and the available services provided by the Department of Children and Family Services including but not limited to TANF, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance, Child Care Assistance, and Employment Training. Additionally, these services will include education and training addressing the problem of statutory rape. These programs are designed to not only reach the public, but also law enforcement officials, educators, relevant counseling services. Training regarding statutory rape will also be made available to males 18 and older.

G. IMPLEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AS NECESSARY TO PREVENT ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE PROVIDED UNDER THE STATE PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER THIS PART THROUGH ANY ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSACTION IN AN AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINE OR POINT-OF-SALE DEVICE LOCATED IN A PLACE DESCRIBED IN SECTION 408(A)(12), INCLUDING A PLAN TO ENSURE THAT RECIPIENTS OF THE ASSISTANCE HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO THEIR CASH ASSISTANCE (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(VII) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Needy families, through the FITAP, KCSP, and STEP programs, will be provided financial assistance, job preparation, work and supportive services. Financial assistance is delivered through Electronic Benefits Transfer. EBT Restrictions The department has promulgated rules to establish provisions necessary to prevent cash assistance provided under the FITAP and KCSP programs from being used in any electronic benefit transfer (EBT) transaction in a liquor store, gambling casino or gaming establishment, or any retail establishment that provides adult—oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment purposes, or at any retailer for the purchase of an alcoholic beverage, a tobacco product, or a lottery ticket.

Louisiana continues to provide recipients access to their benefits and related services in each of the 64 parishes based on the policies and procedures in effect. All of the major ATM networks accept the Louisiana Purchase (EBT) cards and many carry the Louisiana Purchase logo on the machines to allow the recipient to know that the card is accepted.

H. ENSURE THAT RECIPIENTS OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED UNDER THE STATE PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER THIS PART HAVE THE ABILITY TO USE OR WITHDRAW ASSISTANCE WITH MINIMAL FEES OR CHARGES, INCLUDING AN OPPORTUNITY TO ACCESS ASSISTANCE WITH NO FEE OR CHARGES, AND ARE PROVIDED

INFORMATION ON APPLICABLE FEES AND SURCHARGES THAT APPLY TO ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING THE ASSISTANCE, AND THAT SUCH INFORMATION IS MADE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(VIII) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

First time users of the EBT card are provided with a list of banks with no "out of network" surcharges. Information regarding transaction fees and surcharges, including a list of banks that assess no surcharge to recipients, is publicly available on the department's website. Recipients may still access their benefits at grocery stores that sell both groceries and intoxicating liquors as long as the retail establishment does not sell exclusively or primarily intoxicating liquors. Also, recipients may still access their benefits at establishments that offer gaming activities as long as those gaming activities are incidental to the principal purpose of the business.

I. INDICATE WHETHER IT INTENDS TO TREAT FAMILIES MOVING FROM ANOTHER STATE DIFFERENTLY FROM OTHER FAMILIES UNDER THE PROGRAM, AND IF SO HOW (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(I) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

The TANF Programs will be operated statewide in all political subdivisions of the state. No specific provisions will be applied to families moving to Louisiana from another state.

J. INDICATE WHETHER IT INTENDS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO NON-CITIZENS, AND IF SO INCLUDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(II) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Each recipient must be a United States citizen, a non-citizen national (person born in an outlying possession of the United States [American Samoa or Swain's Island] on or after the date the U.S. acquired the possession, or a person whose parents are U.S. non-citizen nationals), or a qualified alien as defined below:

1. An alien who is lawfully admitted for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act;

2. An alien who is granted asylum under Section 208 of such act;

3. A refugee who is admitted to the United States under Section 207 of such act;

4. An alien who is paroled into the United States under Section 212(d)(5) of such act for a period of at least one year;

5. An alien whose deportation is withheld under §243(h) of such act (as in effect immediately before the effective date [April 1, 1997] of §307 of Division C of Public Law 104-208) or §241(b)(3) of such act (as amended by Section 305(a) of Division C of Public Law 104-208);

6. An alien who is granted conditional entry pursuant to §203(a)(7) of such act as in effect prior to April 1, 1980; or

7. An alien who is a Cuban or Haitian entrant as defined in § 501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980; or

8. An alien who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty in the United States by a spouse or parent, or by a member of the spouse's or parent's family residing in the same

household as the alien if the spouse or parent consented to, or acquiesced in, such battery or cruelty. The individual who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty must no longer reside in the same household with the individual who committed the battery or cruelty. The agency must also determine that a substantial connection exists between such battery or cruelty and the need for the benefits to be provided. The alien must have been approved or have a petition pending which contains evidence sufficient to establish:

a. The status as a spouse or a child of a United States citizen pursuant to clause (ii), (iii), or (iv) of §204(a)(1)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act; (INA); or

b. The classification pursuant to clause (ii) or (iii) of Section 204(a)(1)(B) of the INA; or

c. Cancellation of removal under section 1229b of the INA (as in effect prior to April 1, 1997); or

d. The status as a spouse or child of a United States citizen pursuant to clause (i) of §204(a)(1)(A) of the INA, or classification pursuant to clause (i) of Section 204(a)(1)(B) of the INA;

9. An alien child of a battered parent or the alien parent of a battered child as described in §1223A.8.;

10. An alien who is a victim of a severe form or trafficking in persons, or an eligible relative of a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons; or

11. An alien who is an Iraqi or Afghani immigrant who has been granted Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) status. An alien who is a qualified alien and who enters the United States on or after August 22, 1996, is not eligible for any Federal means-tested public benefit for a period of 5 years beginning on the date of the alien's entry into the United States unless:

Exception for refugees and asylees:

- An alien who is admitted to the United States as a refugee under section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act [8 U.S.C. 1157;
- An alien who is granted asylum under section 208 of such Act [8 U.S.C. 1158];
- An alien whose deportation is being withheld under section 243(h) of such Act [8 U.S.C. 1253] (as in effect immediately before the effective date of section 307 of division C of Public Law 104-208) or section 241(b)(3) of such Act [8 U.S.C. 1231 (b)(3)] (as amended by section 305(a) of division C of Public Law 104-208);
- An alien who is a Cuban and Haitian entrant as defined in section 501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980; An alien admitted to the United States as an Amerasian immigrant as described in section 1612 (a)(2)(A)(i)(V)[1] of this title;
- An alien who is a victim of a severe form or trafficking in persons, or an eligible relative of a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons.
- An alien who is an Iraqi or Afghani immigrant who has been granted Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) status.

K. SET FORTH OBJECTIVE CRITERIA FOR THE DELIVERY OF BENEFITS AND THE DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND FOR FAIR AND EQUITABLE TREATMENT, INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION OF HOW IT WILL PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECIPIENTS WHO HAVE BEEN ADVERSELY AFFECTED TO BE HEARD IN A STATE

ADMINISTRATIVE OR APPEAL PROCESS (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(III) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

The DCFS Bureau of Appeals is responsible for providing a system of hearings that must meet the due process standards set forth in federal regulations, state laws and Goldberg vs. Kelly 397 US 254 (1970).

Each applicant is informed by the application form and by the appropriate notification forms (as decisions are made affecting his case) of his right to a hearing, of the method by which a hearing may be requested, and who may present his case.

The claimant may represent himself at the hearing or be represented by any authorized agent.

When a decision is made on a case, the client is notified and is allowed the following number of days from the date of the notice to request a Fair Hearing:

- FITAP 30 days,
- STEP Program 30 days,
- KCSP 30 days.

The client may appeal at any time during a certification period for a dispute of the current level of benefits.

An appeal is timely requested if the appeal request:

- Is delivered on or before the due date; or
- Mailed on or before the due date. If the appeal request is received by mail on the first working day following the due date, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the appeal was timely filed.

Recipients of FITAP and KCSP who request a Fair Hearing prior to the expiration of the Advance Notice of Adverse Action or within 13-days of the date of Concurrent Notice must have benefits continued at, or reinstated to, the benefit level of the previous month, unless:

- The recipient indicates he does not want benefits continued;
- A determination is made at the hearing that the sole issue is one of existing or changing state or federal law; or,
- Change unrelated to the appeal issue affecting the client's eligibility occurs while the hearing decision is pending and the client fails to request a hearing after receiving the notice of change.

A decision by the hearing authority shall be binding on the Department of Children and Family Services and shall summarize the facts of the case, specify the reasons for the decision, and identify the supporting evidence and the pertinent state or federal regulations. The decision shall become a part of the record. The household shall be notified in writing of the:

- Decision,

- Reasons for the decision,
- Available appeal rights, and Right to pursue judicial review of the decision.

L. INDICATE WHETHER THE STATE INTENDS TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALS TO TRAIN FOR, SEEK, AND MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(V) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)—

1. PROVIDING DIRECT CARE IN A LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY (AS SUCH TERMS ARE DEFINED UNDER SECTION 1397J OF THIS TITLE); OR

2. IN OTHER OCCUPATIONS RELATED TO ELDER CARE, HIGH-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS, OR OCCUPATIONS EXPECTED TO EXPERIENCE LABOR SHORTAGES AS, DETERMINED APPROPRIATE BY THE STATE FOR WHICH THE STATE IDENTIFIES AN UNMET NEED FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL, AND, IF SO, SHALL INCLUDE AN OVERVIEW OF SUCH ASSISTANCE.

(1) Providing direct care in a long-term care facility (as such terms are defined under section 1397j of this title); or

(2) In other occupations related to elder care, high-demand occupations, or occupations expected to experience labor shortages as, determined appropriate by the State for which the State identifies an unmet need for service personnel, and, if so, shall include an overview of such assistance.

To assist Louisiana families in becoming economically self-reliant so that their dependence on government benefits for basic needs is minimized, the department implemented the STEP Program effective October 1, 2003, so that all cash assistance recipients, with certain exceptions, are actively engaged in meaningful activities designed to enable their transition from cash assistance to self-reliance. It is further intended that cash assistance recipients demonstrate active and diligent personal responsibility in achieving self-reliance through employment and increased workplace literacy. All appropriate state agencies responsible for employment, training, and educating Louisiana's citizens are expected to cooperate in the pursuit of this goal.

Elder Care

The Louisiana Workforce Commission is responsible for evaluating the labor market and identifying employment trends and demand occupations related to elder care. The Department of Children and Family Services will work with various state agencies to provide referrals of TANF participants seeking training and/or employment in the elder care workforce. Assistance includes vocational education training, job search/job readiness, and supportive services.

M. PROVIDE FOR ALL MOE-FUNDED SERVICES THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: THE NAME OF THE PROGRAM BENEFIT OR SERVICE, AND THE FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA THAT FAMILIES MUST MEET IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THAT BENEFIT OR SERVICE. IN ADDITION, FOR TANF MOE-FUNDED SERVICES (CO-MINGLED OR SEGREGATED MOE) DESCRIBE THE PROGRAM BENEFIT PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE FAMILIES (SSP SERVICES DO NOT HAVE TO INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION

State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

The State EITC is provided to families with dependents and includes the amount of the State EITC that exceeds the taxpayer's tax liability (amount owed prior to application of any other credits). It is available to Louisiana residents who claim the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

These services meet TANF goal 2 to end the dependence of needy parent on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA)

The department through an agreement with the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) collects information on tuition assistance expenditures provided to eligible low income students who are pursuing postsecondary education for the purpose of claiming eligible expenditures that may count as Maintenance of Effort (MOE) effective TANF State Plan FY 2011 for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grant. The eligible tuition assistance expenditures that may be claimed as MOE are from the following programs:

- **Louisiana Go Grants** — A need based student financial aid grant that supports nontraditional and low income students in their pursuit of postsecondary education. To receive the Go Grants, a student must be receiving a federal Pell grant and have remaining financial need, as determined in accordance with a formula established by the Louisiana Board of Regents. The formula for determining financial need is subject to change on a yearly basis in order to ensure that the greatest number of students will benefit from the funds appropriated for the program by the Louisiana Legislature.
- **Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS)** — A state scholarship program for Louisiana residents who attend Louisiana postsecondary institutions. These services meet TANF goal 3, to prevent and reduce the incidence of out—of—wedlock pregnancies, by providing financial aid to eligible students who are pursuing postsecondary education. The services provide the students with the tools necessary to reduce risky behaviors and increase positive decision making.

Financial eligibility for these services attributable to TANF/Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds is limited as follows:

Certification for TANF MOE for Go Grant expenditures will be those students who receive Pell Grants and have a remaining financial need and are defined as dependent by the U.S. Department of Education. The amount used for TANF maintenance of effort is not duplicated in determining match or maintenance of effort for any other program.

TANF eligibility for students receiving TOPS will be determined by receipt of a Go Grant. Certification for TANF MOE for TOPS expenditures will be for those students who simultaneously receive TOPS and Go Grants and are defined as dependent by the U.S. Department of Education.

Services are considered non-assistance by the department. State dollars associated with Louisiana Go Grants and TANF eligible TOPS expenditures may be applied to MOE funding requirements for Louisiana's federal TANF grant.

Louisiana State Child Care Tax Credit

This is an annual refundable tax credit for low—income individuals and families who have a qualified dependent who is under the age of 13, and the parent or qualified relative has paid someone to provide care so that they can work or look for work.

Eligibility is limited to those families with minor children who meet the Louisiana Department of Revenue Child Care Tax Credit eligibility standards.

These services meet TANF Goal 2, to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits, by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.

Louisiana 4 Public Pre—Kindergarten Program (LA4)

The LA4 program provides high quality early childhood education for low—income 4—year—olds in participating public school districts and charter schools.

Services are for children of at risk families in which the child is one year younger than the eligible age for kindergarten and is eligible to receive free or reduced school lunch meals pursuant to the Federal Child Nutrition Program as documented by a completed application for such meals, whether or not such meals are sought.

These services meet TANF goal 3, to prevent and reduce the incidence of out—of—wedlock pregnancies and TANF goal 4, to encourage the formation and maintenance of two—parent families by placing children in learning environments at the pre—school level to foster an interest in learning, increase literacy levels, and increase the likelihood of developing responsible behavior.

Pre- and Post-Release Family Strengthening Program

Financial eligibility is limited to incarcerated and released male offenders who are absent fathers of minor children who are members of a needy family. A family meets financial eligibility if any member receives TANF cash assistance from the Louisiana Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP). Services provided attempt to alter the offender's negative attitude and behavior through treatment and training, reconnect families separated by incarceration, and prepare the family to receive the offender upon release. Services include various types of training, non-medical substance abuse treatment, job placement assistance, cognitive behavior interventions, and intensive case management. These services meet TANF goal 2, to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage, and TANF goal 4, to encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. Services are considered non-assistance by the department. State dollars associated with the Pre- and Post-Release Strengthening Program services are applied to MOE funding requirements for Louisiana's federal TANF grant.

TANF CERTIFICATIONS

States that include TANF in the Combined State Plan must provide a certification by the chief executive officer of that State, that during the fiscal year, the State will:

Operate a child support enforcement program under the State Plan approved under part D. (section 402(a)(2) of the Social Security Act) Yes

Operate a foster care and adoption assistance program under the State Plan approved under part E, and that the State will take such actions as are necessary to ensure that children receiving assistance under such part are eligible for medical assistance under The Unified or Combined State Plan under title XIX. (section 402(a)(3) of the Social Security Act) Yes

Specify which State agency or agencies will administer and supervise the program referred to in paragraph (1) for the fiscal year, which shall include assurances that local governments and private sector organizations (section 402(a)(4) of the Social Security Act)—have been consulted regarding the plan and design of welfare services in the State so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations; Yes

Specify which State agency or agencies will administer and supervise the program referred to in paragraph (1) for the fiscal year, which shall include assurances that local governments and private sector organizations (section 402(a)(4) of the Social Security Act)—have had at least 45 days to submit comments on the plan and the design of such services Yes

Provide each member of an Indian tribe, who is domiciled in the State and is not eligible for assistance under a tribal family assistance plan approved under section 412, with equitable access to assistance under the State program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government. (section 402(a)(5) of the Social Security Act) Yes

Establish and enforce standards and procedures to ensure against program fraud and abuse, including standards and procedures concerning nepotism, conflicts of interest among individuals responsible for the administration and supervision of the State program, kickbacks, and the use of political patronage. (section 402(a)(6) of the Social Security Act) Yes

(optional) Establish and Enforcing standards and procedures to (section 402(a)(7) of the Social Security Act).— screen and identify individuals receiving assistance under this part with a history of domestic violence while maintaining the confidentiality of such individuals; Yes

(optional) Establish and Enforcing standards and procedures to (section 402(a)(7) of the Social Security Act).— refer such individuals to counseling and supportive services; Yes

(optional) Establish and Enforcing standards and procedures to (section 402(a)(7) of the Social Security Act).—waive, pursuant to a determination of good cause, other program requirements such as time limits (for so long as necessary) for individuals receiving assistance, residency requirements, child support cooperation requirements, and family cap provisions, in cases where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for individuals receiving assistance under this part to escape domestic violence or unfairly penalize such individuals who are or have been victimized by such violence, or individuals who are at risk of further domestic violence Yes

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)))

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The State agency must prepare and submit an Employment and Training (E&T) Plan to its appropriate Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Regional Office. The E&T Plan must be available for public inspection at the State agency headquarters. A State agency may include its plan for the SNAP E&T program in a Combined Plan under WIOA but will require FNS approval prior to implementation and must continue to make a copy of the plan available for public inspection. If a State includes SNAP E&T in a Combined Plan under WIOA, the State agency will detail the following for each year covered by the Combined Plan:

1. THE NATURE OF THE E&T COMPONENTS THE STATE AGENCY PLANS TO OFFER AND THE REASONS FOR SUCH COMPONENTS, INCLUDING COST INFORMATION. THE METHODOLOGY FOR STATE AGENCY REIMBURSEMENT FOR EDUCATION COMPONENTS MUST BE SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSED;

This plan presents Louisiana's proposal to use grant funding to meet the SNAP E&T requirements of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and utilize 50/50 federal matching funds to serve participants in defined areas of the state as outlined in this plan hereinafter referred to as Expanded E&T. Policies are defined in Chapter 4 of the DCFS Policy Management System, the Louisiana Job Employment Training (LaJET) Handbook, Expanded E&T Handbook, and the Louisiana Administrative Code-Title 67, Social Services.

Louisiana intends to meet the E&T requirements through contractual agreements with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) to operate the Louisiana Job Employment Training (LaJET) Program and Expanded E&T through contracted partners.

LaJET is a mandatory participant-centered and service-oriented initiative to provide employment-focused services to targeted Mandatory Work Registrants (MWRs) who are recipients of SNAP benefits. ABAWDs who reside in a LaJET parish are exempt from mandatory participation in LaJET. ABAWDs who would be subject to the SNAP time limit if there were not a statewide ABAWD waiver are mandatory E&T participants and will be referred to LWC and will be required to participate in LWC's various programs offered through LWC's Business and Career Solutions Centers statewide. Louisiana currently has a statewide ABAWD waiver approved through August 31, 2018. A MWR is an individual who does not meet a federal exemption to SNAP work requirements as outlined in 7 CFR 273.7. SNAP recipients who are MWRs and reside in a LaJET parish are referred to LaJET; therefore, are mandatory E&T participants. MWRs who do not reside in a LaJET parish are not offered LaJET services nor are considered mandatory E&T Participants. The State contracts the administration of the LaJET Program with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC). The LaJET Parishes are Caddo, Orleans, Ouachita, and Rapides. Although this is a mandatory program volunteers are also accepted.

In addition, Louisiana partners with LWC to offer Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) assessment and training through LWC's Business and Career Solutions Centers statewide (59 locations). ABAWDs in parishes without LaJET are required to participate in

LWC services. Non-ABAWDs are exempt from mandatory participation. Louisiana has five contracted partners which provide Expanded E&T services to SNAP recipients. • Liberty's Kitchen serves youth in the Greater New Orleans area. • The Calcasieu Parish Police Jury (CPPJ) Human Services Department offers services for residents of Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, and Jefferson Davis Parishes. • Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana (GWSELA) offers services to individuals in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area. • Covenant House serves youth in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area. • Reconcile New Orleans (Café Reconcile) serves youth in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area.

Recipients who choose to volunteer may take advantage of opportunities offered through the LaJET Program, LWC's Business and Career Solutions Centers, or opportunities offered via contracts with Expanded E&T partners, where available. This includes ABAWDs and non-ABAWDs. Volunteers who do not participate will not be sanctioned for failure to cooperate with the volunteer program.

The agency utilizes partnerships and contractual agreements with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) and community partners to serve SNAP E&T participants. Voluntary E&T services are offered at Liberty's Kitchen, Calcasieu Parish Police Jury (CPPJ) Human Services Department, Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana (GWSELA), Covenant House, and Reconcile New Orleans (Café Reconcile).

Louisiana Workforce Commission Business Career Solutions Center focuses on providing a variety of employment related labor exchange services including job search assistance, job referral and placement assistance for job seekers. Services are accessed in one of three ways including self-service, facilitated self-help services, and staff assisted service.

Services are provided to ABAWDs statewide through LWC's Business and Career Solutions Centers by providing workforce preparation skills, labor exchange information, and referrals. LWC's Business and Career Solutions Center provides services through Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) participation. Volunteers and mandatory work registrants will be served by Expanded E&T Providers in designated areas of the state.

The following components will be offered through the E&T Program: Job Search Training, Independent Job Search, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Participation, Work Experience, Job Retention, and Vocational Education.

Job Search Training is designed to teach skills leading to behavior modification and foster a positive job search attitude. Participants have an opportunity to set goals, acknowledge barriers to employment, gain skills, training and experience leading to employment. The estimated monthly cost is $149,311.81.

Independent Job Search allows participants to be interviewed by the provider and participate in a one hour Introduction of Job Search session. The participant will then make up to 24 job contacts. Completion of the component occurs when the participant secures a job or completes job contacts and an exit interview. The estimated monthly cost is $26,016.56.

WIOA is a work experience and training component offered by LWC. By federal law, all SNAP recipients are eligible to participate in WIOA activities. Participants expressing an interest in WIOA will evaluated and referred. If referred, the participants must report to the

local WIOA administrative entity or to the designated Louisiana Workforce Investment Act (LWIA) contractor or partner in order to meet compliance. Activities may include On-the-Job Training, Institution Training (class-size or individual referral), Work Experience, Educational/Motivational Training and Special Industry-specific Training Programs. Zero funding is used for administrative costs for ABAWDs at LWC.

Work Experience is designed to improve the employability of participants through work experience and training that will move the participant into employment. The estimated monthly cost is $113,135.85.

Job Retention is designed to assist participants in maintaining employment by assessing participant's performance, assisting the participant to resolve issues that arise and may affect their ability to maintain employment, reinforcing positive behaviors and teaching additional job retention skills. The estimated monthly cost is $60,354.65.

Vocational Training is designed to provide educational programs with a direct link to job-readiness to improve basic skills and employability. The estimate monthly cost is $9,066.50.

The agency's goal is to serve as many mandatory work registrants as possible. After careful analysis of available 100% Employment & Training Funds and consideration of the prevailing environment, it has been determined that the program will best serve our clients if services are provided in a limited geographic area to non-Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (non-ABAWDs). The geographic limitation is expected to provide optimum opportunity to utilize available federal and state funds in a responsible, practical and productive manner.

Geographic Areas Covered and Local Variations

LWC will provide LaJET services in 4 parishes and will serve ABAWDs statewide. Liberty's Kitchen's services are available for participants who reside in the greater New Orleans area. CPPJ will offer services for participants who reside in Allen, Beauregard, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, or Calcasieu Parish.

GWSELA will offer services for participants in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area. Reconcile New Orleans (Café Reconcile) and Covenant House will offer services for participants who reside in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area.

2. AN OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR WITH AN ESTIMATE OF THE COST OF OPERATION FOR EACH FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR COVERED BY THE COMBINED PLAN. ANY STATE AGENCY THAT REQUESTS 50 PERCENT FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT FOR STATE AGENCY E&T ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS, OTHER THAN FOR PARTICIPANT REIMBURSEMENTS, MUST INCLUDE IN ITS PLAN, OR AMENDMENTS TO ITS PLAN, AN ITEMIZED LIST OF ALL ACTIVITIES AND COSTS FOR WHICH THOSE FEDERAL FUNDS WILL BE CLAIMED, INCLUDING THE COSTS FOR CASE MANAGEMENT AND CASEWORK TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION FROM ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY THROUGH WORK. COSTS IN EXCESS OF THE FEDERAL GRANT WILL BE ALLOWED ONLY WITH THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF FNS AND MUST BE ADEQUATELY DOCUMENTED TO ASSURE THAT THEY ARE NECESSARY, REASONABLE AND PROPERLY ALLOCATED. A STATE MUST

SUBMIT A PLAN AMENDMENT TO REQUEST BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS AT LEAST 30 DAYS PRIOR TO PLANNED IMPLEMENTATION;

For the current FFY, the total 100% federal funds allocated to Louisiana is $1,302,299. The total amount of 50/50 funds is $2,964,395.35. The total state share is $1,482,197.67 and the total federal share is $1,482,197.68.

3. THE CATEGORIES AND TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS THE STATE AGENCY INTENDS TO EXEMPT FROM E&T PARTICIPATION, THE ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF WORK REGISTRANTS THE STATE AGENCY PLANS TO EXEMPT, AND THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE STATE AGENCY PLANS TO REEVALUATE THE VALIDITY OF ITS EXEMPTIONS;

The following persons are exempt from work registration requirements:

• Persons under age 16 or age 60 or older. An individual is subject to the work registration requirement beginning the month after his 16th birthday. An individual becomes exempt from the work registration requirement effective the month of his 60th birthday.

• Persons age 16 or 17 who are not the head of the household or person 16 or 17 attending school, or enrolled in an employment-training program on at least a half-time basis.

• Persons age 18 through 59 enrolled at least half-time in any recognized school, training program, or institution of higher education. Students enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher education must meet the student eligibility requirements to meet this exemption. A student will remain exempt during normal periods of class attendance, vacation, and recess if he intends to return.

• Parents or other household members personally providing the care of a dependent child under age 6 or an incapacitated person of any age. Verify that the person is needed to care for the incapacitated person.

• Regular participants in drug or alcohol treatment and rehabilitation programs.

• Persons who are temporarily or permanently disabled (physically or mentally).

• A pregnant woman must register unless a doctor's statement verifies incapacity.

• Persons working an average of 30 hours per week or receiving average weekly gross earnings equivalent to 30 multiplied by the federal minimum wage. Migrant and seasonal farm workers under contract or similar agreement with an employer or crew chief to begin work within 30 days are exempt.

• Persons subject to and complying with STEP or have met the minimum work registration requirement through STEP within the past 12 months.

• Persons receiving unemployment compensation benefits (UCB). A person who has applied for but is not yet receiving UCB is also exempt if that person is complying with the work requirements of the Louisiana Workforce Commission.

Mandatory work registrants with the following barriers will be exempt from participation when the barrier will delay participation in the E&T component beyond 30 days. Reasons

for exemptions and the criteria that will be used to evaluate whether an exemption will be authorized are as follows:

- Geographic: Exemptions are granted for non-ABAWDs who do not reside in a LaJET parish.
- Physical or mental disability: Exemptions are allowed for medical conditions expected to last beyond 30 days which will prevent a work registrant from seeking or accepting employment including pregnancy during the second and third trimester.
- Lack of child care: Registrants with children ages 6-12 may be exempted when participation cannot be initiated because of a lack of child care.
- Lack of transportation: Exemptions will be granted to registrants for whom public or private transportation is not available on a regular basis and who do not live within walking distance of employers.
- Remoteness: Registrants residing an unreasonable distance from the appropriate Service Provider or potential employers will be exempt. A distance may be considered unreasonable if the round trip exceeds two hours by available public or private transportation.

Inability to speak or write English: Exemptions will be granted to mandatory work registrants who are unable to speak or write English. These individuals may be referred to English as a Second Language (ESL).

The percentage of mandatory work registrants who are exempt is 32.32%. These exemptions will be re-evaluated on at least an annual basis.

4. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION THE STATE AGENCY INTENDS TO PLACE IN E&T;

Targeted populations are mandatory work registrants and volunteer participants with a TABE reading level of 4.0, if participating with LaJET. If TABE is 4.0 or above, Job Search and WIOA will be the appropriate component. ABAWDs who are mandatory work registrants will utilize this component for job skills training.

Expanded E&T participants enrolled at Liberty's Kitchen are self-initiated participants between the ages of 16 and 24 who reside in the greater New Orleans area.

Expanded E&T participants enrolled at CPPJ are participants of all ages recruited during Calcasieu Parish Business & Career Solution Center (BCSC) orientation.

Expanded E&T participants enrolled at GWSELA are self-initiated participants ages 18 and up who reside in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area.

Expanded E&T participants enrolled in Covenant House are self-initiated participants between the ages of 16 and 22 who reside in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area.

Expanded E&T participants enrolled in Reconcile New Orleans (Café Reconcile) are self-initiated participants between the ages of 16 to 24 who reside in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area. Louisiana has a large population of underemployed individuals working less than 30 hours per week who are required to register for work. The average number of

SNAP recipients for FFY 2017 was 918,497. Of this number, 156,560 were mandatory work registrants. Statistical information was obtained from the SNAP data files.

5. THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS THE STATE AGENCY EXPECTS TO PLACE IN E&T;

DCFS expects 770 volunteers to participate each year.

6. THE GEOGRAPHIC AREAS COVERED AND NOT COVERED BY THE E&T PLAN AND WHY, AND THE TYPE AND LOCATION OF SERVICES TO BE OFFERED

The LaJET program will be operated in parishes of Caddo, Ouachita, Rapides, and Orleans. The Louisiana Workforce Commission will provide the employment and training services to the LaJET parishes.

Louisiana partners with LWC to offer Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) assessment and training through LWC's Business and Career Solutions Centers statewide (59 locations). ABAWDs in parishes without LaJET are required to participate in LWC services. Non-ABAWDs are exempt from mandatory participation.

Louisiana has five contracted partners which provide Expanded E&T services to SNAP recipients. • Liberty's Kitchen serves youth in the Greater New Orleans area. • The Calcasieu Parish Police Jury (CPPJ) Human Services Department offers services for residents of Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, and Jefferson Davis Parishes. • Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana (GWSELA) offers services to individuals in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area. • Covenant House serves youth in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area. • Reconcile New Orleans (Café Reconcile) serves youth in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area.

7. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO COUNT ALL WORK REGISTRANTS AS OF THE FIRST DAY OF THE NEW FISCAL YEAR;

The initial count for October 2018 will be obtained from the State's eligibility system file. Mandatory work registrants are identified by specific work registration codes on the State's eligibility system. Statewide and individual parish totals are available.

8. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO REPORT WORK REGISTRANT INFORMATION ON THE QUARTERLY FORM FNS–583

DCFS uses the participant information provided by the providers to report participant information to FNS and the electronic LAMR09P3 Report - Unduplicated Count of Mandatory Work Registrants that lists an unduplicated count of mandatory work registrants.

9. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO PREVENT WORK REGISTRANTS FROM BEING COUNTED TWICE WITHIN A FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR. IF THE STATE AGENCY UNIVERSALLY WORK REGISTERS ALL SNAP APPLICANTS, THIS METHOD MUST SPECIFY HOW THE STATE AGENCY EXCLUDES THOSE EXEMPT FROM WORK REGISTRATION UNDER 7 C.F.R. §273.7(B)(1). IF THE STATE AGENCY WORK REGISTERS NONEXEMPT PARTICIPANTS WHENEVER A NEW APPLICATION IS

SUBMITTED, THIS METHOD MUST ALSO SPECIFY HOW THE STATE AGENCY EXCLUDES THOSE PARTICIPANTS WHO MAY HAVE ALREADY BEEN REGISTERED WITHIN THE PAST 12 MONTHS AS SPECIFIED UNDER 7 C.F.R. §273.7(A)(1)(I);

DCFS uses a master list of participant information provided monthly by the providers, the electronic Unduplicated Count of Mandatory Work Registrants Report and the Monthly Mandatory Work Registrants Report to ensure work registrants are not counted twice in a Federal Fiscal Year. Mandatory Work Registrants are screened during certification and recertification for exemptions to mandatory E&T program participation. DCFS uses work registration codes to exempt work registrants from work registration requirements.

All Mandatory Work Registrants (MWRs) must register for work with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) by creating a Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE) account before the SNAP case is certified at application or recertified at redetermination. Work registration status for all MWRs in the SNAP case must be verified before a SNAP case is certified at application and recertified at redetermination by reviewing the LWC website to determine if each MWR has an active work registration in HiRE.

10. THE ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITS RESPONSIBLE FOR CERTIFICATION AND THE UNITS OPERATING THE E&T COMPONENTS, INCLUDING UNITS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, IF AVAILABLE. FNS IS SPECIFICALLY CONCERNED THAT THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION BE EFFICIENT AND THAT NONCOMPLIANCE BY THE PARTICIPANT BE REPORTED TO THE CERTIFICATION UNIT WITHIN 10 WORKING DAYS AFTER THE NONCOMPLIANCE OCCURS;

Program Coordination

Mandatory work registrants will be screened at application and during recertification or every twelve months, whichever is later. During clearance of the work registration status, the eligibility worker will screen individuals to determine their LaJET status and to screen for ABAWDs. The eligibility worker will provide each registrant a written explanation of the work requirements through the mail. Mandatory work registrants will be identified on the State's eligibility system by a special code. Non-ABAWDs who reside in a LaJET parish and are a mandatory work registrant will be referred to LaJET. ABAWDs will be referred to LWC. LaJET volunteers will also be identified. Information obtained during the work registration screening process will be entered on the State's eligibility system as work registrant household members are certified or recertified.

The eligibility worker at the local DCFS office will be responsible for screening all mandatory work registrants by identifying the work registrant and/or volunteers who are to participate in E&T. The eligibility worker will also be responsible for all referral activities related to the LaJET Program and to LWC. Referrals are entered on the State's eligibility system for mandatory LaJET participants and volunteers, and ABAWDs who would be subject to the SNAP time limit if there was not an ABAWD waiver in place. From this information, a weekly Super Referral Report of LaJET referents will be sent to the LaJET Service Provider and weekly referral report of ABAWDs will be sent to LWC.

E&T Component AssignmentThe DCFS Regional Program Consultants will also perform compliance monitoring semi-annually in the local DCFS parish office and

LaJET office in addition to conducting reviews of E&T and ABAWD during the Management Evaluation Review. The DCFS Contract Section will monitor the LaJET contract to ensure that the LaJET Service Provider is in compliance with program policy and procedures and fiscal requirements outlined in the contract. This monitoring will be conducted at least on an annual basis and will include reviewing program and fiscal records, LWC's monthly invoices and participant reimbursements made to SNAP clients.

The SP determines if the individual failed to comply..

Conciliation with LaJET:

- **Is an attempt to reach a resolution of the participant's failure to comply with the employment and training requirements prior to initiation of a sanction.**
- **Must be initiated by the LaJET Service Provider the day following the date the individual fails to comply.**
- **Cannot exceed 30 days and may end sooner if the participant refuses to cooperate in the process.**
- **Is considered successful when the participant performs a verifiable act of compliance.**
- **Is available to all E&T participants.**

Conciliation with LWC for ABAWDs:

- **Is an attempt to reach a resolution of the participant's failure to comply with the employment and training requirements prior to initiation of a sanction.**
- **Will be initiated if the ABAWD fails to contact LWC at the end of 30 days.**
- **LWC will send a second letter to the ABAWD at the end of 30 days allowing another 30 days for the ABAWD to contact LWC to comply.**
- **At the end of the second 30-day period, LWC will send a third letter advising the ABAWD to contact LWC to comply.**
- **At the end of 90 days without compliance, LWC will notify DCFS of non-compliance.**

Preparation of the Notice of Adverse Action

If the participant does not comply during the conciliation process the LaJET Service Provider (SP) will notify the local DCFS of the participant's non-compliance via the LaJET Provider to Parish Communication Form, (LaJET 2). The form must be sent within 2 days of the determination of non-compliance. Upon receipt of notification from the LaJET Service Provider of failure to comply, the worker will contact the mandatory work registrant to determine if good cause exists for non-compliance. If good cause does not exist, DCFS will mail a Notice of Adverse Action within 10 days proposing disqualification of the mandatory LaJET participant or the household, as appropriate.

Determination of Good Cause

Based on the information that is reported by the LaJET provider on the Provider to Parish Communication Form (LaJET 2) regarding the reason for non-compliance and information provided by the mandatory work registrant, the eligibility worker will determine whether the individual had good cause for failure to comply

If an ABAWD does not comply within 90 days, LWC will send a report of non-compliance to DCFS. The worker will review case notes in their Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE) account, and will contact the ABAWD to determine if good cause exists for non-compliance. If good cause does not exist, DCFS will mail a Notice of Adverse Action within 10 days proposing disqualification of the ABAWD or the household, as appropriate.

Sanctioning Resulting From Noncompliance With the E&T Program Requirements

Mandatory work registrants are individuals who are not exempt from SNAP work requirements and are ineligible if they fail to meet the work registration requirements without good cause. This includes failing to create a HiRE account, failing to comply with LaJET for non-ABAWDs, or failing to comply with LWC for ABAWDs. Any household member may assist a mandatory work registrant with creating a (HiRE) account to register for work.

Length of sanction:

- **First violation - the individual will be ineligible for 3 months or until compliance, whichever is later.**
- **Second and subsequent violations - the individual will be ineligible for six months or until compliance, whichever is later.**

If the individual who does not comply is the head of the household, the entire household is ineligible for the duration of the sanction.

Notifications of failure to comply with E&T requirements from the Service Provider are documented in the case and reported to the Department of Children and Family Services on a monthly basis.

11. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE AGENCY AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IT PLANS TO COORDINATE WITH FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES, INCLUDING ORGANIZATIONS IN THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, IF AVAILABLE. COPIES OF CONTRACTS MUST BE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION;

The LaJET Program is the cooperative employment and training services initiative of three entities, the Local Parish Offices of DCFS, State SNAP Office and Louisiana Workforce Commission.

The actual services to participants are provided through a contractual agreement with the Louisiana Workforce Commission. In general, the responsibilities are as follows:

• Staff in the local parish DCFS offices identifies LaJET participants.

• On a weekly basis, DCFS notifies the LaJET Service Providers of the SNAP recipients who are to be provided employment and training services.

• Within 15 days of receipt of notification from DCFS, the LaJET Service Provider must schedule an appointment and subsequently assess and place the LaJET referent. Services will be provided as outlined in the components.

Services are provided to ABAWDs statewide through LWC's Business and Career Solutions Centers by providing workforce preparation skills, labor exchange information, and referrals. LWC's Business and Career Solutions Center provides services through Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) participation. ABAWDs who do not meet the ABAWD work requirements are referred to LWC Business and Career Solutions Centers.

Voluntary E&T services are offered at Liberty's Kitchen, Calcasieu Parish Police Jury (CPPJ) Human Services Department, Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana (GWSELA), Covenant House, and Reconcile New Orleans (Café Reconcile).

12. THE AVAILABILITY, IF APPROPRIATE, OF E&T PROGRAMS FOR INDIANS LIVING ON RESERVATIONS AFTER THE STATE AGENCY HAS CONSULTED IN GOOD FAITH WITH APPROPRIATE TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS;

N/A

13. IF A CONCILIATION PROCESS IS PLANNED, THE PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL FAILS TO COMPLY WITH AN E&T PROGRAM REQUIREMENT. INCLUDE THE LENGTH OF THE CONCILIATION PERIOD

If the participant fails to comply with the first appointment letter, the provider sends the Conciliation Notice, (LaJET 6C) to the participant advising the participant that he must complete the conciliation process and come to the LaJET office by a certain date for a face-to-face interview. The interview must be held within 20 days of the first appointment date. The Conciliation Notice (LaJET 6C) must be mailed no later than the day after the failure to comply.

If the client contacts the LaJET Service Provider and the absence is not excused, but the participant agrees to comply, or has an excused absence, the LaJET Service Provider will schedule another appointment. This appointment must be held within the 20-day time period. The LaJET Service Provider may confirm this appointment with the LaJET 7 (second appointment letter).

ABAWDs are required to meet with LWC staff every 30 days as long as they are actively participating. LWC staff is instructed to document a HiRE case note every 30 days as long as the ABAWD is participating. LWC staff will only document non-compliance when the ABAWD contacts them and states refusal to participate. So, there will not be a HiRE case note if the participant did not create a HiRE account or never participated. The never participated and stopped participating tasks are received after 90 days of no contact with the ABAWD. The stopped participating task does not always mean the ABAWD is non-compliant. The ABAWD could have obtained employment, participating in another program and not required to participate, may

have a long-term barrier or possible exemption, or finished participating and is no longer required to participate.

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14. THE PAYMENT RATES FOR CHILD CARE ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROVISIONS OF 45 CFR 98.43, AND BASED ON LOCAL MARKET RATE SURVEYS.

Provider Type	Regular Care	Regular CareINFANT/ODDLERS	Special NeedsCARE INCENTIVE	SECIAL NEEDSCARE INCENTIVEINFANTS/TODDLERS
Class A	$17.50	$18.50	$21.65	$22.65
Class E	$15.00	$16.00	$18.50	$19.50
Class M	$17.50	$18.50	$21.65	$22.65
Class R	$15.00	$16.00	$18.50	$19.50
Class U	$14.50	$15.50	$17.90	$18.90

15. THE COMBINED (FEDERAL/STATE) STATE AGENCY REIMBURSEMENT RATE FOR TRANSPORTATION COSTS AND OTHER EXPENSES REASONABLY NECESSARY AND DIRECTLY RELATED TO PARTICIPATION INCURRED BY E&T PARTICIPANTS. IF THE STATE AGENCY PROPOSES TO PROVIDE DIFFERENT REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNTS TO ACCOUNT FOR VARYING LEVELS OF EXPENSES, FOR INSTANCE FOR GREATER OR LESSER COSTS OF TRANSPORTATION IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE STATE, IT MUST INCLUDE THEM HERE.

Participants are reimbursed for participation in E&T activities. If funding is not available, the state will exempt individuals from mandatory E&T participation during the screening process. Additionally, during the screening process, the eligibility worker will determine if transportation costs would exceed the allowable reimbursement amounts prior to making a referral to the E&T provider.

Transportation Participants use various methods of transportation including services provided through contractual agreements with different agencies which is free and does not cost the participants any out of pocket expenses.

? LWC will reimburse LaJET participants $5.00 per activity up to a maximum of $60 for Job Search Training per participant or up to $15.00 for Independent Job Search and WIOA. LWC will reimburse ABAWDs $5.00 per activity up to a maximum of $60. ? Liberty's Kitchen will provide monthly bus passes for the public transit system to participants. Billing to DCFS will include information regarding participation so that costs can be verified. ? Calcasieu Parish Police Jury (CPPJ) Human Services Department will ensure transportation is available in one of the following — through

agreements with transportation providers in the area, public transit, car pools, share-a-ride, local taxi service and mileage reimbursement. The method of transportation will be based on needs of the participant. CPPJ will pay the reasonable and necessary rate for transportation. If mileage reimbursement is used, CPPJ will reimburse the participant 32 cents per mile to a maximum. The maximum amount a participant can receive for transportation assistance is $150.00 per fiscal year. ? Goodwill Industries of Southeast Louisiana will provide bus tickets as needed. ? Covenant House has on-site transportation. ? Reconcile New Orleans (Café Reconcile) will provide bus tokens and passes as needed.

Child Care Dependent care expenses are for parents with children under the age of 12, or 13 and older and have a physical or mental disability. The majority of the children are school age and do not require reimbursement. ? LWC will reimburse childcare costs for LaJET participants up to $200 per month for 2 months. Maximum per participant is $400. The state will exempt from mandatory E&T participation an individual who needs childcare reimbursement if funds are not available. There are no childcare reimbursements for ABAWDs. ? Covenant House has an on-site facility available for dependent care.

There are no non-LaJET, non-ABAWD mandatory E&T participants. Only non-ABAWDs would be offered LaJET services, so in the 60 parishes that are non-LaJET parishes, the only mandatory E&T participant are ABAWDs.

Other Costs necessary to participate in educational or job training activities such as uniforms, professional fees, clothing, equipment, and temporary housing assistance are reimbursed by Expanded E&T providers.

The LaJET Handbook and Expanded E&T Handbook provides directions to E&T services providers regarding which costs are allowable and which costs may and may not be reimbursed. Requests from E&T service providers for reimbursement paid to E&T participants are submitted monthly and through contract monitoring when invoices are submitted they are reviewed for allowable expenses. The LaJET Handbook and SNAP work requirements can be found in DCFS' Policy Management System at www.dcfs.louisiana.gov.

16. INFORMATION ABOUT EXPENSES THE STATE AGENCY PROPOSES TO REIMBURSE. FNS MUST BE AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW AND COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED REIMBURSEMENTS BEFORE THEY ARE IMPLEMENTED.

We anticipate that $201,044.49 (state/federal funds) will be used to reimburse SNAP E&T participants.

B. ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS (ABAWD)

A State agency interested in receiving additional funding for serving able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs)* subject to the 3-month time limit, in accordance with 7 C.F.R. §273.7(d)(3), must include the following for each Federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan under WIOA: *7 CFR § 273.7(c)(7)

1. ITS PLEDGE TO OFFER A QUALIFYING ACTIVITY TO ALL AT-RISK ABAWD APPLICANTS AND RECIPIENTS

Its pledge to offer a qualifying activity to all at-risk ABAWD applicants and recipients;

Louisiana is not a pledge state.

2. ESTIMATED COSTS OF FULFILLING ITS PLEDGE

Louisiana is not a pledge state.

3. A DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT CONTROLS IN PLACE TO MEET PLEDGE REQUIREMENTS

Louisiana is not a pledge state.

4. A DISCUSSION OF ITS CAPACITY AND ABILITY TO SERVE AT-RISK ABAWDS.

The current approved E&T State Plan includes ABAWDs; however, Louisiana has an approved ABAWD Waiver.

5. INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIZE AND SPECIAL NEEDS OF ITS ABAWD POPULATION

The current approved E&T State Plan includes ABAWDs; however, Louisiana has an approved ABAWD Waiver.

6. INFORMATION ABOUT THE EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND WORKFARE COMPONENTS IT WILL OFFER TO MEET THE ABAWD WORK REQUIREMENT.

The current approved E&T State Plan includes ABAWDs; however, Louisiana has an approved ABAWD Waiver.

C. PLAN MODIFICATION

If FNS determines that the performance of a State agency with respect to employment and training outcomes is inadequate, FNS may require the State agency to make modifications to the State E&T plan to improve the outcomes.*

***7 U.S.C. 2025(h)(5)(E) as amended by Agricultural Act of 2014 .**

FUNDING DISCLAIMER

Funds may not be available when SNAP E&T portions of a Combined State Plan under WIOA are approved. FNS's obligation after approving a SNAP E&T plan submitted as part of a Combined State Plan is contingent upon the availability of an appropriation from which payment can be made. Any FNS funding resulting from an approval of a SNAP E&T plan submitted as part of a Combined State Plan is subject to FNS receiving

sufficient funds (in the Program Financial Control System for FNS) to fund this and all prior approved SNAP E&T plans submitted as part of a Combined State Plan in their entirety in the time and date order received. Federal reimbursement to States for 50 percent of State administrative expenditures and for participant reimbursements is subject to the above conditions.

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA)

There are no program-specific state planning requirements for TAA. If the state includes TAA in a Combined State Plan, the state must incorporate TAA in its responses to the common planning elements in sections II, III, IV, and V of the WIOA State Plan requirements instrument.

Has the state incorporated TAA into the sections indicated above? Yes

JOBS FOR VETERANS' STATE GRANTS

The Jobs for Veterans' State Grants (JVSG) are mandatory, formula-based staffing grants to (including DC, PR, VI and Guam). The JVSG is funded annually in accordance with a funding formula defined in the statute (38 U.S.C. 4102A (c) (2) (B) and regulation and operates on a fiscal year (not program year) basis, however, performance metrics are collected and reported (VETS-200 Series Reports) quarterly (using four "rolling quarters") on a Program Year basis (as with the ETA-9002 Series). Currently, VETS JVSG operates on a five-year (FY 2015-2019), multi-year grant approval cycle modified and funded annually.

In accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(b)(5) and § 4102A(c), the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (ASVET) makes grant funds available for use in each State to support Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff. As a condition to receive funding, 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c)(2) requires States to submit an application for a grant that contains a State Plan narrative, which includes:

A. HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS UNDER THE JVSG

Services are provided to veterans and eligible persons by JVSG staff members according to the needs of the veteran, any significant barrier to employment (SBE) they may possess and the roles and responsibilities of JVSG personnel. DVOP specialists and LVERs are essential parts of and fully integrated into the workforce development network. They are included among the One Stop Career Center (OSCC) partner staff, which consists of all staff employed by programs or activities operated by OSCC partners listed in 29 U.S.C. 2841(b) that provide online and/or in—person workforce development or related support services as part of the workforce development system. Other BCSC partner staff members include staff of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Wagner Peyser (WP) and other OSCC network partner programs.

DVOP specialists —— Under 38 U.S.C. 4103A(a), a DVOP specialist provides intensive services and facilitates placements to meet the employment needs of veterans, prioritizing service to special disabled veterans, other disabled veterans and other categories of veterans in accordance with priorities determined by the Secretary of Labor; and

LVER —— Under 38 U.S.C. 4104(b), the LVER's principal duties are to: (1) conduct outreach to employers in the area to assist veterans in gaining employment, including conducting seminars for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops and establishing job search groups; and (2) facilitate employment, training and placement services furnished to veterans in a state under the applicable state employment service delivery systems.

DVOP specialists are domiciled in local OSCC offices throughout the state or with other partner agencies. One LVER is designated as the state coordinator of veteran's services and one DVOP is currently assigned as an intensive service coordinator (ISC) co—located with the Veterans Affair VR&E office in New Orleans. The state is currently operating under an approved waiver from DOL VETS to utilize four LVERs as veteran program managers (lead LVERs) in the JVSG Program. These LVERs provide direct supervisory and administrative oversight for the DVOP staff in their assigned areas of operation. It is anticipated the lead LVER will perform the traditional role of the LVER within their assigned geographical area 70% of the time. The remaining time will be spent performing supervisory functions such as payroll activities, schedule approval, performance evaluation, etc. for DVOP staff in their respective geographical area.

An analysis of the veteran population in each parish throughout the state was recently conducted to determine an equitable distribution of DVOP specialists. Official domiciles and areas of responsibility have been adjusted in accordance with the results of that analysis. The state will review analysis results annually in conjunction with the Annual Funding Modification process and adjust domicile locations as necessary based on population shifts in order to best serve veterans (with SBEs) and other eligible persons in targeted populations. In addition to DVOP specialists, each OSCC has individuals trained in case management and business and/or community services networking. DVOP specialists coordinate closely with these OSCC staff members when providing intensive services to veterans with an SBE or those that are otherwise targeted. In turn, DVOP specialists provide advice and guidance as needed to OSCC staff members that are providing services to other veterans and other eligible persons. This team approach ensures that all veterans and other eligible persons receive quality services that afford them the greatest opportunity for a successful outcome.

When not actively providing intensive services or reviewing open case files, DVOP specialists and other OSCC career specialists fully trained in case management and networking conduct outreach at off—site locations including, but not limited to, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs offices, Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC) for the U.S. DVA, Military Treatment facilities (MTF), Warrior Transition Units/Battalion (WTU/WTB) and Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) grantee locations. The purpose of these outreach efforts is two—fold. The first

purpose is to find veterans in need of services and offer the needed services to them. The second purpose is to develop relationships with supportive services in the area so that SBE and other veterans can be referred to those agencies for services.

LVER staff members are domiciled in local OSCCs throughout the state. In the state's business services delivery model, one industry sector coordinator and one business services coordinator has been assigned to each of the state's eight regional labor market areas. The area of responsibility for each LVER staff member has been adjusted to align with that of these regional labor market areas. The LVER coordinates with regional industry sector coordinators, business services coordinators and members of the Recruitment and Placement Team assigned to OSCCs to advocate to employers on behalf of veterans and to develop job opportunities specifically for veterans. LVER staff train all OSCC employees to network for veterans and comply with priority of service requirements.

B. THE DUTIES ASSIGNED TO DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF BY THE STATE; SPECIFICALLY IMPLEMENTING DVOP AND LVER DUTIES OR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS OUTLINED IN 38 U.S.C. § 4103A AND 4104. THESE DUTIES MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT GUIDANCE;

Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists The primary function of the state's DVOP specialist team is to provide intensive services for veterans identified to have an SBE in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4103A, VPL 07-10 and VPL 03-14, or the most recent USDOL policy, and those veterans that are a member of a special population in accordance with VPL 04-14, or the most recent USDOL policy.

Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists The primary function of the state's DVOP specialist team is to provide intensive services for veterans identified to have an SBE in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4103A, VPL 07—10 and VPL 03—14, or the most recent USDOL policy, and those veterans that are a member of a special population in accordance with VPL 04—14, or the most recent USDOL policy.

Prior to conducting any other intensive service, DVOP specialists shall conduct a comprehensive assessment, which shall be an "intensive interviewing process" and may also include the use of an Interest Inventory, Work Keys, WIN Assessment or other assessment tool. Once the comprehensive assessment has been completed, the DVOP shall, with the cooperation of the veteran, develop and implement an Individual Development Plan (IDP). DVOP specialists shall always, and as a minimum, complete these two intensive services. Case management continues to be an appropriate delivery strategy or framework within which intensive services may be delivered and in most cases, shall be followed. To enhance the implementation of the IDP career guidance, supportive services, job development contacts, job referrals and intensive services and training may also be provided. Depending on the needs of the individual, the goal of the IDP may be to obtain education, training or employment. Training or education may be short— or long—term depending on the certification, licensing or skills being acquired to optimize successful employment outcomes. The DVOP specialist may receive assistance with these functions by other career specialists who are also specifically trained to facilitate case management.

The state requires DVOP specialists to conduct outreach to locate veterans with an SBE with the purpose of providing intensive services and to form partnerships with external and internal supportive services programs that can provide those services. Examples of the programs are listed below.

The DVOP will work closely with the following partner programs or organizations:

— VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment facilities

— Homeless Veteran Reintegration Programs

— Quad Area Community Action Agency two grants (urban and non—urban)

— Volunteers of America Greater New Orleans (urban)

— VA VET Centers — Homeless and Halfway Shelters

— Civic and Veteran Service Organizations

— Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act partners

— Louisiana Vocational Rehabilitation facilities

— Southeastern Louisiana University Veterans' Upward Bound Program

— State Veterans' Affairs Representatives

— Local College and Universities and Vo—Tech Veterans' Service Representatives

— Veterans' Service Organizations

— Department of Social Services TANF initiatives for veterans

— Parish Veteran Service Officers

Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) Staff

The LVER responsibilities are specifically targeted to promote the advantages of hiring veterans to employers, employer associations and business groups. LVER roles and responsibilities are consistent with 38 U.S.C. § 4104, VPL 07—10 and VPL 03—14.

As such, the LVER serves an important role in the state's Business Services Delivery Model. In coordination with the other members of the business services team, the LVER advocates for employment and training opportunities through outreach to employers, training facilities, unions, apprenticeship programs and private and government businesses. The LVER also participates in job fairs, promotes programs that offer licensing and credentialing opportunities and develops and makes presentations to employers. Each LVER must provide a monthly report to the state veterans coordinator detailing their outreach activities. LVER Staff members conduct outreach to perform the following activities:

• Conducting employer outreach;

• In conjunction with employers, conducting job searches and workshops and establishing job search groups;

• Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs and businesses or business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs for veterans;

• Informing federal contractors of the process to recruit qualified veterans;

• Promoting credentialing and licensing opportunities for veterans; and

• Coordinating and participating with other business outreach efforts.

The state intends for LVER staff to play a central role in facilitating the provision of services to veterans. This is accomplished through building partnerships, especially with OSCCs in their assigned regions, providing subject matter expertise and promoting the efficient and effective integration of all employment services provided to veterans. Within each OSCC, LVER staff shall coordinate closely with the local area coordinator (LAC) to provide training and technical assistance on priority of service, best practices for providing effective services to veterans, relevant external partners, the role of DVOP specialists, integration of DVOP specialists into the OSCC service delivery model, and best practices for conducting outreach to employers.

To maximize the impact of the streamlined LVER staff, the state takes a top—down, cooperative approach to employer outreach. LVER staff shall coordinate with their business service team partners, and other state agencies or programs such as Louisiana Rehabilitative Services (LRS), to conduct outreach to employer associations at the state and regional level. In this way the maximum number of employers can be efficiently and effectively incorporated into the promotion of hiring of veterans. This outreach will educate employers on the advantages of hiring veterans, and inform employers on how to find qualified veteran applicants by leveraging the State workforce system and OSCCs. The state intends to increase veteran employment by making a sound business case to employers regarding the advantage of hiring veterans and providing employer's tools and contacts to do so effectively.

C. THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNER NETWORK;

Louisiana provides employment, training and placement services to all veterans through a network of strategically located OSCCs operated by 16 Regional Workforce Development Boards (WDB) and supported by the state's proprietary HiRE database system. The state, working closely with each OSCC and their WDB, has implemented a standardized framework for customer flow. This flow determines the methodology through which all clients (both job-seeker and employer) are integrated into the system and how they are assessed to identify their service needs. All programs are coordinated through a joint referral process described in each region's memorandum of understanding (MOU) between partners. Each partner performs the services allowed by their authorizing legislation or policy.

Inter-staff collaboration is also enforced via program updates and workforce development policies are shared among partners at regularly scheduled staff meetings and training. During those contacts, all staff members share information

about new employers and job orders received, OSCC scheduled activities and positive recruitment activities taking place in the region.

All DVOP specialists are full-time employees, including the DVOP specialist ISC out-stationed with VA VR&E. They are singularly responsibility for locating and providing intensive services to targeted veterans and other eligible persons in the context of an effective network system. Although DVOP specialists are responsible for facilitating the case management and intensive services of veterans with significant barriers, they are not alone in this effort. Providing services to veterans with SBEs takes a team effort and as such, all services available in any particular OSCC are available to veterans on a priority-of-service basis. The state mandates and monitors that non-JVSG funded staff provide intensive services and case management as appropriate to veterans and other eligible persons when no DVOP specialist is available.

The state promotes employment and job training opportunities through the use of several specialized programs. The state funds an Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP) initiative through collaboration with local education and training facilities in order to train participants who are already working toward upgrading their skills and pay. Southeastern Louisiana University and Delgado Community College operate Veterans' Upward Bound Programs to promote additional education for veterans and assist with college or technical school programs designed to help earn a degree or certification. These opportunities are presented to veterans through OSCC office visits and presentations at veterans workshops.

The state's Business Services Delivery Model divides the state in to eight separate labor regions. Each region is assigned an industry sector coordinator and a business services coordinator. The LVER functions as a member of these Business Services Teams in their respective regions. The team's primary focus is to conduct job development and outreach to employers, including federal contractors and labor unions. LVER staff responsibilities include operating targeted hiring events, and veterans' job fairs. LVER staff provides program continuity by acting as the technical program advisor and trainer for OSCC staff. The state has no part-time LVER staff.

To facilitate the optimal utilization of the services and resources available from other service providers, the state has developed cooperative relationships with many service providers including all WDBs, OSCCs, the Louisiana Economic Development (LED), Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) grantees, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves (ESGR), Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs (LDVA), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) and numerous local agencies and nonprofit organizations. The state continues to execute robust, coordinated outreach efforts at the local, regional, and state levels to identify and reach out to additional service providers. As part of this outreach, all DVOP specialists are required to conduct outreach to local USDOL-VETS competitive grantees (currently there are two HVRP grantees in Louisiana) and the one Wounded Warrior Transition Unit located at Fort Polk, La. This outreach ensures an accurate and realistic picture of what other services and resources are available at the local, regional and state levels and promote the development of relationships to leverage those service providers. This information is shared with JVSG staff across the state. Information sharing provides a vehicle for DVOP specialists to integrate available

partner services and resources into the IDP for the veterans they are serving and provide LVER staff with additional avenues to promote and facilitate employment services and placements for veterans and other eligible persons.

The state partners with many of these organizations through the MOU process and DVOPs make regular outreach contact with these organizations on behalf of the veterans they serve.

All OSCCs across the state work together with JVSG grant-funded staff to ensure that information flow regarding employment and training opportunities is clear, concise and continuous. The state lists approved training providers on its website including detailed descriptions of training provided and the veteran's potential for employment after successful completion of the training, based on occupational demand.

Louisiana's Native American tribes live in open tribal lands and are not segregated from the general public. As such, resources of other organizations that provide employment services to veterans are openly available to the very small Native American population residing in Louisiana.

Louisiana has adopted a demand-driven approach to all workforce and employment programs to ensure that all services and training are directed toward high-demand jobs. To support this effort, the state is heavily engaged with employers, employer associations and other partners in the top industries within each region to continuously identify the skills necessary to both enter and succeed in high-demand careers.

The local WDBs and their constituent OSCCs make up the central hub for all workforce activities and associated training within the state. The state's strategy for the leveraging of other state and federal education and training programs to develop skills necessary to prepare veterans for in-demand jobs is therefore focused on and operated in close cooperation with our OSCC partners. The combined effects of the effective integration of the JVSG into the OSCC service delivery model, outreach to and relationship building with relevant partners, and comprehensive up-to-date information on in-demand jobs and skills, produces a coordination of programs and services that reduces or eliminates duplication, closes gaps in service and identifies the program or service best suited to the individual veteran being served. In this way, the state leverages a wide range of state and federal training programs to efficiently and effectively provide veterans with the specific skills necessary to secure and succeed in current in-demand jobs.

The state's outreach efforts and public information activities are used to inform veterans of the services available at their local OSCC and the training opportunities that are available in their area and within the state. These outreach efforts, as described in Section B above, are focused on key service providers likely to interact with SBE veterans. The intent of this outreach is to educate service providers about job training and other services available to veterans at their local OSCC. In turn, the state's partner service providers can encourage veterans to seek services at an OSCC. Due to the complexity of eligibility criteria and the variance of programs offered in disparate areas, public information systems usually do not provide specifics on

particular programs but do direct veterans and other eligible persons into the local OSCC.

The state is actively engaged in promoting development of high-demand, job-driven training opportunities for veterans and other eligible persons within the education community. Business Services Teams, specifically the ISC, partnering with LED staff members, advise and collaborate with employers and educational institutions, (particularly the Louisiana Community and Technical College System), to promote access to, retention in and completion of individual training and education.

D. THE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED USING THE 1% GRANT ALLOCATION SET ASIDE FOR THIS PURPOSE, AS APPLICABLE;

The state shall request 1 percent of its annual allocation for each year's JVSG grant as performance incentive awards for eligible staff. This award shall be used in accordance with VPL 02-07 or the most recent guidance from USDOL-VETS. The objective of the LWC incentive award program is to recognize, promote and reward superlative and exceptional performance in the provision of service to veterans within the context of statutes and regulations. The basic objective of the awards program is to create an awareness and continuous level of interest in the importance of priority of service for veterans and an environment that engenders continuous improvement in serving veterans across the spectrum of service. The award system shall continue to operate as defined in the applicable State Policy and as approved by USDOL.

The state anticipates that individuals and teams will recognize the value and process of the awards program and will, as a result, develop a competitive attitude within the agency that supports esprit de corps within the team while sharpening the focus on service to other eligible persons.

Incentive awards shall be expended up to and including 1 percent of the total grant amount for the fiscal year, which is set aside strictly for this purpose in the annual grant budget. Awards shall be determined based on a percentage of total award available for that fiscal year but shall not (in total) exceed 1 percent of the total available funds for a given fiscal year or the most current USDOL guidance on grant-funded incentive award amounts.

Exceptional merit is based on a number of factors, with the overriding concept being the value of the process. In essence this is determining both a quantitative and qualitative rating and merit based on the following factors:

- Total numbers of veterans served and total services rendered to those veterans within the parameters of these areas;

- Outreach to veterans and subsequent flow of core services that result in veterans becoming job ready, or the need for intensive services;

- Outreach to and the comprehensive assessment of special target groups within the veteran community;

- Intensive services, case management and outcomes of those efforts;

- Job placements, in particular job developments, for veterans and disabled veterans;

- Other successful outcomes for veterans who may not return to employment, but through community partner referral developed an improved situation and/or economic stability;

- Outreach to and partner development with employers and federal contractors in the support of creating job opportunities for veterans;

- Outreach to and partner development with community service agencies, other state and federal programs and internal agency components in creating a supportive service network for veterans with barriers to employment and who may need case management;

-Organization of, participation in and success in job fairs and other veteran center community activities;

- Any other innovative veteran-related activity.

The award process is restricted by state law, such that to operate all awards must be cash, and all cash awards must be presented directly to individuals. This means that offices (teams) receiving incentive recognition shall share equally in the overall office award, and the individual award amount shall be determined by the team composition.

Half the total award fund available shall be awarded to JVSG funded staff, 35% of the total award fund available shall be split between two offices (teams of which JVSG grant funded staff may be a part) and 15% of the total award fund available shall be awarded to three individual partner agency service providers. The two awards made to offices shall be split between one large office (6) full- time staff or and one small office (5) or fewer full-time staff.

Awards shall be administered and distributed as approved by the state of Louisiana Civil Service Board as detailed in the approved policy. For state merit staff awardees, the incentive will be paid out through the payroll system. For non-state merit employee, a separate payroll check will issued to the individual. Any employee contributions that result from the payment of the incentive will be charged to the JVSG grant.

An email request for team details and recommendations shall be sent to all Workforce Development Boards, local area coordinators, site supervisors, senior field leadership and JVSG-funded staff during August. Recommendations may come from anyone in the system, co-workers, supervisors, managers, coordinators, directors and JVSG staff.

Determination of the award shall be by a combination of objective and subjective data. Data compilation, analysis and award determination shall be by a team comprised of the veterans state coordinator and members of the management of information systems (MIS) staff. The final award approval shall be by the appointing authority, director of the Office of Workforce Development who is also the signatory authority for the JVSG grant relationship with USDOL.

Incentive award funds distributed shall be obligated by Sept. 30 each fiscal year and distributed not later than Dec. 31 of the same year in accordance with the regulation. The incentive award report shall be in compliance with USDOL VETS reporting requirements.

Winners shall be publicly recognized locally by their peers, local dignitaries and leadership for their exceptional performance on behalf of veterans. Winners shall also be recognized at a statewide conference or other similar large-scale event forum that provides the greatest positive publicity for the program.

Insufficient nominees: Because the entering arguments for eligibility are based on objective performance data, there shall be sufficient nominees. Unless, and in the unlikely and extraordinary circumstance that the appointing authority chooses not to make any award, all incentive award funds shall be distributed.

Tie breakers: If two or more individuals or offices (teams) score equally for their category, then those ties shall be broken by selecting the office that had the highest ratings on customer service reports during the review period, taken from the JVSG Customer Service Surveys, or for the individual by selecting the individual who had the most successful outcomes or the most successful job developments for the period.

Documentation: Documentation used for the award nominee selections shall be taken from the state proprietary employment system HiRE, veteran staff reports and job fair records. Data shall encompass the period of the first three federal fiscal quarters of the fiscal year. Credit for activities and services shall not be awarded without back-up documentation.

E. THE POPULATIONS OF VETERANS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING ANY ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS DESIGNATED BY THE SECRETARY AS ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES, AND ANY ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS SPECIFICALLY TARGETED BY THE STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY FOR SERVICES FROM ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNERS (E.G., NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS; VETERANS IN REMOTE RURAL COUNTIES OR PARISHES);

Veterans that attest to belonging to at least one of the six criteria listed below or are members of a special population are considered to have an SBE and are targeted by the DVOP specialist:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as defined in 38 U.S.C. § 4211(10) and (3);

- Homeless, as defined in Sections 103(a) and (b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a) and (b)), as amended;

- A recently separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months;

- An offender, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (38), who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration;

- Lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or

- Low-income, as defined by WIOA Section 3(36). DVOP specialists shall also provide services to priority category populations identified by the Secretary under 38 U.S.C. §

4103A (a)(1)(C). Currently, the secretary has identified four such populations. These populations are:

Transitioning service members who have participated in the Transition Assistance Program and have been identified as in need of intensive services;

Service members who are wounded, ill or injured and receiving treatment in military treatment facilities or warrior transition units;

The spouses or other family caregivers of such wounded, ill or injured service members;

Veterans, as defined in 38 U.S.C. § 4211, aged 18 to 24.

F. HOW THE STATE IMPLEMENTS AND MONITORS THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO COVERED PERSONS;

Priority of service is one of the most important elements of service for veterans, as prescribed by 38 U.S.C. § 4215(b) and 20 CFR Parts 1001 and 1010 and reinforced through the State issued Workforce Development Policy 18.

Priority starts with the first OSCC member that comes in contact with the veteran or eligible person. During the reception process, a series of questions identifies veteran or eligibility status. Qualified veterans and/or qualified spouses are provided services prior to other customers and an initial assessment is completed by the first available OSCC staff member. If during the initial assessment it is determined that the veteran has an SBE or is a member of another special category, the veteran is immediately referred to a DVOP specialist.

The state provides priority of service in accordance with TEGL 05-03. When a veteran is identified as having barriers to employment, they are fast-tracked on a priority basis to ensure that those barriers are resolved as expeditiously as possible. The state has MOU agreements with the USDOL funded programs covered by 38 U.S.C. § 4215(b) on veterans' priority and refers veterans to training and supportive services within that network on a priority basis. The state has partnered with educational entities within the state and the vocational/technical institutions, which also provide priority service for veterans and assists them with their educational and literacy needs.

Veterans receive priority for employment and job training opportunities available through WIOA funding, on-the-job training, skills development training and youth training contracts. Veterans can locate training opportunities through use of the HiRE data base and receive training at private facilities, which have been approved through the State Established Training Provider List (ETPL). Should veterans meet the eligibility criteria, their training costs are paid by the WIOA program or through Individual Training Accounts. Veterans take priority in instances of training-fund shortages. LVER staff and other OSCC staff identify jobs and training opportunities specifically tailored for veterans, as they promote veterans as potential employees. These priority services are made available and provided to veterans, transitioning service members, Chapter 31 veterans, Native American Veterans, and other groups

targeted for special consideration, including difficult to serve veterans and veterans with barriers to employment.

Each WDB coordinates available funds with those provided by the VA VR&E program such that there is no duplication of services. When VR&E is providing training and supportive services, WIOA can provide services to spouses or services that were not covered by the VA VR&E program. WIOA may also provide Work Keys testing and certification to veterans, designed to identify skills designated by employers as necessary to perform certain jobs. This enhances veterans' employability for jobs needing the skills identified in their certifications.

In conjunction with the LACs, the state closely monitors the provision of priority of service. Both JVSG management and LACs shall periodically conduct site checks to ensure all required priority of service signs are present and properly displayed, and that OSCC staff understand both the requirement of priority of service and its proper implementation. During these site visits, monitors pay particular attention to the implementation of priority of service beyond core services, particularly in the allocation of training funds.

The state analyzes data from reports in conjunction with HiRE data in order to continuously compare outcomes by veterans and other eligible persons to the outcomes of non-veteran populations. This ongoing analysis supports the state's continuous improvement process. Specifically, this is the relative rates of referral to USDOL funded training, referral to employment by OSCC staff and job placement activities provided by OSCC staff. The state shall consider an indicated referral rate in any one of these areas being lower for veterans and other eligible persons than for nonveterans, evidence of a potential priority of implementation problem. The state shall immediately place the affected region under examination and corrective action measures to include, but not be limited, to additional training. The DVET shall also monitor a percentage of the OSCCs within the state annually.

G. HOW THE STATE PROVIDES OR INTENDS TO PROVIDE AND MEASURE, THROUGH BOTH THE DVOP AND ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNER STAFF:

1. JOB AND JOB TRAINING INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES,

1. job and job training individualized career services,

DVOP Specialists are integrated into the OSCC service delivery model. In this model Veterans are initially identified through self-attestation during registration for service. On a priority of service basis, OSCC staff members determine the eligible person's purpose for registering. Once the veteran or other eligible person is identified, the Career Specialist conducts an initial assessment. This initial assessment uses a customized intake form to help determine if the veteran or other eligible person has a SBE or that they may be a member of another special priority group. Those Veterans determined not to possess a SBE are provided job and job training individualized career services as needed by OSCC and other partner staff on a priority of service basis. If a determination is made that the client is a Veteran with a SBE or other special criteria, they are referred to the DVOP specialist for further assessment and individualized career services.

The State will measure the performance of DVOP Specialist utilizing statistical data found in the Hire system. Specifically, the State will monitor: the Individualized Career Services provided to Individuals by DVOP Specialist. In addition to these performance measures, the State will monitor additional DVOP performance measures required under WIOA and in accordance latest DOL VETS guidance.

2. EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT SERVICES, AND

If it is determined that a Veteran or eligible person is "job ready," the Veteran will be referred to a Business Services Representative or a Career Specialist to receive employment placement services. Employment placement services could include direct referral to an employer through the HiRE system, referral to attend an employer job fair, direct referral to the employer's website, or any other means of connecting the Veteran with an employer.

The State will measure the performance of employment placement services utilizing statistical data found on using the Hire system. Specifically, the State will monitor additional employment placement and LVER services, performance measures required under WIOA and in accordance latest DOL VETS guidance.

3. JOB-DRIVEN TRAINING AND SUBSEQUENT PLACEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS;

If it is determined that a Veteran or eligible person is preliminarily qualified for and in need of job-driven training and subsequent placement services, the DVOP will include those services in the individuals Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) and then directly refer them to a WIOA Career Specialist. The WIOA Career Specialist will then determine program eligibility and complete WIOA enrollment process with the individual on a priority of service basis.

H. THE HIRE DATE ALONG WITH MANDATORY TRAINING COMPLETION DATES FOR ALL DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF; AND

All current JVSG staff members that have been in position for over 18 months have completed the required courses relevant to their position. Below is a list of all current JVSG staff members, their date assigned to current position, and course completion dates.

DVOP	Date Appointed to Current Position	Facilitating Veteran Employment (FVE) *Formerly LES	Intensive Services (IS) *Formerly CM	Employer Outreach (EO) *Formerly PPE
Minchew, Valerie	5-Jun-05	19-May-06	29-Sep-06	4-Apr-08
Thomas, Millard	1-Jun-06	20-Oct-06	27-Oct-06	19-Jan-07

DVOP	Date Appointed to Current Position	Facilitating Veteran Employment (FVE) *Formerly LES	Intensive Services (IS) *Formerly CM	Employer Outreach (EO) *Formerly PPE
Hebert, Bradley	29-May-07	13-Mar-15	6-Jun-08	21-Nov-08
Luttrull, Michael	29-May-07	27-Jul-07	19-Aug-11	21-Dec-07
Everett, Ingle	25-Oct-07	15-May-08	12-Jun-15	13-Feb-09
Thompson, Purvis	13-Aug-12	1-Feb-13	3-Apr-15	15-Feb-13
Rodgers, Gary	15-Apr-13	16-Aug-13	17-Apr-15	
Taylor, Eric	4-Sep-13	20-Jun-14	1-Aug-14	
Kron, Edward	22-Dec-14	3-Apr-15	17-Apr-15	
Granger, Chad	2-Feb-15	22-May-15	10-Jul-15	
Davis, Holly	20-Jul-15	12-Feb-16	9-Sep-15	
Cutrer, Robert	12-Oct-15	12-May-17	12-Feb-16	
Villaflor Michelle	4-Apr-16	24-Jun-16	15-Jul-16	
Johnson, Wilfred	2-May-16	21-Oct-16	28-Oct-16	
Moore, Rashaun	9-May-16	28-Oct-16	9-Dec-16	
Dwight Elmore	1-May-17	26-May-17	15-Dec-17	
Samuel Hoston	24-Aug-16	22-Sep-17	3-Nov-17	
Shannon Forbes	17-Apr-17	14-Sep-17	22-Sep-17	
Heather McWilliams	28-Nov-16	31-Mar-17	28-Apr-17	
Melinda Boutte	9-Nov-16	31-Mar-17	24-Jul-17	
Kennery Foster	9-Nov-16	21-Apr-17	12-May-17	
Robinson, Adrian	6-Jun-16	9-Dec-17	9-Mar-17	
Mitchell Brasseaux	14-Feb-18			
Vicks, Andetrie	14-Feb-18			
Nicholas Murphy	14-Feb-18			
Merold Gaines	14-Feb-18			
LVER				
Lynch, Kenny	2-Feb-15	31-Jul-15	6-Jun-14	10-Apr-15
Demery, Nakeeta	2-Oct-15	13-Dec-13	21-Mar-14	15-Apr-16

DVOP	Date Appointed to Current Position	Facilitating Veteran Employment (FVE) *Formerly LES	Intensive Services (IS) *Formerly CM	Employer Outreach (EO) *Formerly PPE
McGee, Michael	1-Feb-16	12-Jun-15	10-Jul-15	15-Apr-16
Eric Taylor	26-Feb-18			
Narcisse, Jonathan	3-Apr-17	21-Apr-17	16-Jun-17	

I. SUCH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE.

There is no additional information required.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG)

Note: Below is information about the employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) that is included in the WIOA Combined State Plan. The complete CSBG State Plan is submitted directly to the Federal agency that administers that program and is collected under OMB Control Number: 0970-0382.

Where CSBG is included in the Combined State Plan, the State CSBG Lead Agency (as designated by the chief executive of the State under the requirements of section 676(a) of the CSBG Act (42 U.S.C. 9908(a)) will coordinate plans for employment and training activities under CSBG as part of a larger antipoverty and workforce development strategy.

As part of the Combined State Plan,the State CSBG Lead Agency must:

(a) Describe how the State and the eligible entities will coordinate the provision of employment and training activities through Statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems; and may

(b) Provide examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by eligible entities or other neighborhood-based organizations as part of a community antipoverty strategy.

The mission and responsibilities of the state agency that serves as the CSBG lead agency is to provide resources and foster partnerships in low-income communities that will enable low-income individuals to achieve self-sufficiency, enhance family stability and revitalize their community. Within the Louisiana Workforce Commission's Office of Workforce Development, the Community Services Block Grant Unit's mission and responsibilities are to be the lead poverty reduction agency in the state, administer the Community Services Block Grant funds, provide guidance to Community Action Agencies, ensure that resources are utilized to help local public and private nonprofit agencies assist low-income individuals and families achieve

self-sufficiency, ensure that Community Services Block Grant funds are expended in accordance with applicable rules and regulations, ensure that Community Services Block Grant services are accessible through and coordinated with the One-Stop Career Centers as specified in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and encourage innovative initiatives to combat the effects of poverty throughout Louisiana.

The CSBG Act, Sec. 676(b)(5) requires eligible entities to coordinate the provision of employment and training activities through statewide and local workforce investment systems under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which was signed into law on July 22, 2014, supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA).

Agencies align services to ensure that customers receive the best available employment and training services, as well as employment supports to achieve their employment and self-sufficiency goals. As partners in the workforce system continuum of services, these services focus on vulnerable populations and other least job-ready customers by focusing on reduction of the barriers to employment.

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	60.00	64.50	62.00	64.50
Dislocated Workers	65.00	64.30	67.00	64.30
Youth	65.00	67.00	67.00	67.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	50.00	61.00	52.00	61.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 1

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	50.00	64.40	52.00	64.40
Dislocated Workers	55.00	67.20	57.00	67.20
Youth	55.00	67.00	57.00	67.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	62.70	62.70	46.00	62.70
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 2

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	6,000.00	4,900.00	6,200.00	4,900.00
Dislocated Workers	7,000.00	6,800.00	7,200.00	6,800.00

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	2,100.00	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	4,351.00	4,700.00	5,200.00	4,700.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 3

TABLE 4. CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT RATE

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	65.00	64.30	67.00	64.30
Dislocated Workers	55.40	70.00	55.40	70.00
Youth	54.90	60.20	54.90	60.20
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 4

TABLE 5. MEASUREABLE SKILL GAINS

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	51.00	51.00	52.00	52.00
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 5

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

TABLE 7. ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

Measure	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level

Measure	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
N/A				
N/A				
N/A				
N/A				
N/A				

User remarks on Table 7

APPENDIX 2. OTHER STATE ATTACHMENTS (OPTIONAL)

N/A