WIOA STATE PLAN FOR THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY FY-2018

CONTENTS

WIOA State Plan for the State of New Jersey FY-2018 1
Overview 4
Options for Submitting a State Plan 4
How State Plan Requirements Are Organized 5
I. WIOA State Plan Type 9
Combined Plan partner program(s) 9
II. Strategic Elements 10
a. Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis 10
b. State Strategic Vision and Goals 48
c. State Strategy 53
III. Operational Planning Elements 80
A. State Strategy Implementation 80
b. State Operating Systems and Policies 125
IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs 168
V. Common Assurances (for all core programs) 173
VI. Program-Specific Requirements for Core Programs 175
Program-Specific Requirements for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B 175
Program-Specific Requirements for Wagner-Peyser Program (Employment Services) 201
Program-Specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs 220
Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation (General) 235
Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation (Blind) 299
VII. Program-Specific Requirements For Combined State Plan Partner Programs 363
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) 363
Jobs for Veterans' State Grants 363
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) 387
Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (RExO) 411
Appendix 1. Performance Goals for the Core Programs 412
Table 1. Employment (Second Quarter after Exit) 413
Table 2. Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit) 414
Table 3. Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit) 414
Table 4. Credential Attainment Rate 415
Table 5. Measureable Skill Gains 416

Table 6. Effectiveness in Serving Employers 417
Table 7. Additional Indicators of Performance 417
Appendix 2. Other State Attachments (Optional) 418
Endnotes 418
Appendix 1: Performance Goals for Core Programs and NJ Additional Indicators of Performance 419
Appendix 1: Performance Goals for Core Programs - PY 2016 and 2017 420
Appendix 1: Performance Goals for Core Programs - PY 2016 and 2017 (continued) 421
Appendix 1: Performance Goals for Core Programs - PY 2018 and 2019 422
Appendix 1: Performance Goals for Core Programs - PY 2018 and 2019 (continued) 424
Appendix 1: Performance Goals for Core Programs (continued) 425
Appendix 2: Public Comment Summary - 2016 425
Appendix 2: Public Comment Summary - 2016 (continued) 426
Appendix 2: Public Comment Summary - 2016 (continued) 426
Appendix 2: Public Comment Summary - 2016 (continued) 427
Appendix 2: Public Comment Summary - 2016 (continued) 429
Appendix 2: Public Comment Summary - 2016 (continued) 431
Appendix 2: Public Comment Summary - 2016 (continued) 434
Appendix 2: Public Comment Summary - 2016 (continued) 435
Appendix 2: Public Comment Summary - 2018 437
Appendix 3: USDOE WIOA Measurable Skills Gains Target Worksheets 441

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.

INTRODUCTION

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

This talent development system includes:

1. New partnerships with employers across the state's nine key industries,

2. Strong collaborations between workforce programs, education and higher education,

3. The use of technology to better connect jobseekers and employers,

4. Better labor market intelligence to inform workforce investments, and

5. Innovative partnerships between the state, local governments, community and faith-based organizations and educational institutions.

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

The Plan is focused on five primary themes:

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

Through a common definition of career pathways, a newly created list of industry-valued credentials, literacy standards and a renewed commitment to Employment First for all persons

with disabilities, New Jersey will ensure that all workforce investments are enabling individuals to access greater economic opportunity and to build on their skills throughout their careers. These efforts will expand the number of career pathways, at all levels of education and workforce services, which will help more individuals obtain industry-valued credentials and degrees.

Theme 2: Expanding High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships

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

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

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

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

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

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

Theme 5: Ensuring System Integrity through Metrics and Greater Transparency

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

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

WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

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

Required Partners Department of Labor and Workforce Development

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

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

Figure 1

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

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.) No

Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4))) No

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))] Yes

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

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

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

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

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

A. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-State regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This must include-

I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

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

II. EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATION

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

III. EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in 1 and 2 above, provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

EXISTING INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND[I], [II], [III]

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

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

industries of Education and Health Services and Professional and Business Services produce nearly one out of every three jobs for the State.

Industry (2-digit NAICS)	2015 Annual Average Employment	Percent of Total Employment
Education and Health Services	659,300	16.40%
Professional and Business Services	651,400	16.20%
Government	614,800	15.30%
Retail Trade	462,300	11.50%
Leisure and Hospitality	359,600	8.90%
Financial Activities	250,800	6.20%
Manufacturing	238,200	5.90%
Wholesale Trade	216,800	5.40%
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	176,600	4.40%
Other Services	168,900	4.20%
Construction	148,000	3.70%
Information	74,400	1.80%
Mining and Logging	1,400	0.00%

Figure 2 *Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics*

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

Occupation (6-digit SOC)	2014 Annual Average Employment	Annual Average Salary
Total, All Occupations	3,868,950	$53,770
Retail Salespersons	138,020	$26,860

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

FIGURE 3 *Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics*

Diving more deeply into New Jersey's high demand industries, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has highlighted nine key industry clusters for the state. The nine key industry clusters are: Advanced Manufacturing; Construction & Utilities; Food Industry; Health Care; Financial Services; Technology; Transportation, Logistics and Distribution; Biopharmaceutical and Life Science; and Leisure, Hospitality and Retail Trade. Together, all of these clusters account for 71.5% of employment and 73.1% of wages for all private sector industries in New Jersey.[iv] They represent 161,570 establishments, more than 62% of all establishments in the state.

The target industry clusters were developed several years ago in support of New Jersey's State Plan. The State Plan focused on targeted economic growth by promoting opportunities that attract and grow industries important to the state and the region. Job retention and creation efforts can be strengthened by focusing on regional planning and the cultivation of industry cluster based development strategies. A review of New Jersey's strengths and assets reflected the critical role these industries played in New Jersey. However, this is not to say other industry sectors are not important. The success of these core industries will create secondary benefits that will contribute to the growth of other industries. The nine key industry clusters account for more than 70% of the employment and wages in the state. In the Garden State, these key clusters have found an ideal location - within a day's drive of 40.0% of the U.S. population; a talented, productive and highly educated workforce with a high density of residents with advanced degrees and 52 colleges and universities.

LEISURE, HOSPITALITY AND RETAIL (LHR)

This is the largest of the industry clusters in terms of employment with nearly 25% of statewide employment in 2014. The state's tourism industry is a significant part of the state's economy and is primarily captured by the Leisure and Hospitality super sector. Retail trade is the state's second largest industry as far as employment at the two-digit level signifying its importance to the overall

economy. These three industries were grouped together primarily based on similar occupational requirements.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

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

HEALTH CARE

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

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

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

TRANSPORTATION, LOGISTICS AND DISTRIBUTION (TLD)

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

LIFE SCIENCES

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

TECHNOLOGY

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

CONSTRUCTION & UTILITIES

The construction industry in New Jersey is focused on three different components and their subgroups: construction of buildings, heavy and civil engineering, and specialty trade contractors. Utilities has three groupings as well, with a primary focus on power generation and supply. These industries are grouped together based on the commonalities in their classifications.

Advanced Manufacturing	Health Care
2014	2014

Advanced Manufacturing	Health Care
Establishments: 5,143	Establishments: 21,559
Employment: 161,328	Employment: 448,863
Average Wages: $90,040	Average Wage: $53,718
Percent of Total Employment: 4.9%	Percent of Total Employment: 13.8%
Percent of Total Wages: 7.4%	Percent of Total Wages: 12.3%

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

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

Leisure, Hospitality, and Retail Trade	Construction & Utilities

Leisure, Hospitality, and Retail Trade	Construction & Utilities
2014	2016
Establishments: 53,854	Establishments: 22,402
Employment: 806,046	Employment: 166,474
Average Wages: $28,146	Average Wages: $72,977
Percent of Total Employment: 24.7%	Percent of Total Employment: 4.9%
Percent of Total Wages: 11.6%	Percent of Total Wages: 5.8%

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

AND NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND INFORMATION, QUARTERLY CENSUS OF EMPLOYMENT & WAGES, 2016 ANNUAL AVERAGES

The Food Industry Talent Network was created in New Jersey in 2017. In the labor market data provided above, the food industry is included in the Advanced Manufacturing data.

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[i] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, 2014 Annual Averages on March 2015 Benchmark, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[ii] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, May 2015 Estimates, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[iii] New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages, 2014 Annual Averages, NJLWD, Division of Workforce, Research & Analytics, Bureau of Labor Market Information, December 2015.

[iv] Percentage totals are the sum of all mutually exclusive component industries. Therefore, the sum of individual industry cluster annual averages will not equal the total cluster industries annual averages. In addition, the sum of individual industry cluster percentages of totals will not equal the percentage of total.

EMERGING INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS[I]

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

to lose around 1% of their jobs. Government and Manufacturing are the only industries that are expected to lose over 15,000 jobs, with Government losing the most at nearly 20,000 jobs.

Industry (2-digit NAICS)	2012 Jobs	2022 Jobs (Projected)	Change in Jobs	Percent Change
Goods Producing	**377,000**	**397,050**	**20,050**	**0.5%**
Mining and Logging	1,300	1,150	(150)	(1.4%)
Construction	130,400	166,550	36,150	2.5%
Manufacturing	245,300	229,350	(15,950)	(0.7%)
Service-Providing	**3,513,800**	**3,800,200**	**286,400**	**0.8%**
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	821,700	885,100	63,400	0.7%
Information	77,300	70,850	(6,450)	(0.9%)
Financial Activities	250,100	264,100	14,000	0.5%
Professional and Business Services	618,200	702,700	84,500	1.3%
Educational and Health Services	620,300	733,050	112,750	1.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	346,000	371,650	25,650	0.7%
Other Services	164,200	176,350	12,150	0.7%
Government	616,000	596,350	(19,650)	(0.3%)

Figure 4

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections

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

Occupation (6-digit SOC)	2012 Employment	2022 Employment (Projected)	Change in Employment	Percent Change

Occupation (6-digit SOC)	2012 Employment	2022 Employment (Projected)	Change in Employment	Percent Change
Home Health Aides	31,150	46,300	15,150	48.6%
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	60,000	70,200	10,200	17.0%
Retail Salespersons	125,700	134,850	9,150	7.3%
Registered Nurses	79,850	88,900	9,050	11.3%
Nursing Assistants	51,800	60,050	8,250	16.0%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	75,750	83,350	7,600	10.1%
Receptionists and Information Clerks	51,150	57,850	6,700	13.0%
Software Developers, Applications	29,100	35,750	6,650	23.0%
Customer Service Representatives	63,450	69,550	6,100	9.6%
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	41,550	47,000	5,450	13.1%
Total, All Occupations	**4,149,400**	**4,462,550**	**313,150**	**7.5%**

Figure 5

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections

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

EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS[I],[II]

When looking at the 10 fastest growing occupations there are a wide range of education requirements. Software Developers, Applications is the only occupation of the top 10 that needs a bachelor's degree. Registered Nurses require an associate's degree and Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers and Nursing Assistants require a postsecondary non-degree award. Of the other six occupations, two require a high school diploma or equivalent, and the other four require less than high school education. None of the occupations require any work experience and three occupations also do not require any job training. The seven occupations that do require job training require short-term on-the-job training. While Retail Salespersons has the highest number of annual job openings it has the lowest percentage of openings for growth at around 18%. Home Health Aides

has the highest percentage of annual openings for growth at nearly 72%. Software Developers, Applications (64.4%) is the only other occupation with an opening for growth percentage above 50%.

Occupation (6-digit SOC)	Average Annual Job Openings	Education	Work Experience	Job Training
Home Health Aides	2,110	Less than HS	None	Short-term OJT
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	3,310	Less than HS	None	Short-term OJT
Retail Salespersons	5,220	Less than HS	None	Short-term OJT
Registered Nurses	2,450	Associate's degree	None	None
Nursing Assistants	1,810	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	None
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	3,110	Less than HS	None	Short-term OJT
Receptionists and Information Clerks	2,040	High school diploma or equiv.	None	Short-term OJT
Software Developers, Applications	1,040	Bachelor's degree	None	None
Customer Service Representatives	2,340	High school diploma or equiv.	None	Short-term OJT
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,210	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Short-term OJT

Figure 6

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry and Occupational Employment Projections

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

KSAs, including Communication Skills and Organizational Skills, which are included in the top competencies for most industries.

Advanced Manufacturing	Health Care
Key Certifications:	**Key Certifications:**
Six Sigma	Registered Nurse
Project Management Certification	Home Health Aide
Certified Production Technician	Certified Nursing Assistant
Key KSAs:	**Key KSAs:**
Communication Skills	Communication Skills
Organizational Skills	Patient Care
Problem Solving	Organizational Skills
Collaboration	Writing
Planning	Treatment Planning
Financial Services	Technology
Key Certifications:	**Key Certifications:**
Series 7	Project Management Certification
Certified Public Accountant	Certified Information Systems Auditor
Certified Financial Planner (CFP)	Certified Network Professional
Key KSAs:	**Key KSAs:**
Communication Skills	Communication Skills
Organizational Skills	Organizational Skills
Cash Handling	Oracle
Customer Service	SQL
Microsoft Excel	Java

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

Leisure, Hospitality, and Retail Trade	Construction & Utilities
Key Certifications:	Key Certifications:
ServSafe Certification	Professional Engineer
Forklift Operator Certification	EPA Section 608 Certification
Key KSAs:	Photovoltaic (PV) Installer Certification
Communication Skills	Residential Building Envelope Whole House
Customer Service	Air Leakage Control Installer Professional
Store Management	**Key KSAs:**
Merchandising and Sales	Project Management
Mathematics	Repair
Construction Management	
Inspection	
HVAC	

*Burning Glass Technologies Inc., Labor Insight Key KSAs:*BURNING GLASS TECHNOLOGIES, INC., LABOR INSIGHT (1 YEAR)

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

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

In accordance with state law, the LWD Center for Occupational Employment Information (COEI) created a Credential Review Board. This Board, made up of representatives from LWD, the Department of Education, the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education and the State Employment and Training Commission, reviewed the draft list, all available data, and the feedback from employers and stakeholders. The Credential Review Board adopted the initial Industry-Valued Credentials List in October 2016. The list, updated through continued efforts of the Credential Review Board, is available on the New Jersey Career Connections website at: http://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/prepare/skills/credentials/industry_valued_credentials.shtml.

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

[ii] Burning Glass Technologies Inc., Labor Insight, Prepared by New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, December 2015

[iii] The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development through its agreement with Burning Glass technologies is able to provide labor market information aggregated from online employer job listings. This data provides valuable insight regarding current demand for characteristics such as knowledge, skills and abilities, sought by employers.

B. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of 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'.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT[I]·[II]

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

New Jersey's Employment and Unemployment

Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
4,562,425	4,355,041	207,204	4.5%

Figure 7

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

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

CHARACTERISTICS OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE CLAIMANTS[III]

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

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

Industry	% of total receiving unemployment benefits
Administrative and Waste Services	15.6%
Retail Trade	11.3%
Construction	10.7%
Heath Care and Social Assistance	8.6%
Accommodation and Food Services	8.2%
Professional and Technical Services	5.7%
Manufacturing	5.7%
Wholesale Trade	5.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	4.0%
Educational Services	3.6%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3.1%
Finance and Insurance	2.6%
Other Services except Public Administration	2.5%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1.6%
Public Administration	1.5%
Information	1.4%
Management of Companies	1.2%
Agriculture	1.0%
Utilities	0.2%
Mining	0.1%

Industry	% of total receiving unemployment benefits
Did not identify a specific industry	*5.9%*

Figure 8

NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Office of Research and Information, Economic and Demographic Research

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

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

Figure 9

NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Office of Research and Information, Economic and Demographic Research

YOUTH WORKERS[IV]

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

OLDER WORKERS[V]

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

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

Figure 10

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2010-2014

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

VETERAN WORKERS[VI]

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

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

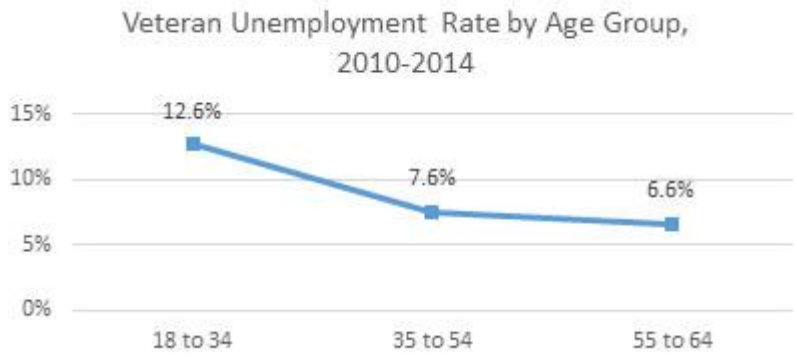


Figure 11

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2010-2014

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES[VII],[VIII]

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

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

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

Figure 12

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2010-2014

LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS[IX]

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

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS[X],[XI]

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

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

LABOR MARKET TRENDS[XII]

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

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

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

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

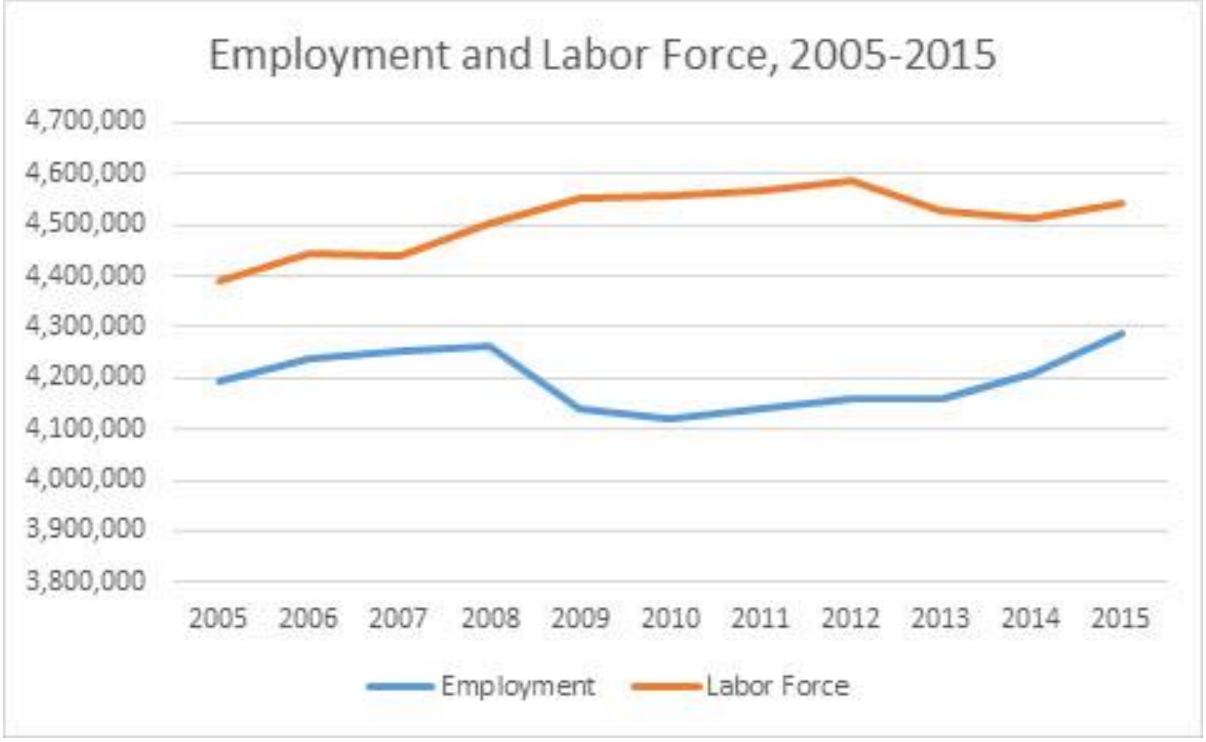


Figure 13

BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, LOCAL AREA UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

BIOPHARMACEUTICAL LIFE SCIENCES INDUSTRY CLUSTER

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

TRANSPORTATION, LOGISTICS, DISTRIBUTION INDUSTRY CLUSTER

- In 2014, transportation, logistics and distribution (TLD) employed 360,618 workers in New Jersey. The cluster employed 11.0 percent of the state's private sector workers, a higher percentage than for the nation (8.8%).
- TLD contributed more than $55.5 billion to the state's Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP - chained 2009 dollars) in 2014.
- In 2014, employers in the state's TLD industry cluster paid more than $25.8 billion in total wages.
- Located between New York City and Philadelphia, New Jersey is within a day's drive of 40 percent of the U.S. population.
- New Jersey offers access to the nation's freight rail network and is also home to several key transportation facilities necessary for a strong TLD industry cluster including three major seaports and a large international airport.
- According to 2013 figures (latest available) from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center, New Jersey's shipping activity accounts for 6.5 percent of the nation's tonnage of total cargo volume.

FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY CLUSTER

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

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY CLUSTER

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

chemical manufacturing represents 6.1 percent of U.S. chemical manufacturing employment.
- The state's advanced manufacturing industry establishments paid a total of more than $14.5 billion in wages in 2014, or roughly 7.4 percent of New Jersey's total wages.

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

HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY CLUSTER

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

TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY CLUSTER

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

LEISURE, HOSPITALITY AND RETAIL INDUSTRY CLUSTER

- Leisure, hospitality and retail (LHR) is comprised of four components: retail trade (56.0% of employment); food services/drinking places (30.1%); arts/entertainment/recreation (7.3%) and accommodation (6.6%).
- Many of the businesses within LHR are intertwined with the state's tourism industry, which directly supported 315,952 jobs in 2014. According to the NJ Division of Travel and Tourism, the state generated a record-breaking $42.1 billion in tourism demand in 2014.

- LHR contributed $46.1 billion (or 9.1%) to the state's Real Gross Domestic Product in 2014.
- LHR jobholding totaled 806,044 in 2014, or 24.7 percent of the state's private sector workers.
- New Jersey LHR employers paid over $22 billion in wages during 2014, or 11.6 percent of the state total. The average annual wage for the LHR cluster in 2014 was $28,146.
- Over one-quarter (28.5%) of all employment in the LHR cluster is concentrated in three counties: Bergen, Monmouth and Middlesex. Atlantic County ranks fourth for LHR employment due mainly to the presence of its casino hotel industry.
- Due primarily to their tourism-based economies, over half of private sector employment in Cape May (54.6%) and Atlantic (54.2%) counties is concentrated in the LHR cluster.

CONSTRUCTION & UTILITIES INDUSTRY CLUSTER

- The construction and utilities sector provides many employment opportunities for blue collar workers to earn above-average salaries.
- Since 2012, the construction and utilities sector has had a strong yearly average employment increase of 3.8 percent versus the statewide average of 1.4 percent.
- Seventy-five percent of construction and utility employment require less than a bachelor's degree, but the average wages in the sector are 16.9 percent higher than the statewide average.

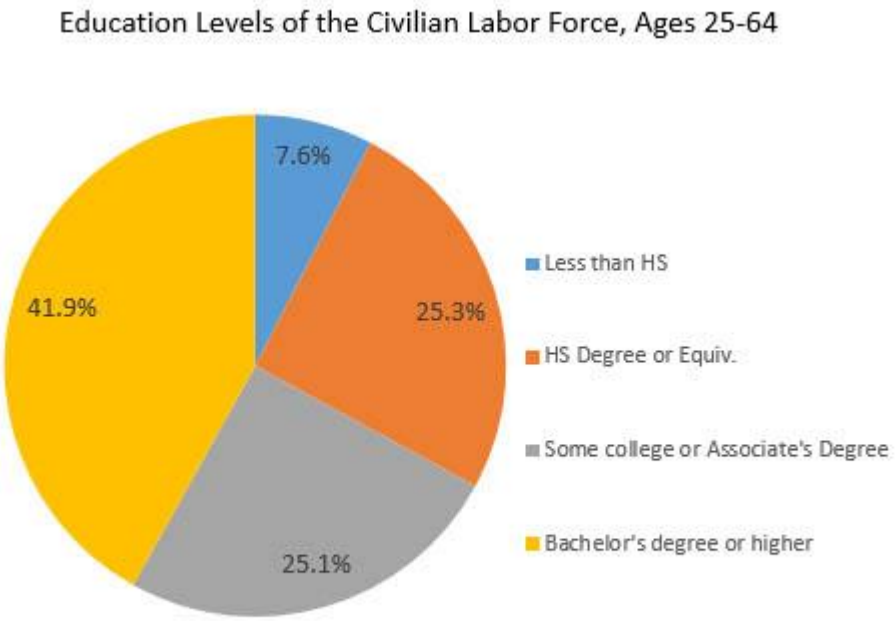
(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE[XIII]

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

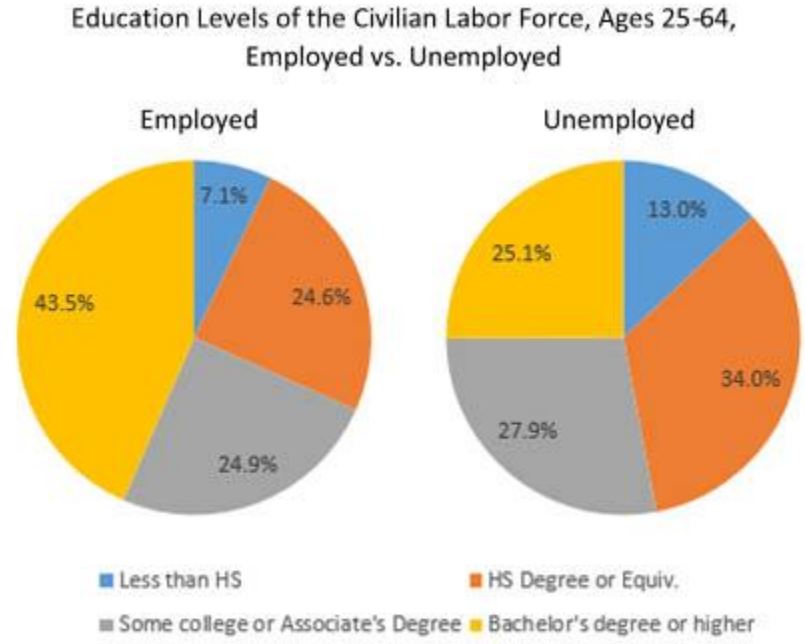
When analyzed among the populations of those who are employed and unemployed individually, the levels of educational attainment are shifted slightly. Among employed workers, the largest portion, 43.5% hold a Bachelor's degree or higher. Those groups holding a high school degree and those with some level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

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



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

Figure 14



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

SKILL GAPS[XIV]

According to data analyzed with EMSI Analyst, there are projected to be more than 136,000 openings annually over the next ten years. The occupational groups projected to have the highest

numbers of annual openings are Office and Administrative Support, Sales and Related, and Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations, representing nearly 50,000 job openings each year.

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

Figure 16

EMSI Analyst, 2015

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

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

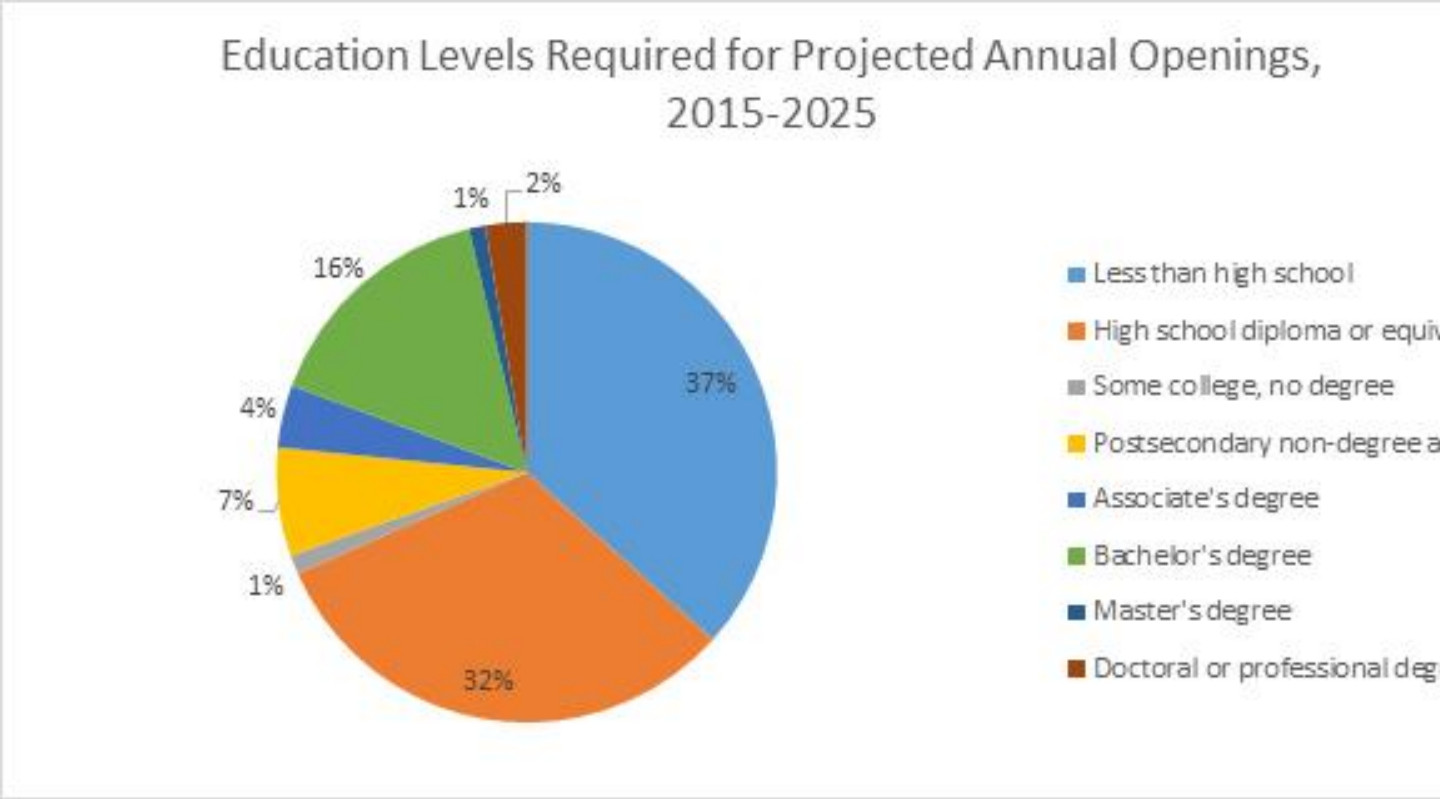


Figure 17

EMSI Analyst, 2015

<u>SETC and NJBIA Employability Skills Task Force and Stakeholder Groups</u>

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

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

The stakeholder groups have committed to the Employability Skills Task Force to raise awareness of the crisis, share solutions and focus efforts, leverage resources, and inform intelligence as national thought leaders on addressing employability skills gaps. NJBIA will remain diligent in this effort, highlighting return on investment (ROI) and best practices models. The effort to minimize the skills gap around employability skills remains a priority for New Jersey.

Many related New Jersey efforts, including those undertaken by Task Force members, found a significant need for workers to demonstrate career-readiness skills. As a result, there will be an increased effort to have these types of skills incorporated into curricula, to enhance the opportunity for learning and application. The Task Force noted that many of these career-readiness skills are already incorporated into Registered Apprenticeship programs. Apprentices are required to demonstrate their employability skills while engaged in the required work-based or experiential learning components of the apprenticeship. The apprentices are then assessed on their proficiency in these skills by a senior-level journey worker. Registered Apprenticeship can serve as a model with regard to having curricula that incorporate these employability skills across all occupations.

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

[ii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Selected Economic Characteristics*

[iii] NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information, Economic and Demographic Research, March 15, 2016

[iv] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Sex by Age by Employment Status for the Population 16 years and over*

[v] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Sex by Age by Employment Status for the Population 16 years and over*

[vi] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Age by Veteran Status by Employment Status for the Civilian Population 18 to 64 years*

[vii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Employment Status by Disability Status*

[viii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Work Experience by Disability Status*

[ix] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months of Individuals by Sex by Employment Status*

[x] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Selected Social Characteristics in the United States*

[xi] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Educational Attainment and Employment Status by Language Spoken at Home for the Population 25 Years and Over*

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

[xiii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Educational Attainment by Employment Status for the Population 25 To 64 Years*

[xiv] Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc., Analyst, 2015

[xv] While Annual Openings are reported for the 2-digit SOC groups, Most Required Education Level represents the minimum education level required for the highest number of annual openings of the

5-digit SOC groups that fall within each 2-digit group. Percent reports the portion of openings in this occupations with the most common educational requirement.

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.

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

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

OVERVIEW - EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

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

Notable characteristics of these workforce system participants include:

- **Close to half of all Employment Service customers are age 45 years or older**.

Policy Challenge: Helping significant numbers of older jobseekers change career paths, change industries, and obtain new skills.

- **60% have no postsecondary education beyond high school.**

Policy Challenge**:** Connecting jobseekers to credentials that will give them the higher-level skills required to access many occupations.

- **The racial/ethnic profile of Employment Service customers is 43% white, 28% African-American, and 15% Hispanic compared to the overall New Jersey civilian workforce in 2015 which was 75% white, 14% African-American, and 18% Hispanic**.

Policy Challenge: Employment and training programs must address language and cultural barriers that limit job opportunities for many jobseekers. A simplistic "one-size-fits-all" job search strategy cannot serve the needs of a customer base this diverse.

New Jersey Workforce System Participants Profile

Participant Description	Count	% of Total
Total	**196,696**	**100**
Veterans & Eligibles	10,152	5.2
Person w/Disability	3,540	1.8
Employment Status at Registration		
Employed	24,833	12.6
Unemployed	171,863	87.4
UI Claimant	107,204	54.5
Sex		
Male	94,259	47.9
Female	98,429	50
Undisclosed	4,008	2.0
Age		
Under 18	1,646	0.8
18-44	103,048	52.4
45-54	49,431	25.1
55+	41,636	21.1
Race/Ethnic		
African American	55,746	28.3
American/Alaskan Native	1,142	0.6

Participant Description	Count	% of Total
Asian	7,802	4
Hispanic	29,431	15
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	647	0.3
White	83,900	42.7
Education Level		
In School	12,183	6.2
Less than HS	17,440	8.9
HS Grad/GED	100,922	51.3
Post-Secondary	75,300	38.3
Source: June 2015 ETA 9002A		

Figure 18

WIA TITLE I: Youth/Adults/Dislocated Workers

Title I sets performance standards and eligibility criteria for a broad array of training services for youth, adults, and dislocated workers. It encompasses numerous programs including the Job Corps; Veterans' Workforce Investment programs; Youth Opportunity grants for high-poverty areas; technical assistance efforts to States and local areas; program evaluations; and National Emergency grants.

Wagner-Peyser funds cover the majority of costs for providing employment and training services to jobseekers in New Jersey (Figure 19 below). WIA Title I programs covered 16,438 (14%) of 116,000 participating adults, youth and dislocated workers in the past year.

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

WIA Title I Participants Served and Exited by Program Area

Program	Participants Served	Participants Exited	% Exited to Served
Adult	5,505	2,586	47.0%
Dislocated Workers	6,177	3,963	64.2%

Program	Participants Served	Participants Exited	% Exited to Served
Youth	4,756	2,100	44.2%
Total	16,438	8,649	52.6%

Figure 19

New Jersey Participation Levels

(Adults Served with Title I + Wagner Peyser Funds)

Total Participants Served Total Exiters

Total Adults 116,330 102,612

WIA Adult 5,505 2,586

WIA Dislocated Workers 6,177 3,963

Total Youth (14-21) 4,756 2,100

Younger Youth (14-18) 3,579 1,556

Older Youth (19-21) 1,177 544

Out-of-School Youth 2,032 982

In-School Youth 2,724 1,118

WIA TITLE II: ADULT EDUCATION & LITERACY

Title II programs help adults age 16 or older to reach higher levels of literacy in order to obtain employment, retain employment, enter postsecondary education or occupational training, or attain a high school diploma (or its equivalent). Adult education is provided to help adults increase their educational functioning levels while preparing them for successfully entering the workforce. As Figure 20 below indicates, 71% of New Jersey's participants are between the ages of 25 and 59. The majority of the students served in the Title II program do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent. New Jersey allows its Title II programs to serve 2% of their students who have a high school diploma.

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

The state's second-largest literacy enrollment is in **Adult Basic Education** (ABE), a refresher program in reading and writing for students whose test scores are too low to gain entrance to

postsecondary training or education courses. ABE services account for nearly 40% of Title II participants.

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

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

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

Number of people served in key program activities

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

Title II Breakdown of people served by Age

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

Figure 20

WIA TITLE IV: VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

Four largest program activities:

Assessments: 6,721

Miscellaneous Training: 1,592

Transportation: 923

Rehabilitation Technology: 1,019

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

High school or Equivalent Certification					
Age	0-22	23-45	46-65	66-100	Total %
Male	398	411	248	25	28%
Female	214	271	234	39	19%
Associate Degree and Higher					
Age	0-22	23-45	46-65	66-100	Total %
Male	38	194	120	15	10%
Female	31	194	170	15	11%
Vocational/Technical Certificate or Special Education					
Age	0-22	23-45	46-65	66-100	Total%
Male	184	113	19	317	8%
Female	82	66	36	184	5%
Other (no degree-certificate or diploma) 19%					

Figure 21

The figure below provides detail regarding services rendered for new cases in a federal year. The typical length of time a DVRS case is open is approximately 26 months, and counselors see consumers over many months before cases are closed. A typical counselor maintains an average of 175 to 200 open cases and sees consumers in their caseload over the entire time a case remains open.

Participant Description	Count	% of Total
Total	1933	100.00%
Veterans	54	2.79%

Participant Description	Count	% of Total
Employment Status at Application		
Not Reported\Not Available	58	3.00%
Competitive Integrated Employment w/ Supports	31	1.60%
Competitive Integrated Employment	290	15.00%
Extended Employment	5	0.26%
Homemaker	2	0.10%
Not Employed: All other students	74	3.83%
Not Employed: Other	523	27.06%
Not Employed: Student Secondary Education	63	3.26%
Not Employed: Trainee, Intern or Volunteer	8	0.41%
Self-Employment (Except BEP)	1	0.05%
Business Enterprise Program (BEP)	28	1.45%
Unpaid Family Worker	4	0.21%
Not Working	845	43.71%
Employed: Received notice of termination or WARN	1	0.05%
Total	1933	
Sex		
Male	1141	59.03%
Female	791	40.92%
Does not wish to self identify	1	0.05%
Total	1933	
Age at Application		
14-18	202	10.45%
19-21	332	17.18%
22-44	860	44.49%
45-54	292	15.11%
55+	247	12.78%
Total	1933	
Race/Ethnic		

Participant Description	Count	% of Total
Black or African American	636	32.90%
American/Alaskan Native	35	1.81%
Asian	49	2.53%
Hispanic	245	12.67%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	10	0.52%
White	938	48.53%
Info not available	20	1.03%
Total Responses	1933	
Education Level		
Not Reported	139	7.19%
No Schooling	5	0.26%
Elementary	15	0.78%
Post-secondary education, no degree	185	9.57%
Special Ed (completion or attendance)	196	10.14%
High school graduate or equivalency certificate	902	46.66%
Secondary education, no HS diploma	237	12.26%
Vocational/ Technical Certificate or License	34	1.76%
Bachelor's Degree	111	5.74%
Masters +	21	1.09%
Post Secondary / Associates Degree	86	4.45%
Occ. Credential Beyond Undergraduate Degree Work	2	0.10%
Total	1933	

Figure 22

New Jersey has utilized the option in Federal law allowing Vocational Rehabilitation services for the blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind to be delivered by a separate entity from that serving other individuals with disabilities. The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) is the designated state unit responsible for delivering high-quality employment services to these participants. The agency is located within New Jersey's Department of Human Services and provides a continuum of services to individuals with vision loss throughout the lifespan, including services leading to competitive, integrated employment for youth and adults with disabilities.

Consistent with the requirements of WIOA, CBVI is committed through its array of programming to helping its participants prepare for employment outcomes that lead to a career pathway. The

agency supports a number of post-secondary training and education initiatives, including post-secondary certificate programs, two and four year programs leading to undergraduate degrees, and graduate degree programs. In addition, the agency operates a residential training center in New Brunswick called the Joseph Kohn Training Center providing a 20-week program of instruction for adults preparing for work in various core curriculum areas, including skills of independence, computer skills, career exploration, soft skills, and community based work experiences.

CBVI Participant Profile

Participant Description	Count	% of Total
Total	3853	100.00%
Veterans	62	1.60%
Employment Status at Application		
Not Reported	142	3.70%
Employment with Supports in Integrated Setting	58	1.50%
Employment without Supports in Integrated Setting	1386	36.00%
Extended Employment	1	0.00%
Homemaker	31	0.80%
Not Employed: All other students	106	2.80%
Not Employed: Other	1676	43.50%
Not Employed: Student Secondary Education	345	9.00%
Not Employed: Trainee, Intern or Volunteer	9	0.20%
Self-Employment (Except BEP)	63	1.60%
Business Enterprise Program (BEP)	28	0.70%
Unpaid Family Worker	8	0.20%
Sex		
Male	2063	53.50%
Female	1790	46.50%
Age at Application		
14-18	848	22.00%
19-21	193	5.00%
22-44	1040	29.00%

Participant Description	Count	% of Total
45-54	886	23.00%
55+	886	23.00%
Race/Ethnic		
African American	786	20.00%
American/Alaskan Native	20	0.50%
Asian	197	5.00%
Hispanic	550	14.00%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	19	0.50%
White	2358	60.00%
Total Responses	3930	100.00%
Education Level		
Not Reported	19	0.50%
No Schooling	19	0.50%
Elementary	169	4.40%
Grades 9-12 no diploma	732	19.00%
Special Education Certificate	351	9.10%
High School Graduate	1195	31.00%
Post-secondary no degree	55	1.40%
Associates Degree/ Voc Tech	208	5.40%
Bachelor's Degree	462	12.00%
Masters +	143	3.70%
Source: Last reporting period under WIA		

Figure 23

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.

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

activities under the guidance of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Specifically, the strengths of workforce development activities in New Jersey include:

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

New Jersey's workforce system has a number of challenges. These are currently being addressed through strategies, programs and investments that are described throughout this Plan. These challenges include:

- Need to Strengthen Coordination in One-Stop Career Centers: If New Jersey is to truly create an efficient and effective One-Stop Career Center system, we will need to ensure a higher level of consistent coordination between all partners in the One-Stop Career Centers. In the implementation of WIA, the State decided that the roles and responsibilities of state and local staff should vary from one location to the next in response to local needs. This State Plan clearly defines roles and responsibilities of Employment Services and WIOA Title I staff and takes clear steps to create a locally driven One-Stop Career Center system. In addition, moving forward, state initiatives will focus on serving customers who are individuals with barriers to employment as identified in WIOA Sec.3 (24). In particular, it will be groups that have been traditionally underserved by the local areas to avoid duplication of effort. At the

local level, there has been inadequate coordination among partner programs. Customers generally receive funding under one program; if referred to a partner program, services are not provided concurrently. For example, customers referred by WIOA Title I counselors to Adult Education services do not receive any Title I services until they have completed the Adult Education services. The SETC and the LWD Workforce Development Board (WDB) Coordination and Support Team will be engaged in providing technical assistance to local areas on developing strong, meaningful MOUs that will describe coordination of service. They will also provide, using best practices from around the nation, assistance regarding how partners can communicate with one another while concurrently serving customers.

- Need to Strengthen Professional Development for Staff: In a rapidly changing labor market and economy, staff who are serving customers must have up-to-date skills and up-to-date knowledge and information. Traditionally, New Jersey has not developed and implemented formal professional development programs for front line staff. Instead, New Jersey has relied on a series of informal training efforts. New Jersey has begun to address this need through the launch of the New Jersey Career Connections initiative and has provided in-person and virtual Navigator training to 900 state, local and partner staff statewide. In addition, LWD has created the WDB Coordination and Support Team that is currently developing a plan for expanding professional development for staff.

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

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

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

- New Jersey's frontline service delivery staff funded by WIOA programs across the state are one of our greatest strengths (item above) and a key to our capacity to deliver high quality programs. The work of our strong staff across all WIOA Titles is supported by ongoing professional development and staff training activities. WIOA Title I, Employment Service, Adult Education and other staff will participate in professional development that is provided directly by, or coordinated by, the WDB Coordination and Support Team. Professional development will utilize multiple delivery modes to reach part-time and other hard to reach staff. This includes a mix of in-person meetings, synchronous online events and resources made available online. Key to all of this professional development system will be the requirement that Workforce Development Boards conduct joint planning and training for One-Stop, adult literacy and WDB staff directed toward establishing partnerships, resource sharing and appropriate and necessary student referrals. Additionally, professional development resources will be made available to all One-Stop Career Center staff through the WIOA Technical Assistance webpage. LWD also will incorporate training opportunities for One-Stop staff relating the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, in coordination with DVRS and CBVI.

SETC and LWD maintain a comprehensive listing of statewide policies and guidance issued to local areas and partners for the use of State funds from workforce investment activities. State policies can be accessed online at the SETC and LWD websites. With the implementation of WIOA, SETC and

LWD have been working to and will continue to update existing policies and/or establish new policies to be in compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as needed.

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

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

1. VISION

Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

STRATEGIC APPROACH TO TALENT DEVELOPMENT

I. TWO CRITICAL GOALS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In response to this need, New Jersey began the ***65 by 25* Initiative** in 2017. State agencies and businesses, including the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Department of Education, and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, and the State Employment and Training Commission, are working collaboratively to increase the number of degrees or credentials attained by New Jersey's workforce, so that 65 percent of the state's adult population, with a special focus on race and gender equity, will have completed a post-secondary degree or credential beyond high school by the year 2025.

2. Building Economic Opportunity for all New Jersey Residents

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

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

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

To more fully understand the needs of New Jersey residents, in 2017, the SETC in partnership with LWD and the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, implemented a dashboard to display high-level performance data in order to support evidence-based policy decisions. The dashboard will enable Commission members to better understand the scope of state programs and their related populations. The dashboard will help the Commission explore data trends, highlight potential program issues, and coordinate with other state agencies to advance the workforce needs of New Jersey. The dashboard is publicly available on the SETC website at njsetc.net/njsetc/performance.

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

A. Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers of employment* and other populations.**
B. Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

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

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

I. New Jersey's Talent Development Strategy

The Mission

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

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

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

Workforce Programs Can Make Critical Investments in Talent Development

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

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

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

The Opportunity of WIOA

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

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

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

Title I: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Formula Programs

Title II: Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)

Title III: Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services Program

Title IV: Title I of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act

Programs included in the Plan: Senior Community Service Employment Program, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program, and Reentry Employment Opportunities Programs

Critical partner programs (not in the plan, but connected to this effort): Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, Unemployment Insurance, WorkFirst New Jersey (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, TANF) Employment and Training Program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training Programs, New Jersey Workforce Development Partnership Program, New Jersey Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills

Key State Government partners in this effort include:

- State Employment and Training Commission
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development,

o Workforce Operations and Business Services

o Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

o Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity

o Office of Research and Information, Center for Occupational Employment Information

o Office of Research and Information, Workforce Research and Analytics

- Department of Education
- Department of Human Services

o Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

o Division of Family Development

- Office of the Secretary of Higher Education

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

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

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

4. ASSESSMENT

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

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

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

12. Number of program participants served by the program
13. Number of program participants exited from the program

14. Percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment as follows:

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

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

Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I ONLY[i]

16. Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification
17. Number of High Quality Partnerships
18. Regional Coordination

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

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

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

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[i] A full explanation and definitions of these additional performance measures are included in Section III.(b)(4) of this plan.

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).

FIVE KEY STRATEGIC THEMES

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

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

Theme 2: Expanding High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships

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

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

Theme 5: Ensuring System Integrity through Metrics and Greater Transparency

The strategies associated with each of these themes are detailed below (see Section, II.c.2), including:

- Career Pathways Definition and Career Pathways for Secondary Education Students
- Identification of Industry-Valued Credentials
- Literacy Priorities and Standards
- Employment First Framework and Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities
- High Quality Partnerships Definition; Talent Networks; Talent Development Centers; and the Strategic Partnership Academy
- One-Stop Operator Competitive Selection; Locally-Driven, High Quality One-Stop Career Centers; One-Stop Career Center Certification; and Broad Partnership to Expand Services (including "Path to Employment" and Career Partners NJ Website)
- WDB Regional Collaboration and Planning; Local Area Designations; WDB Certification; WDB Budget & Staffing Requirements; and Local Area Funding Allocations
- Performance Metrics; New Jersey Additional Performance Measures; Co-Enrollment of Title I and Title II Participants; the Eligible Training Provider List and Consumer Report Card

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

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

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

Key Policies

- **Career Pathways Definition**

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

Career pathways are: A series of education and training experiences resulting in industry-valued credentials leading to employment, promotion and / or advanced education. Career Pathways are industry-focused, have diverse entry and exit points, and include integration of adult basic skills, digital literacy, employability skills and work-based learning, including Registered Apprenticeships.

- **Identification of Industry-Valued Credentials**

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

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

These required levels are as follows:

State Fiscal Year 2017 *(July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017)* - 50%

State Fiscal Year 2018 *(July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018)* - 60%

State Fiscal Year 2019 *(July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019)* - 70%

State Fiscal Year 2020 *(July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020)* - 75%

State Fiscal Year 2021 *(July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021)* - 80%

Career Pathways for Secondary Education Students

The New Jersey Department of Education issued a grant in November 2015, with state funding of $800,000 per year for each of five years and has granted awards to eight diverse high schools. This five-year grant, Building Capacity for Career Pathways: A Pilot Program for Comprehensive High Schools is designed to increase access and opportunities for New Jersey secondary students to participate in high-quality career and technical education programs (CTE) in comprehensive high schools, delivered through career pathways leading to careers with high labor market demand and family-sustaining wages aligned to New Jersey's key industry clusters. The eight districts are developing CTE programs in life sciences; technology; leisure, hospitality and retail; health care; financial services and advanced manufacturing.

Since 2016, the eight districts that were awarded with the grant opportunity built partnerships with business and industry, Talent Networks, and postsecondary partners. These districts created a career pathways vision and action plan, assembled an advisory team, attended targeted professional development, and implemented their first career pathway program in September 2017. Curriculum for the career pathway programs is based on the student-centered and interdisciplinary instruction using approaches such as project based learning (PBL), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), technology integration, Career Ready Practices and individualized career exploration and planning.

These efforts support and align with New Jersey's ***65 by 25* Initiative**, launched in 2017. State agencies and businesses, including the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Department of Education, and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, and the State Employment and Training Commission, are working collaboratively to increase the number of degrees or credentials attained by New Jersey's workforce, so that 65 percent of the state's adult population, with a special focus on race and gender equity, will have completed a post-secondary degree or credential beyond high school by the year 2025. The SETC adopted Policy Resolution 2017-01 in support of this initiative; this policy is included in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

- **Literacy Priorities & Standards**

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

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

The primary funding source for adult literacy in the State of New Jersey is the federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), which is Title II of WIOA. Final regulations for Title II were published in the Federal Register in the summer of 2016. In New Jersey, more than 800,000 adults lack a high school diploma. Title II of WIOA, the largest funding source for adult literacy services, provides resources to serve only about 3 percent of this population in New Jersey. Although other programs fund adult literacy education, these programs are located in different funding areas and many have not been historically coordinated with Title II in a holistic manner.

The State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES), a council of the SETC, in recognition of the WIOA goal of maximizing resources and services recommended establishing a policy that recognizes the various sources of adult literacy education program resources; and notes the importance of coordinating related programs locally in order to maximize services to people needing such services, in particular aligning services to eliminate gaps in client information sharing between programs. With the SCALES council recommendation, the SETC approved Policy Resolution 2017-02, included in Appendix 4 of this Plan, and an inter-agency workgroup was formed to explore opportunities to strengthen coordination between Titles I and II.

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

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

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

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

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

To more fully understand the needs of New Jersey residents, in 2017, the SETC in partnership with LWD and the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, implemented a dashboard to display high-level performance data in order to support evidence-based policy decisions. The dashboard will enable Commission members to better understand the scope of state programs and their related populations. The dashboard will help the Commission explore data trends, highlight potential program issues, and coordinate with other state agencies to advance the workforce needs of New Jersey. The dashboard is publicly available on the SETC website at njsetc.net/njsetc/performance.

The use of dashboards and definitions that span multiple workforce programs will strengthen New Jersey's ability to target priority populations, and those most in need, and to take timely action if appropriate clients are underserved in workforce programs. Building on the collaborative partnerships that exist between the state and local entities that provide these services, New Jersey looks to provide increased opportunities for those most in need to gain employable skills and financial independence.

THEME 2: Expanding High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships

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

Key Partnership Policies

***High Quality Partnerships* Defined**

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

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

- Private sector employers, actively working with their public and non-profit colleagues to focus upon the specific jobs and skills in demand by the region's leading sectors.
- A clear mission and well-defined roles for all of the partner organizations.
- Distinct career pathways, defined by a series of degrees, certificates, and other credentials that employers value and look for in hiring.
- Widespread use of timely industry and workforce data, ensuring that partners' employment and training investments target authentic job opportunities - not declining occupations and obsolete skills.
- Practical, collaborative learning experiences where trainees apply lessons from the classroom in real-world settings through internships, mentorships or apprenticeships.
- Clear measures of program effectiveness so partners can see meaningful outcomes in terms of trainee job placement and credentials earned.

- Reliable, sustainable funding streams

New Performance Metric: Number of High Quality Partnerships Established

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

Key Investments

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

Talent Networks

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

The Talent Networks are focused on the following key tasks:

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

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

Talent Development Centers

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

Strategic Partnership Academy

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

THEME 3: PROVIDING Career Navigation Assistance through One-Stop Career Centers and Broad Partnerships

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

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

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

In February 2018, New Jersey was selected to participate in the USDOL-ETA's Future of American Job Centers (AJCs) Cohort Challenge, designed to help teams re-engineer services based on the needs of worker and employer customers. New Jersey looks forward to engaging in this effort with USDOL-ETA and other states. New Jersey is also identifying ways to incorporate American Job Center branding into the New Jersey One-Stop Career

Center system; this may include adding "A Proud Partner of the American Job Center Network" to One-Stop Career Center branding throughout the state.

Key Policies

One-Stop Operator Competitive Selection

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

offer no more than two one-year extensions to successful One-Stop Operator contracts. A successful One-Stop Operator meets or exceeds local area and state performance standards, as applicable; satisfies the requirements of the One-Stop Career Center Certification, provided in SETC Policy Resolution 2016-14, provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan. Further, the local Workforce Development Board (WDB) must have determined that neither its One-Stop Operator, nor any of its sub-contracted entities, has engaged in fraud or abuse, as those terms are used within 29 U.S.C. 3122 (c)(3)(A), and that neither the One-Stop Operator, nor any of its sub-contracted entities, has engaged in any of the prohibited conduct listed as cause for corrective actions and penalties under N.J.A.C. 12:42-3.6.

The local area grant recipient retains the financial and administrative responsibility to ensure that the procurement and resultant system is appropriate, aligns with area needs and service structure, and is consistent with the local plan as approved by the local WDB.

Locally-Driven, High Quality One-Stop Career Centers

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

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

State Employment Services staff, funded by WIOA Title III / Wagner-Peyser program, will focus on providing group-based activities such as Reemployment Eligibility Assessment, PROs, Jersey Job Clubs and the General Assistance 28-Day Job Search Program. Employment Services staff will also be responsible for staffing and creating resource rooms for jobseekers.

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

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

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

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

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

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

One-Stop Career Center Certification

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

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

Center Certification Process must be reviewed and or modified by state or local plans on a biennial basis.

On September 20, 2016, the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) adopted Policy Resolution 2016-14, creating the One-Stop Career Center Certification Process. New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center Certification (OSCC) process has an effective date of July 1, 2017. It considers the requirement that a competitively-selected One-Stop Operator should be in place in each local Workforce Development Area. Under this policy, local workforce boards are to establish a local process of review that may include a qualified group of non-conflicted local board members or a qualified third-party entity. All local areas will have the responsibility to ensure that the group established locally is qualified and able to perform such work. Pre-requisites to OSCC certification are necessary. This recognizes essential elements of programming and services that must be in place prior to certification. The pre-requisites include accessibility standards, establishment of a grievance/complaint system for customers, a certified local Workforce Development Board (WDB), and a local memorandum of understanding (MOU) that includes the local WDB and its partners. SETC Policy 2016-14 is provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

Key Investments

Broad Partnership to Expand Services

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

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

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

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Through this initiative, New Jersey has established a network of partners providing unified career services, job search assistance and career planning throughout the state. The network connects One-Stop Career Centers, libraries, community colleges, community and faith-based organizations and other state and county agencies through the use of the shared, comprehensive career navigation model and consistent support from LWD. The network offers New Jerseyans an unprecedented number of locations where they can receive assistance through seminars, workshops, and one-on-one engagements with career exploration and work search experts. To maintain consistency for all partners, the LWD partner engagement team provides regular, ongoing training to staff delivering services to jobseekers via the "Path to Employment" framework. In addition, partner network events sponsored by LWD allow partners to learn about career navigation and job search resources offered by various partners statewide, as well as collaborate and share resources.

Funding for organizations providing career guidance services is provided by all four titles of WIOA or by other core workforce programs administered by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD). In addition, state agencies such as the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, Displaced Homemaker Network, and New Jersey Child Support have been key partners in the network, not having received funding. Staff at these organizations have received "career navigation training" from LWD and are utilizing the service model with their clients who need career guidance and assistance obtaining employment.

To further support the effort, New Jersey developed the CareerPartners.nj.gov website to deliver career navigation and job search resources to all partners. The website consists of a statewide partner directory, event calendar, and document repository that allows partners access to information on LWD services and programs, training materials, and templates. Future enhancements to the website include a partner referral system and a partner directory search engine that will allow users to search for partner services by type of service and geographical area served. To improve LWD communication and outreach efforts with the partner network, the communication technology will be enhanced to include such functionality as targeted e-mail campaigning, response automation, and social listening.

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

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

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

will support and strengthen the labor market regions and will develop a process for regional planning and collaboration in workforce development.

Key Policies

Regional Collaboration and Planning

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

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

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

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

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

These plans should include:

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

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

Local Area Designations

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

WIOA states that during the first 2 full program years following July 22, 2014, the Governor shall approve a request for initial designation as a local area from any area that was designated as a local area for purposes of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) for the 2-year period preceding July 22, 2014, performed successfully, and sustained fiscal integrity. The period of initial designation for local areas is from July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2017. This covers Program Years 2015 and 2016. Local areas must submit requests for initial designation using the process included in SETC Policy 2015-02, which is provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

WIOA further states that after the initial designation period, the Governor shall approve a request for subsequent designation as a Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) from such local area, if such area has performed successfully, sustained fiscal integrity and in the case of a local area in a planning region, met the requirements described in 29 U.S.C. 3121(c)(1). In addition, the SETC is requiring that the LWDA demonstrate its ability to coordinate planning with its regional partners, and fully support its WDB roles, through two new performance metrics: a Regional Coordination metric and WDB Certification metric. The SETC approved Policy Resolution 2016-02 outlining the process for subsequent local area designations. This process is anticipated to be implemented in 2018. SETC Policy Resolution 2016-02 is provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

WDB Certification

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

WIOA Section 107, and New Jersey's administrative code N.J.A.C 12:42-4, requires that the Governor shall, once every 2 years, certify one local board for each local area in the State. Such certification shall be based on meeting membership criteria and the extent to which the local board has ensured that workforce investment activities carried out in the local area have enabled the local area to meet the performance accountability measures and achieve sustained fiscal integrity. All New Jersey local Workforce Development Boards were certified under WIA as of June 2014. The WDB certification process for 2016 used an updated process and items required for submission, as outlined below, which is slightly abbreviated from the 2014 certification process. In 2018, the WDB certification process will return to the full process, and may contain additional items required by the State Employment and Training Commission.

WDB Budget & Staffing Requirements

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

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

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

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

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

4. The local board will review and approve the LWDA Programs Budget and the WDB Staff Budget in an open and public process. This process must include:
    a. Initial budget review by a WDB-led budget committee, or an existing WDB committee;
    b. Budget presentation and recommendations made by this committee to the full WDB at one of its quarterly meetings;
    c. Approval by the full WDB within <u>90 days</u> of receipt of the NOOs by the LWDA.

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

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

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

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

Local Area Funding Allocations

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

New Jersey will distribute WIOA Title I funds to local Workforce Development Areas based on the following formulas. The formulas incorporate the federal required elements, as outlined in the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 27-16. The formulae also use data sources that are reliable, available at the county and city level and updated on a regular basis. The "hold harmless" provisions under WIOA will apply to these funding allocations.

Youth Funding	
33.3%	Relative number of **Disadvantaged Youth** in each local area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state.
33.3%	Relative number of unemployed individuals in **Areas of Substantial Unemployment** in each local area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.
33.3%	Relative **Excess Number of Unemployed Individuals** in each local area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state.

Figure 24

Adult Funding

Adult Funding	
33.3%	Relative number of **Disadvantaged Adults** in each local area as compared to the total number of disadvantaged adults in the state.
33.3%	Relative **Excess Number of Unemployed Individuals** in the local area as compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state.
33.3%	Relative number of unemployed individuals in **Areas of Substantial Unemployment** in the local area as compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.

Figure 25

Dislocated Worker Funding	
25%	Declining Industries: Total projected employment change in declining industries.
25%	Insured Unemployment Data: Number of Unemployment Insurance claimants.
25%	Long-term Unemployment: Number of UI claimants who have exhausted Unemployment Insurance.
25%	Unemployment Concentration: Number of unemployed individuals.
0%	Plant Closing and Mass Layoff Data; an accurate source of data is not available at the state or local level.
0%	Farmer-Rancher Economic Hardship Data; an accurate source of data is not available at the state or local level.

Figure 26

Metrics

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

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

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

Theme 5: Ensuring System Integrity through Metrics and Greater Transparency

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

Performance Metrics

In preparation to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, New Jersey adopted *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development*. Among the goals included in the Blueprint is data-informed decision making. New Jersey will make performance data on workforce development programs accessible to workforce decision-makers and the public. The State will examine and use additional performance measures to assess and guide training investments across federal and state workforce programs.

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

1. Adding additional metrics that will be applied to WIOA Title I programs

2. Applying the WIOA Core Metrics to the WorkFirstNJ Employment and Training Program and the SNAP Employment and Training program, and

3. Adding additional metrics that will be applied to all four Titles of WIOA and to the WorkFirstNJ Employment and Training Program and the SNAP Employment and Training program.

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

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

PRIMARY INDICATORS FOR ADULTS AND DISLOCATED WORKERS	WIOA Title I	WIOA Title II	WIOA Title III	WIOA Title IV	WorkFirst NJ Employment & Training Program
4. The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (subject to clause (iii)), during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program;	X	X	X	X	X
5. The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and	X	X	X	X	X
6. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause (iv).	X	X	X	X	X

Figure 27

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

Figure 28

ADDITIONAL METRICS: NEW JERSEY	WIOA Title I	WIOA Title II	WIOA Title III	WIOA Title IV	WorkFirst NJ Employment & Training Program
1. Number of program participants served by the program	X	X	X		
2. Number of program participants exited from the program	X	X	X		
3. Percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment as follows:	X	X	X		
a. Disability					
b. Ex-Offender					
c. No High School Diploma					
d. Previously or currently in foster care					
e. Homeless					
f. Limited English Proficiency or Low Level Literacy					
g. Long-Term Unemployed					
h. Public Assistance Customer					

ADDITIONAL METRICS: NEW JERSEY	WIOA Title I	WIOA Title II	WIOA Title III	WIOA Title IV	WorkFirst NJ Employment & Training Program
1. Number of program participants served by the program	X	X	X		
2. Number of program participants exited from the program	X	X	X		
3. Percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment as follows:	X	X	X		
a. Disability					
b. Ex-Offender					
c. No High School Diploma					

ADDITIONAL METRICS: NEW JERSEY	WIOA Title I	WIOA Title II	WIOA Title III	WIOA Title IV	WorkFirst NJ Employment & Training Program
d. Previously or currently in foster care					
e. Homeless					
f. Limited English Proficiency or Low Level Literacy					
g. Long-Term Unemployed					
h. Public Assistance Customer					

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

5. Workforce Development Board (WDB) CertificationX

6. Number of High Quality Partnerships established:X

7. Regional CoordinationX

Figure 29

Co-Enrollment of WIOA Title I and Title III Participants

In April 2016, New Jersey considered the co-enrollment of all Title I and Title III participants under WIOA. New Jersey will now utilize co-enrollment based on the results of customer assessment. Appropriate staff will use a common form, the New Jersey Intake and Initial Assessment Form, which will assist staff in identifying customer barriers and whether co-enrollment is appropriate.

Eligible Training Provider List and Consumer Report Card

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

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

the collection and display of specific provider and program performance data on a publically available Consumer Report Card.

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

Reentry Employment Opportunities Program (REO)

a. **DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE AND THE REO GRANTEE(S) WILL COORDINATE SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES FOR JUSTICE INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS TO SUCCESSFULLY ATTAIN EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITION INTO THEIR COMMUNITIES WITH STATEWIDE AND LOCAL WIOA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS; AND MAY**

Ensuring continuity of services for offenders transitioning from prison back to their communities is an important goal for New Jersey. WIOA Title II and State Literacy funds (Workforce Learning Link) are provided to the correctional system so that work-readiness services can be implemented prior to release to help promote a seamless transition to community-based One-Stop Career Center services and then into employment.

Wagner-Peyser provides accessibility for all populations to the full range of One-Stop Career Center employment and training programs. Programs designed to serve the needs of special populations with or without significant barriers to employment are integrated into the universal access provided by Wagner-Peyser and WIOA. Members of special populations, however, identified as having significant barriers to employment often require more intensive services to reach the employment goal. Significant barriers include poor previous attachment to the workforce, literacy or language barriers, ex-offender status, educational or occupational skills gap or lack of a credential, physical or mental disability, and driver's license suspension.

To help special populations with significant barriers to employment, New Jersey has created targeted programs and dedicated staff to help ensure positive outcomes. The challenge is to meet customers where they are by creating a proactive approach to promote and serve special populations. Once special populations enter the One-Stop Career Center system, ensuring that customers receive the services needed to reach their goal becomes a staff responsibility. All One-Stop Career Center staff members need to take ownership for the customer experience by providing warm handoffs when referrals to other service providers are appropriate. That involves taking the extra time to walk customers to where they need to go, introducing them to staff that can help them, and then circling back with customers to make sure their needs were met. Staff need to follow-up with customers to ensure all jobseekers remain engaged and focused on overcoming barriers to enable them to

successfully (re)enter the workforce. Maintaining a stronger, more supportive connection to customers will result in better outcomes and improve the perceived value of the One-Stop Career Centers.

The Department is a participant in a monthly workgroup, the Vocational Training Planning Board, which is addressing employment and training services for inmates in the State Penal system. Representatives include:

- NJ Department of Corrections
- NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD)
- NJ Department of Education
- NJ State Building and Construction Trades Council
- NJ Business & Industry Association
- NJ Council of County Vocational-Technical Schools
- Three public members

The goal of the Planning Board is to establish a pilot program within one the Department of Corrections facilities in vocational trades. A report is to be filed annually with the Governor and the Legislature. The objectives of the planning board are to improve upon the facility's most successful vocational programming offerings; introduce new vocational programming offerings to inmates of the facility; and provide vocational programming which is consistent with actual post-release employment opportunities and reflects the State's emerging industry and business workforce needs.

It should also be noted that LWD, by State Statute, is required to evaluate the relevance of vocational training services in the Department of Corrections to insure that training services are in job demand occupations. The evaluation of vocational training services is to be accomplished on a semi-annual basis.

The LWD Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program ensures that not more than 10 percent of 82.5 percent of the funding for the cost of educational programs is allocated for programs for criminal offenders in the correctional facilities as well as for other institutional individuals. Emphasis is on programs that promote:

- Adult Basic Education
- Programs for individuals with disabilities as well as other special needs
- English literacy programs
- Secondary school credit programs
- Transitional support to prepare students to make a successful transition to the community
- Life skills and employability skill development to prepare students to gain employment.

LWD will use the same grant announcement and application process to provide funds to serve individuals in correctional facilities and other institutions that is being used for all other eligible providers.

Providers that receive funds to provide programs and services to correctional facilities and other institutions will be required to describe in their grant application, in addition to all

other program requirements, how they will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

LWD has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Jersey State Parole Board to provide employment assistance and case management services to men and women under supervision of the State Parole Board. The State Parole Board has provided financial resources (the current allocation is $2.0 million for the period of July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018) to LWD for the past five program years to fund the Parolee Employment Placement Program (PEPP).

LWD has vended direct services to PEPP program enrollees to two community based agencies, utilizing performance based contacts. Grantee deliverables and fee-for-service schedule is:

- Assessment/Job Coaching/Case Management - $600 per participant
- Job Placement with 30-day employment retention - $900 per participant
- 60-day retention - $700 per participant
- 90-day retention - $700 per participant
- 150-day retention - $1,100 per participant
- Maximum payment for participant who completes all deliverables is $4,000

Agency Roles:

- Regional Parole Offices

o Identification of eligible parolees and referral to designated grantees

o Monitor the progress and attendance of all program participants

- Grantees

o Coordinate case management services for parolees enrolled in the program

o Placement of the program participants into sustainable employment

o Case management of all program participants

o Referral of program participants to the One-Stop Career Center for employment registration

o Employment verification for all program participants who secure employment

- One-Stop Career Centers

o Registration of all PEPP trainees in AOSOS

o Assignment of PEPP, Parole and Wagner-Peyser identifiers in AOSOS Programs and Public Assistance drop-down screen

o Delivery of appropriate labor exchange and employability development services per needs of registrant

o Federal Bonding and WOTC certification, when appropriate

o Linkage with special population' service staff (Veterans Services, WorkFirst New jersey, Vocational Rehabilitation, etc.)

As noted previously, the SETC also works with the Department of Corrections and the Juvenile Justice Commission to align educational and training opportunities for incarcerated individuals.

b. PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF INNOVATIVE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS (FBCOS), STATE REENTRY COUNCILS, AND JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS IN COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS, ONE-STOP CENTERS AND OTHER SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, WHICH IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS.

In October 2010, LWD secured grant funding from USDOL for a youth-centered Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). DVRS was identified as the lead division to increase the capacity of pilot Workforce Development Board areas to serve youth with disabilities (ages 16 - 26), in particular youth offender populations and returning veteran youth. This funding also includes ability to promote universal design in One-Stop Career Centers throughout the entire state.

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).

A. Board Functions

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

23. The development, implementation, and modification of the State plan;
24. The review of statewide policies, statewide programs, and recommendations on actions that should be taken by the State to align workforce development programs in the State in a manner that supports a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system in the State, including the review and provision of comments on the State plans, if any, for programs and activities of one-stop partners that are not core programs;
25. The development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in the State, including:

    a. The identification of barriers and means for removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system;
    b. The development of strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment;
    c. The development of strategies for providing effective outreach to and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system;
    d. The development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and jobseekers, particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations;

e. The identification of regions, including planning regions, for the purposes of section 106(a), and the designation of local areas under section 106, after consultation with local boards and chief elected officials;
f. The development and continuous improvement of the one-stop delivery system in local areas, including providing assistance to local boards, one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and providers with planning and delivering services, including training services and supportive services, to support effective delivery of services to workers, jobseekers, and employers; and
g. The development of strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system;

26. The development and updating of comprehensive State performance accountability measures, including State adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the State as required under section 116(b);

27. The identification and dissemination of information on best practices, including best practices for:
    a. The effective operation of one-stop centers, relating to the use of business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies, including strategies for serving individuals with barriers to employment;
    b. The development of effective local boards, which may include information on factors that contribute to enabling local boards to exceed negotiated local levels of performance, sustain fiscal integrity, and achieve other measures of effectiveness; and
    c. Effective training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis, that effectively use direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure an individual's prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences, and that evaluate such skills, and competencies for adaptability, to support efficient placement into employment or career pathways;

28. The development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the State's one-stop delivery system described in section 121(e), including the development of:
    a. Objective criteria and procedures for use by local boards in assessing the effectiveness and continuous improvement of one-stop centers described in such section;
    b. Guidance for the allocation of one-stop center infrastructure funds under section 121(h); and
    c. Policies relating to the appropriate roles and contributions of entities carrying out one-stop partner programs within the one-stop delivery system, including approaches to facilitating equitable and efficient cost allocation in such system;

29. The development of strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to, and improve the quality of, services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system, including such improvements to:
    a. Enhance digital literacy skills (as defined in section 202 of the Museum and Library Services Act (20 U.S.C. 9101); referred to in this Act as ''digital literacy skills'');

b. Accelerate the acquisition of skills and recognized postsecondary credentials by participants;
c. Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals; and
d. Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas;

30. The development of strategies for aligning technology and data systems across one-stop partner programs to enhance service delivery and improve efficiencies in reporting on performance accountability measures, including the design and implementation of common intake, data collection, case management information, and performance accountability measurement and reporting processes and the incorporation of local input into such design and implementation, to improve coordination of services across one-stop partner programs;
31. The development of allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for employment and training activities for adults, and youth workforce investment activities, to local areas as permitted under sections 128(b)(3) and 133(b)(3);
32. The preparation of the annual reports described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 116(d);
33. The development of the statewide workforce and labor market information system described in section 15(e) of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49l-2(e)); and
34. The development of such other policies as may promote statewide objectives for, and enhance the performance of, the workforce development system in the State.

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

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

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

B. State Board Operational Structures

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

Jersey Economic Development Authority; 30 percent representation from organized labor and community-based organizations; and 10 percent representation from the general public.

The current Board make-up is enshrined in State statute *N.J.S.A. 34:15C-6*, which created SETC as a Human Resource Investment Council under the Alternative Entity provision of WIA. In keeping with requirements and expectations of WIOA, New Jersey is seeking to amend State statute to move toward a business-driven State Workforce Board in line with WIOA expectations. New Jersey will seek to amend the Statute to require 51% business sector membership. Within two years of the adoption of this Plan, it is anticipated that state legislation will be enacted to allow New Jersey to achieve this goal. Specifically, New Jersey expects to present draft legislation transitioning the State Employment and Training Council from an HRIC to a WIOA State Workforce Development Board in the New Jersey Legislature in the current legislative session, 2016-2017. With this guiding legislation in place, New Jersey expects to present the new Board for confirmation, and anticipates the new SETC membership to be in compliance by January 2018.

The proposed change to State statute will include requirements in keeping with WIOA's framework for the membership of the State Workforce Board. The proposed New Jersey legislation includes a requirement that not less than five members of the SETC shall be representatives of labor organizations, who have been nominated by a labor organization, and not less than three membersh shall be representatives of community-based organizations. Membership will include the following, drawn from and specifying the representation required in the WIOA legislation:

(A) The Governor;

(B) A member of each chamber of the State legislature, appointed by the appropriate presiding officers of such chamber; and

(C) Members appointed by the Governor, of which—

- (i) A majority shall be representatives of businesses in the State, who—
  - (I) are owners of businesses, chief executives or operating officers of businesses, or other business executives or employers with optimum policy-making or hiring authority, and who, in addition, may be members of a local board described in section 107(b)(2)(A)(i);
  - (II) represent businesses (including small businesses), or organizations representing businesses described in this subclause, that provide employment opportunities that, at a minimum, include high-quality, work-relevant training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the State; and
  - (III) are appointed from among individuals nominated by State business organizations and business trade associations;
- (ii) not less than 20 percent shall be representatives of the workforce within the State, who—
  - (I) shall include representatives of labor organizations, who have been nominated by State labor federations;
  - (II) shall include a representative, who shall be a member of a labor organization or a training director, from a joint labor-management

apprenticeship program, or if no such joint program exists in the State, such a representative of an apprenticeship program in the State;
        - (III) may include representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or that provide or support competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; and
        - (IV) may include representatives of organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of- school youth; and
    - (iii) the balance—
        - (I) shall include representatives of government, who—
            - (aa) shall include the lead State officials with primary responsibility for the core pro- grams; and
            - (bb) shall include chief elected officials (collectively representing both cities and counties, where appropriate); and
        - (II) may include such other representatives and officials as the Governor may designate, such as—
            - (aa) the State agency officials from agencies that are one-stop partners not specified in subclause (I) (including additional one-stop partners whose programs are covered by the State plan, if any);
            - (bb) State agency officials responsible for economic development or juvenile justice pro- grams in the State;
            - (cc) individuals who represent an Indian tribe or tribal organization, as such terms are defined in section 166(b); and
            - (dd) State agency officials responsible for education programs in the State, including chief executive officers of community colleges and other institutions of higher education.

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

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

SETC Council/Committee	Mission and Responsibilities

SETC Council/Committee	Mission and Responsibilities
Disability Issues: State Rehabilitation Councils	The mission of both the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) Rehabilitation Councils is to advocate for the increase in the number of people with disabilities in New Jersey's workforce. In order to achieve this goal, persons with disabilities must have improved access to New Jersey's workforce programs and services. The two State Rehabilitation Councils will develop policies and program strategies for recommendation to the SETC that focus on identifying the training needs, accommodations, and resources specific to people with disabilities. The integration of these specific policies will ensure that New Jersey's workforce system is equipped to address the diverse needs of the disability community.
Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education	The Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education's mission is to insure and advocate for the execution of equitable gender and labor practices in educational programs and workforce training throughout New Jersey. The Gender Parity Task Force was first established by the SETC in 1993, and the Council was permanently established through legislation in 1999. The Council is legislated to consist of 16 members: six members are appointed by the SETC and six members are appointed by the Division on Women, with not more than half of these members shall be of the same political party. In addition, four members serve ex-officio and are appointed by the Commissioners of Children and Families, Education, Human Services, and the Secretary of Higher Education.
Governance Committee	The SETC is responsible for the oversight of local Workforce Development Boards. The SETC develops appropriate standards to ensure local WDBs are in compliance with state and federal law, the state plan and other relevant documents regarding membership and functions. A key role of this Committee is to establish standards and priorities, and to provide oversight and guidance for local Boards with the goal of enhancing and empowering local WDBs in carry out their own planning and oversight responsibilities. The Governance Committee is currently overseeing the adoption of key board governance policies in support of the strategies outlined in the Combined State Plan.

SETC Council/Committee	Mission and Responsibilities
Performance Committee	The Performance Committee supports New Jersey's commitment to system accountability and integrity, demonstrating success through performance standards, outcomes and data quality. The committee provides high-level performance oversight and recommends performance policy that drives program effectiveness and efficiency. It advises the SETC on performance standards for the workforce system. This includes identifying quantifiable performance standards for use in evaluating the workforce investment system, and guidelines for procedures to encourage and enforce compliance with these standards, as required by *N.J.S.A. 34:15C-8*. The committee reviews outcomes for federally-mandated performance measures for the State and local areas; reviews recommendations from LWD on additional performance measures; identifies promising practices and facilitates the replication of effective models, and makes recommendations to the Commission on the appropriateness of additional measures and the standards and implementation of such measures.
State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services	The State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) focuses on improving the adult literacy delivery system. It is a bipartisan body created within the State Employment and Training Commission by Statute in 1999 to facilitate state and local policy development, planning and oversight in consultation with stakeholders in the area of adult literacy education. In carrying out its role, the Council is responsible for developing a broad-based State Literacy Plan that focuses on appropriate system-wide performance standards, evaluates adult literacy services, and advocates for professional development and capacity building among practitioners and policy makers. By law, SCALES members are appointed by the Assembly, Senate and the Governor's office.

SETC Council/Committee	Mission and Responsibilities
New Jersey Shared Youth Vision Council	The mission of the New Jersey Shared Youth Vision Council is to empower New Jersey's youth to become productive members of their communities through the development of skills focused on leadership, career preparation and community engagement. The Shared Youth Vision Council was formed to assist New Jersey with the development of a comprehensive youth strategy around the development of workforce policies and program strategies focused on building capacity, fortifying career awareness efforts and highlighting innovative programs that create pathways to employment for youth. The Council connects state agencies, education, community organizations, workforce development programs and other youth related stakeholders around a singular shared youth vision:to assist youth to successfully navigate the labor market and to obtain the skills they need for employment.
Apprenticeship Pathways Committee	WIOA allows for an increased emphasis on the nationally recognized and portable credential attained through Registered Apprenticeship programs, which includes both the theoretical and work-based learning opportunities that employers indicate they desire. To support this initiative, the SETC will explore the development of an Apprenticeship Pathways Committee to work with the Talent Networks and other High Quality Partnerships in the State, to identify industry-recognized Registered Apprenticeship (RA) models and encourage the use, expansion and creation of RA models that meet occupational needs of business and industry. The Committee would also work to develop policy and support initiatives that focus on RA programs in non-traditional career paths and support pay equity. The Committee would make recommendations for policy that support and expand RA programs to ensure that New Jersey's workforce acquires the skills, training and education necessary for sustainable occupations. The Committee would also explore policy that could allow apprentices to receive college credit upon completion of a Registered Apprenticeship program, which would build upon an existing model, New Jersey Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education (NJ PLACE).

Figure 30

In addition, the SETC formed an ad-hoc task force in partnership with the New Jersey Business & Industry Association (NJBIA). The NJBIA brought this critical business need to the SETC, as a member of the Commission, with a request to form the Employability Skills Task Force to aid in creating a statewide call to action around the lack of employability skills found in new job applicants and existing employees within the workforce. This critical need was underscored by a survey of industry employers, which demonstrated that these skills are needed by employers and required for workers to find success in the world of work.

Under the leadership of the Task Force, chaired by NJBIA, one of the outcomes was the creation of High Quality Stakeholder Groups focused on seven key areas: Business/Employer; Workforce Development Boards; Education; Registered Apprenticeship/Organized Labor; Government; Non-Profits; and Higher Education. Current efforts to address the crisis were explored, best practice models within each group were identified, and commitments to address the issue from each of the Stakeholder Groups were provided. The stakeholder groups have committed to the Employability Skills Task Force to raise awareness of the crisis, share solutions and focus efforts, leverage resources, and inform intelligence as national thought leaders on addressing employability skills gaps.

In addition, this past June, the SETC, in conjunction with the State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES), and in agreement with its responsibility as the state workforce board for the development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the State's one-stop delivery system, established Policy Resolution 2017-02 regarding the coordinated provision of Title I and Title II services. This was the result of concerns related to a gap in client information that existed between local service providers under both Title I-Workforce Services, and Title II - Adult Education and Literacy Services.

To address this issue, the SETC, through its SCALES council, created an inter-agency Title I/Title II workgroup that includes state and local representatives of the two Titles. The workgroup has developed a list of similar program activities that occur under both Titles; discussions regarding processes, removal of barriers, and opportunities for deeper coordination are ongoing. The workgroup objectives are to prepare a summary of findings and recommendations for both Titles, with the intention of integrating these findings into future policies and grant solicitations. The ultimate goal of the policy is to expand access to services through the improved sharing of information among partners.

C. State Board Decision Making Processes

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

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

D. State Board Functions and Duties

Under New Jersey law, the SETC performs the duties required of the State Workforce Investment Board. As described in *N.J.S.A. 34:15C-5,* "the purpose of the commission shall be to develop and assist in the implementation of a State workforce investment policy with the goal of creating a coherent, integrated system of workforce investment programs and services which, in concert with the efforts of the private sector, will provide each citizen of

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

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

1) Issue the New Jersey Workforce Investment Plan pursuant to the provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2801* et seq.) and section 10 of P.L.1989, c.293 (*C.34:15C-7*); [This duty is in keeping with WIOA Section 101(d)(1), "the development, implementation and modification of the State Plan."]

2) Establish performance standards for workforce investment programs pursuant to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2801* et seq.) and section 11 of P.L.1989, c.293 (*C.34:15C-8*); [This duty is in keeping with WIOA Section 101(d)(4), "(4) the development and updating of comprehensive State performance accountability measures, including State adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the State as required under section 116(b)."]

3) Act to ensure the full participation of Workforce Investment Boards [and now Workforce Development Boards] in the planning and supervision of local workforce investment systems. The commission shall be responsible to oversee and develop appropriate standards to ensure Workforce Investment Board compliance with state and federal law, the State Plan, and other relevant requirements regarding membership, staffing, meetings, and functions;

4) Foster and coordinate initiatives of the Department of Education and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education to enhance the contributions of public schools and institutions of higher education to the implementation of the state workforce investment policy;

5) Examine federal and state laws and regulations to assess whether those laws and regulations present barriers to achieving any of the goals of this act. The commission shall, from time to time as it deems appropriate, issue to the Governor and the Legislature reports on its findings, including recommendations for changes in state or federal laws or regulations concerning workforce investment programs or services, including, when appropriate, recommendations to merge other State advisory structures and functions into the commission;

6) Perform the duties assigned to a State Workforce Investment Board pursuant to subsection (d) of section 111 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2821) [and now Section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Public Law 113-128]*;

7) Have the authority to enter into agreements with the head of each state department or commission which administers or funds education, employment or training programs, including, but not limited to, the Departments of Labor and Workforce Development, Community Affairs, Education, and Human Services and Higher Education, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, and the Juvenile Justice Commission, which agreements are for the purpose of assigning planning, policy guidance and oversight functions to each Workforce Investment Board with respect to any workforce investment program funded or administered by the state department or commission within the Workforce Investment Board's respective labor market area or local area, as the case may be; and

8) Establish guidelines to be used by the Workforce Investment Boards in performing the planning, policy guidance, and oversight functions assigned to the boards under any agreement reached by the commission with a department or commission pursuant to subsection g. of this section. The commission shall approve all local Workforce Investment Board plans that meet the criteria established by the commission for the establishment of One-Stop systems. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development shall approve the operational portion of the plans for programs administered by the department.

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

The state statute, *N.J.S.A. 34:15C*, will be amended to reflect the new requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, including the functions, roles and responsibilities of the state board and the board membership, as discussed in the State Board Operational Structure section, and in particular with regard to WIOA Section 101(d), State Workforce Development Board Functions.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in 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. WIOA Services delivered by Department of Labor and Workforce Development through One-Stop Career Centers (WIOA Title I Activities)

New Jersey is committed to locally-driven and managed One-Stop Career Centers that assist individuals who are unemployed or under-employed to obtain new skills and employment. New Jersey maintains and will continue to build a strong network of One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, libraries, community and faith-based organizations, labor unions and educational institutions to ensure that jobseekers and students, at all levels,

have access to high-quality career guidance and job search information and assistance. New Jersey will invest in professional development and staff training and in on-line resources to support this effort.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) is the state agency responsible for delivery of the vast majority of WIOA core programs. Figure 31 outlines the roles and responsibilities for the various State programs:

New Jersey WIOA Programs and Responsible Entities

LWD via State and Local Government Staff LWD via competitive contracts

Division	Core Programs	Non-Core Programs
LWD via funding to Local Workforce Development Boards	- Adult (Title I)	
- Wagner-Peyser (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III)	- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Worker Program (Chapter 2, Title II Trade Act	
- Adult Basic Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II)	- Senior Community Service Employment Program (Title V Older Americans Act)	
LWD Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services AND Department of Human Services, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired	- Vocational Rehabilitation (Title I Rehabilitation Act, as amended by Title IV)	---
New Jersey Department of Education	---	- Career and Technical Education (Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical 'Education Act)

Figure 31

New Jersey's WIOA system is delivered through State and local government staff, and vendor staff, at the State's 30 One-Stop Career Centers. These include at least one Center in each of New Jersey's 21 counties, and multiple centers in some of the State's 17 Workforce Development Boards. New Jersey's local workforce development system and One-Stop Career Centers are described in greater detail in Section VI below.

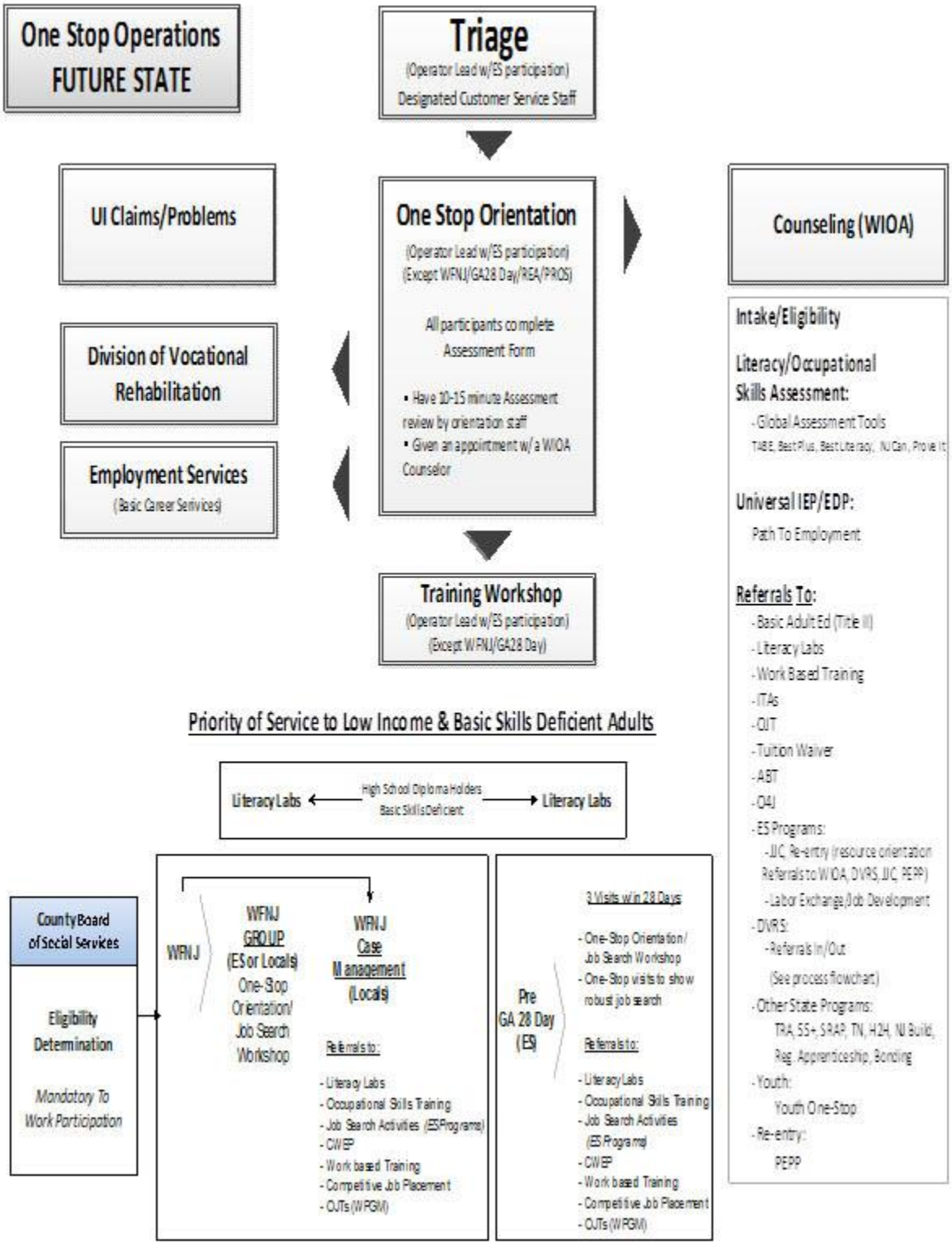
One Stop Operations
FUTURE STATE
Triage
(Operator Lead w/ES participation)
Designated Customer Service Staff
UI Claims/Problems
One Stop Orientation
(Operator Lead w/ES participation)
(Except WFNJ/GA28 Day/REA/PROS)
All participants complete Assessment Form
• Have 10-15 minute Assessment review by orientation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

Figure 32

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

The One-Stop Operator provides for the integration of State, local government, and vendor agency staff providing WorkFirst NJ (TANF and GA), SNAP, and WIOA funded employability assessment, service identification and sequencing, Individual Employment Plan (IEP) development, and case management services for mandatory work activity participants Services are delivered as shown in Figure 32 above - New Jersey WIOA Programs and Responsible Entities. The staff at each One-Stop includes a mix of State LWD staff and local government (and in the future sub-contracted One-Stop Operator) staff, as well as those from other partners.

B. Customer Flow and Counseling

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

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

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

In New Jersey's prior system, both WIOA and ES had separate Counselors who worked in parallel with customers, and sometimes overlapped in interaction with a given customer. This duplication has been removed in the current model. Also, there are separate

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

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

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

CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED):

C. Training and Other Services

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

C.1. Training Services

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

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

New Jersey will develop an industry-valued credentials list on an annual basis based on an analysis of labor market data, feedback from employers and stakeholders, and formal adoption of the list by the Credential Review Board. The initial Industry-Valued Credential List was adopted by the Credential Review Board in October 2016, and continues to be updated through the efforts of the Board. It is available on the New Jersey Career Connections website at:

http://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/prepare/skills/credentials/industry_valued_credentials.shtml

The State intends to create a workforce system valued by employers that also creates bridges for individuals to attain post-secondary credits. New Jersey's goal is to dedicate at least 80% of all federal and state funds spent on occupational training to programs that result in an industry-valued credential or degree. The five-year plan will proceed incrementally for each Local Area as follows:

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

The State plans on utilizing the new statutory authority in WIOA to test pay-for-performance contracting with WIOA formula funds held at the state level and provide technical assistance for local workforce areas, as requested at the local level, to determine if outcome-based approaches can improve overall WIOA performance. As part of *New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development*, New Jersey prioritizes strategies and investments in work-based learning opportunities including Pre-apprenticeship, Apprenticeship, Internship, Job Shadowing, Job Coaching, Mentoring and On-the-Job Training models. The following make up New Jersey's main training methods:

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

customers. Currently, the cap is $4,000 per individual, but New Jersey recognizes some valuable trainings cost more than that.

- *On-the-Job Training (OJT):* Business Services staff at each One-Stop may work with customers and area businesses to develop OJT agreements when appropriate. New Jersey continues to promote greater use of On-the-Job Training (OJT) as it is a method of ensuring that employers gain a workforce with the exact skills and training desired. It is in keeping with the State's Talent Network focus and Talent Networks provide a key resource in facilitating OJT activity. New Jersey follows all WIOA regulations regarding OJT provision.
- *Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship*

Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs and initiatives have and will remain continued strategies for New Jersey. The models, by design, incorporate both theory and experiential learning that business and industry often request, and simultaneously create career pathways for participants. The Registered Apprenticeship model leads to a nationally-recognized industry credential that is both portable and stackable. Strategies to incorporate Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship are project-specific, allowing LWD and its partners to build specific solutions to identified needs and incorporate promising practices gleaned from previous projects.

- *Opportunity Partnership:* This program utilizes State funds to support cohort training for dislocated workers. Employers or groups of employers work with community colleges or private trainers to develop curricula that are needed for targeted openings at their firms, and then commit to interview successful completers from a cohort enrolled in the program. These trainings are paid for by the class rather than through an ITA or other customer-level manner.
- *Other Work-Based Training* including Internship, Job Shadowing, Job Coaching, Mentoring and a number of customized training and related services developed through the Talent Networks and Business Services staff, built to benefit employers and jobseekers; provide better exposure of jobseekers, especially Youth and those with limited work history to the State's key industries and in-demand occupations; and offer customized methods of preparing new and existing workers for specific job opportunities.

C.2. Other Partner Services

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

- Employment Services programs including basic career services, Juvenile Justice Commission Re-entry and Labor Exchange/Job Development (for direct placement)
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) services as outlined throughout this Plan.
- Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) services as outlined throughout this Plan.
- Trade Adjustment Act and access to Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRAs), providing services and aid to American workers who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign trade.

- Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP): Also known in New Jersey as the WorkForce 55+ Program, this is a federally funded program that offers economically disadvantaged seniors, 55 years of age and older, jobs and training. Participants receive the counseling, assessment, and training necessary to enable them to be placed in unsubsidized employment. Program pays full training salary at a non-profit or public employer for up to 48 months
- State Rental Assistance Program (SRAP): This program provides tenant-based and project-based rental assistance grants for up to five years to recipients who are not currently holding a federal Section 8 voucher. Individuals residing in a household receiving an SRAP subsidy are required to participate in the One-Stop Career Centers employment and training services that help them become employed and self-sufficient.
- Helmets to Hardhats (H2H): Designed to help transition active duty military, members of the National Guard and Reserves, and veterans into the best careers in the construction industry in New Jersey
- NJ BUILD (New Jersey Builders Utilization Initiative for Labor Diversity): Program designed to provide training opportunities for minorities and women in the construction trades and construction related trades so that they can have equal employment opportunity in public contracting.
- Federal Bonding Program: A program that gives an incentive for hiring employers through Fidelity Bonds that guarantee honesty for "at-risk" hard-to-place jobseekers. Bonds cover the first six months of employment and are at no cost to both employer and applicant. It is a unique job placement tool to assist ex-offenders, and other at-risk/hard-to-place job applicants (e.g.: recovering substance abusers, welfare recipients, poor credit histories, etc.).

CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED):

D. Job Placement and Business Services

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

D.1. Industry Specialization

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

extensive cross-workforce area and cross-region commuting patterns), and build methods of collaboration and specialization within industries.

D.2. Career Connections

To assist customers as they work to complete activities associated with their Individual Employment Plan (IEP), counselors utilize the **New Jersey Career Connections "Path to Employment"** service model, which is housed on the New Jersey Career Connections website (CareerConnections.nj.gov). The "Path to Employment" features expert insights and actionable guidance that help jobseekers obtain their career goals, and it consists of three steps: **Plan, Prepare and Succeed**. Each step provides information and activities that jobseekers can use throughout their search for employment.

In the ***Plan*** stage, jobseekers are encouraged to assess their current skills and interests and explore the job market, as well as apply for funding assistance, if needed, and prepare a personal budget. Next, in the ***Prepare*** stage, jobseekers can consider activities such as researching and attending skill trainings, sharpening existing skills, building and enhancing a résumé, and learning interview and job search techniques. Ultimately, in the ***Succeed*** stage, jobseekers pursue their chosen job opportunities with confidence, applying the tools and skills they acquired throughout their New Jersey Career Connections experience to realize their career goals.

Through a statewide "train-the-trainer" initiative conducted in the fall of 2016, hundreds of individuals at partner organizations were trained to become "Career Navigators" to provide New Jersey Career Connections services to jobseekers. That same year, the Department awarded grant funding to 19 public library systems to provide New Jersey Career Connections services at their locations. This grant has been extended to continue into 2018. As an additional resource, staff providing New Jersey Career Connections services have access to the CareerPartners.nj.gov website, which was launched in October 2017. This website provides tools and resources, including a network directory, access to presentations and marketing materials, and quick links to career navigation resources, to help counselors as they work with jobseekers. The New Jersey Career Connections network of partners also benefits from ongoing support from the Department's partner engagement team, which provides network onboarding, technical, and training assistance.

Based on feedback from the network of partners, New Jersey has begun to move into the second phase of implementation of the CareerPartners.nj.gov website. A top requirement for the partners is having a "searchable" partner directory. Plans are underway to have the current network directory powered with search engine capabilities that will enable users to search partners by geographical location, type of services offered, hours of operation, and more. Through this function, partners will also be able to make and track partner referrals via single sign-on partner portals, another top request from network partners. In addition to these requirements, using enhanced calendar functionality, partners will be able to register for New Jersey Career Connections sponsored events and ongoing training and share their own events with the extended partner network.

In an effort to improve communication with network partners and increase market penetration of new partner recruitment, New Jersey will increase awareness of its workforce programs and services by using targeted communication to both potential and established partners. This functionality will enable LWD to share monthly e-newsletters,

tailor communication by partner interest, automate activities, and customize the partner engagements. New Jersey will use "Social Listening" to strategically engage potential partners by analyzing partner and potential partner conversations on social media platforms. Ultimately, this will allow New Jersey to gather market intelligence on current trends and engage potential new partners interested in joining the network. In addition, this will help LWD reach its goal of obtaining a "360-degree picture" of partners across social channels and the New Jersey Career Connections network.

D.3. Jersey Job Clubs

The Jersey Job Clubs serve as the backbone of state Employment Services delivery. All of the mandatory partner programs refer customers to it. The Jersey Job Clubs are the statewide method of delivering job readiness workshops and related career advising work. New Jersey has determined that providing jobseeker customers with a peer community that could help build, or re-build often broken professional networks was a critical service for all of the system's customers. The result, Jersey Job Clubs, are now universally accessible and encouraged for all enrolled participants in any of the WIOA and partner programs. Activities are centered on Job Club activities where individuals can meet and share their job search work, share employer contacts they have made, and utilize one another's growing professional networks for potential employment opportunities. Workshops offered through the Jersey Job Clubs include:

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

D.4. America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS) New Jersey currently utilizes the AOSOS system across all One-Stops, and all core partner programs are able to utilize it as the primary case management resource, for recording and accessing all jobseeker customer data, as well as for reporting on LWD performance measures. Staff use the system in collaborative case management across sites and the multiple staff working with customers. New Jersey is in the process of undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the State's case management system needs as well as identifying any new or updated requirements for case management and reporting systems in WIOA. This work will be undertaken in coming years, but for the present AOSOS will remain for current and immediately expected purposes.

D.5. Re-Employment Portal

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

D.6. One-Stop Operator Selection and Certification

New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development includes a commitment for the SETC regarding Local Workforce Board Certification and Capacity Building. The Commission will build on its foundation of required certification and capacity building for local boards, with an expanded certification process that includes enhanced communication, capacity building and technical assistance in partnership with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. WIOA requires that local areas competitively select the One-Stop Operator. Based on WIOA, One-Stop Operators may be an institution of higher education; an employment service State agency established under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), on behalf of the local office of the agency; a community-based organization, nonprofit organization, or intermediary; a private for-profit entity; a government agency; or another interested organization or entity, which may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization, or a labor organization. State law N.J.S.A 34:15D-4.7 and 21 also requires that all counseling services in One-Stop Career Centers must be either provided by a job counselor hired and employed by the State pursuant to N.J.S.A 11A or hired and employed by a political subdivision of the State with the exception of those One-Stop Centers grandfathered under P.L. 2004, c. 39. State law further requires that all staff who are hired and supported by moneys from the Workforce Development Partnership Fund or the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills, including any of those staff located at any One-Stop Career Center will be hired and employed by the State pursuant to N.J.S.A 11A or hired and employed by a political subdivision of the State, with the exception of those One-Stop Centers grandfathered under P.L. 2004, c. 39. Local Boards are required to comply with both the federal and State law.

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

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

And include:

- Manage hours of operation at all sites
- Manage technological resources such as websites, case management information, business networking software, on-line testing sites
- Manage daily operations thru coordination with WIOA Fiscal Agent for lease, utilities, and other invoice remittance
- Manage partner responsibilities as defined in MOU
- Manage services for individuals
- Manage services for business
- Provision of basic services such as orientations, information on careers and labor markets, and resource rooms
- Submission of annual staffing, and operational budgets

- Following federal and state regulations pertaining to handling of EEO responsibilities, customer complaints, and physical and programmatic accessibility
- Implementation of board policies
- Reporting to Board on operations, performance accountability, and continuous improvements

Each local board will select the One-Stop Operator through a competitive process. Any Request for Proposal should clearly delineate the role of the prospective one-stop operator to deliver services "at a minimum" level described within proposed 20 CFR 678.620 or near it, so as to ensure continued compliance with state law. The local area process for Competitive Selection of the One-Stop Operator must be open, transparent and made available to all eligible entities. Local areas must follow state procurement laws at a minimum. Competitive selection must be made prior to June 1, 2017 with implementation of the role of the One-Stop Operator beginning no later than July 1, 2017. Competitive selection must be made no less than every two years. Local areas may offer no more than two one-year extensions to successful One-Stop Operator contracts. A successful One-Stop Operator meets or exceeds local area and state performance standards, as applicable; satisfies the requirements of the One-Stop Career Center Certification, provided in SETC Policy Resolution 2016-14, included in Appendix 4 of this Plan. Further, the local Workforce Development Board (WDB) must have determined that neither its One-Stop Operator, nor any of its sub-contracted entities, has engaged in fraud or abuse, as those terms are used within 29 U.S.C. 3122 (c)(3)(A), and that neither the One-Stop Operator, nor any of its sub-contracted entities, has engaged in any of the prohibited conduct listed as cause for corrective actions and penalties under N.J.A.C. 12:42-3.6.

The local area grant recipient retains the financial and administrative responsibility to ensure that the procurement and resultant system is appropriate, aligns with area needs and service structure, and is consistent with the local plan as approved by the local Workforce Development Board.

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

CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED):

On September 20, 2016, the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) adopted Policy Resolution 2016-14, creating the One-Stop Career Center Certification Process. New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center Certification (OSCC) process has an effective date of July 1, 2017. It considers the requirement that a competitively-selected One-Stop Operator should be in place in each local Workforce Development Area. Under this policy, local Workforce Development Boards are to establish a local process of review that may include a qualified group of non-conflicted local board members or a qualified third-party entity. All local areas will have the responsibility to ensure that the group established locally is qualified and able to perform such work. Pre-requisites to OSCC certification are necessary. This recognizes

essential elements of programming and services that must be in place prior to certification. The pre-requisites include accessibility standards, establishment of a grievance/complaint system for customers, a certified local Workforce Development Board (WDB), and a local memorandum of understanding (MOU) that includes the local WDB and its partners. SETC Policy 2016-14 is provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

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

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

The local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) are often considered the nucleus within their jurisdiction or area. In this pivotal role, it is imperative that the local WDB be engaged by entities applying for funding, implementing programs and/or services within the local area. In this way efforts and resources can be coordinated, maximized and avoid duplication. Carl D. Perkins funding, which supports Career and Technical Education (CTE) requires applicants to consult with the local WDB in the development of the grant applications to ensure: the grant application is in conformity with the plans of the local WDB; the amount of the allocation; approved career and technical education programs to be supported; performance standards and measures to be addressed for the programs; categories of expenditures; justification for the proposed expenditures; and anticipated outcomes. This knowledge assists both the potential grantee and the local WDB to influence the implementation of the grant from a referral or connectivity perspective, with the broader local workforce system.

Registered Apprenticeship, as outlined in Section VI of the Plan, has been and will remain a continued strategy for New Jersey. This model, by design, incorporates both the theory and work-based/experiential learning components that business and industry often request, and simultaneously create career pathways for participants. WIOA has provided an increased focus on Registered Apprenticeship as a model for education and training. New Jersey welcomes the opportunity to build upon existing initiatives and create new opportunities to expand quality Registered Apprenticeship programs that incorporate the appropriate level of classroom theory and work-based/experiential learning that has been proven to provide highly skilled workers to many industries. These high-quality Registered Apprenticeship programs provide industry-valued credentials that are both portable and stackable. Strategies to incorporate Registered Apprenticeships are project-specific, allowing LWD and its partners to build specific solutions to identified needs and incorporate promising practices gleaned from previous projects. Business Services staff at local One-Stops are able to help establish or refer WIOA customers to Registered

Apprenticeship programs that meet business, industry, and educational/training requirements.

New Jersey already invests in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training programs that focus on specific groups such as youth, women, minorities, veterans and ex-offenders. All program funds are competitively awarded by LWD. Examples include:

- One of the Registered Apprenticeship initiatives that focuses on youth is the Youth Transitions to Work (YTTW) grant program. These grants are funded through the state Workforce Development Partnership (WDP) funds, and are competitively awarded to educate high school juniors and seniors about Registered Apprenticeship occupations in various industries. A requirement is that programs be implemented through consortia of key partners, including the local Workforce Development Boards and local One-Stop Career Centers. These grants serve as a successful pre-apprenticeship education initiative that offers students extensive insight about the industry, entrance and training requirements and often involves an experiential learning opportunity for participants. Many of the program graduates apply to the formal Registered Apprenticeship program upon completion of their high school education.
- New Jersey Builders Utilization Initiative for Labor Diversity (NJ BUILD), a program designed to provide training and work opportunities in building, construction and construction-related jobs to women and minorities. Funding for these programs are derived from an allocation of one-half of one percent of construction projects funded entirely with appropriated funds, or a combination of funds from appropriated and other sources, as identified through Public Law 2009, Chapter 313 and 335. The purpose of this program is to increase the number of minorities and women that can realize equal employment opportunities on publicly-funded contracts.

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

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

Two initiatives summarized below represent High Quality Partnerships focused on increasing the number of women in non-traditional careers, and support the mission and

duties of the Gender Parity Council. These programs have already delivering documented results and are identified for expansion. The GPC has discussed them as potential best practices models and encourage similar efforts in other industries and/or occupational fields, some of which utilize Registered Apprenticeship as the delivery model of training and education.

Sisters in the Brotherhood (SIB)

A recruitment and retention effort imparted upon the New Jersey Locals of the Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters (NRCC) by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters (International). The initiative focuses on reaching a goal to have women represent a minimum of 10% of all registered apprentices within the trade by 2019, and maintaining that percentage moving forward. The lessons learned have influenced positive modifications to the recruitment, support, education and training programs within the NRCC. Since its inception, the effort has established relationships with community and faith-based partners, vocational schools, guidance counselors, Workforce Development Boards, One-Stop Career Centers, correctional institutions, and other government agencies, to name a few. The NRCC has created a pre-apprenticeship program to support women who have expressed an interest in the field but require additional preparation. The implementation of the SIB pre-apprenticeship program has had a positive influence on the outcomes and success of the program. This program is a win-win for non-traditional careers for women, as it provides equal pay for equal work, demonstrates career pathways and utilizes Registered Apprenticeship as the method of training and education.

Women in Sustainable Employment (WISE) Pathways

A career-exploration course designed for women to explore nontraditional, in-demand jobs in the construction, gas, water, electric and energy industries, with some occupations being Registered Apprenticeship programs. This forty-hour program was created to educate women about career paths in these industries, and provide strategies in conflict management, team building, and workplace expectations. Additional focus is placed on résumé writing, practice online applications and interviewing; and participants can be connected with recruiters from participating companies. This program was designed and implemented through a quality partnership between employers, organized labor and higher education, to design and implement this career exploration program. The goal is to expand the initiative into other counties, post-secondary educational institutions and employers in the future.

In addition, the SETC continues to staff and support the New Jersey Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education (NJ PLACE) initiative. The NJ PLACE initiative focuses on having college credits awarded to Registered Apprenticeship programs, and other industry-recognized credentials and certificates to authenticate the post-secondary education, learning and knowledge attained through these training experiences. The initiative also guides apprentices through the process of gaining college credits for their apprenticeship training, and the needed documentation to acquire such credit. This initiative is yet another example of a High Quality Partnership that engages higher education, business and industry, organized labor, national credentialing entities, and government to assist individuals who participate in these types of training programs and services. The SETC will explore avenues to strengthen the existing NJ PLACE initiative, through expansion into new industries and occupations.

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

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

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

Coordination With Partners

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

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

Additionally, LWD was awarded a grant from USDOL to build its partially developed workforce longitudinal data system (WLDS). The proposedfullydeveloped WLDS will connect workforceand employment datawiththe administrative data systems of P-12 and postsecondaryeducationin New Jersey. The design and proposed analysis are alignedwith the overall workforce innovation development goals ofLWD, as a robust WLDS is a critical component to theimplementation and success of moreeffective Re-employment and Talent Development Strategies. The creation of a longitudinal database will support four major objectives:

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

The WLDS will include:

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

Trade Act Automation Program:

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

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

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

The State is currently seeking quotes to automate the existing OJT system and customize it for TAA, including TAA contracting, by getting training contracts online using the OJT contract system. This online update will be paid for using TAA funds and will help improve accuracy, accountability, reporting and long-term tracking of the services. The State is creating the automated system internally by using the foundation of the existing OJT system and customizing it for TAA. The implementation date of the new system is targeted for Spring 2018. In addition, TAA funds from Workforce will be used to replace the outdated TRA Benefit System used by Unemployment Insurance to make weekly Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) payments to Trade Act participants. The Department views this second phase of automation as integral to enhancing the entire Trade Act experience for participants.

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

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

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

1. A shift to more workplace and career-focused basic skills education curriculum

2. An integration of basic skills training into the subsequent steps of occupational skills training.

3. More co-location of Title II services with One-Stop Career Center services

A.1. Career Focused Basic Skills

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In coming years, Title II services should, as much as possible, become co-located with WIOA Title I services at the One-Stop Career Centers or other delivery sites. With a trend toward One-Stop Career Centers locating on-site at community colleges, and strengthening of these relationships as part of the Talent Network and Career Pathway efforts, the further integration by co-locating Adult Education and Literacy with Title I at community colleges and other educational partners based on participant needs, helps further strengthen this important collaborative work.

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

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

Appropriate co-enrollment of Wagner-Peyser participants will be based on customers' needs and informed by system-wide common intake and common assessment tools. Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I partners share a common case management system (AOSOS). Strategic co-enrollment of WIOA partner program participants will help transform One-Stop service delivery from the sequence of service model under WIA to the career services model under WIOA, enabling job-seekers to immediately access the services, including training, most beneficial to their employment directed needs. Improved communication between partner data systems will help minimize duplication of services, better manage referrals between partners and inform individualized customer action plans across partner agencies.

Each One-Stop Career Center has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between required and optional partners, which outlines partners' responsibilities. Customers with significant barriers to employment may be served by Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I funded staff dedicated to assisting with the needs of special populations such as customers with disabilities, veterans, older workers, the long-term unemployed, ex-offenders, and public assistance and other low income individuals. Sharing of information, skill levels and employment development plans assists in providing comprehensive services. Referrals to literacy and disability services will be improved through improved system-wide intake and assessment tools.

New Jersey will utilize co-enrollment based on the results of customer assessment. In addition to the use of the common NJ Intake and Initial Assessment Form, cross-training of staff will facilitate appropriate co-enrollment and referrals.

As shown on the One-Stop Operations FUTURE STATE flowchart, Employment Services (ES) and UI Claims/Problems are core components of the customer flow within the One-Stop system. Dislocated Workers receive and manage their Unemployment Insurance benefits through the online system. Wagner-Peyser provides dislocated workers and other jobseekers with labor exchange services virtually and at the bricks and mortar One-Stop Career Centers. Online services are offered on the New Jersey Career Connections website (CareerConnections.nj.gov).

LWD will is working to develop and implement a "Single Sign-on" system that will allow customers register with UI and ES at the same time, and access information about their UI account.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DVRS subscribes to the Employment First principles adopted by the Governor in April 2012, and the agency believes that these principles should be accomplished in the context of long-term career pathway development.

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

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

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

1. Goal 1: By September 30, 2017, the number of individuals with DD, including ASD applying for DVRS services will increase by 50 percent. Strategic objectives to meet this goal include the following:

- a. Provide education and communication - All identified stakeholders will know about the DVRS Employment First (EF) initiative by the end of year one. Surveys will be used to determine initial training needs for DVRS staff members and CRPs.

- b. Collaborate with interagency partners - Identify key state partners and research how other states are collaborating on EF initiatives. Design the process, roles and responsibilities for partners.
- c. Improve DVRS access for individuals with significant disabilities - Develop a plan for obtaining valid statistics of how many individuals with DD are served by the DVRS. Create a plan to prioritize students with DD to be linked to DVRS two years prior to exiting the school.
- d. Develop innovative and expanded services that offer increased employment opportunities - Verify successful Innovation and Expansion grantees for possible expansion. Determine possible sites for a Project SEARCH Pilot.
- e. Engage employers - Take advantage of the new 503 regulations. Engage LWD talent networks. Find options for work trials through internships. Replicate the Schedule A targeted hiring events throughout the state.

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

2. Goal 2: By September 30, 2017, there will be an increase in the number of Deaf/HH consumers seeking DVRS services and communication access and services for Deaf/HH will be consistent, reliable, and result in employment. Strategic objectives to meet this goal include the following:

- a. Provide education and communication - Identify stakeholders from the Deaf/HH community. Encourage participation from the Deaf/HH with the SRC. Develop marketing materials in ASL.
- b. Collaborate with interagency and community partners - Identify key state partners needed to support the DVRS D/HH goals. Design the process, roles and responsibilities for partners. Determine the skills needed for ASL SE staff. Identify interpreter vs. SE needs for D/HH consumers.
- c. Improve access to DVRS for D/HH consumers - Install videophones in every office. Develop a plan for obtaining valid statistics of the number of D/HH served by DVRS. Create a plan to allow D/HH transition students to be referred to the regional Deaf Centers two years prior to exiting school. Use the model state plan for the Deaf consistently throughout New Jersey.
- d. Develop innovative and expanded services that offer increased employment opportunities - Expand services of the regional Deaf Centers. Assess DVRS projects to consider how they could serve D/HH consumers. Determine required training for counselors working with D/HH.

  e. Engage employers - Take advantage of the new 503 regulations. Engage the LWD talent networks.

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

3. Goal 3: By September 30, 2015, the DVRS will provide training and technical assistance to counselors on SE and SE services, as follows:

- a. Provide training to staff related to the definition of SE and SE services to include appropriate identification of SE goals on the IPE, coding of SE services on the IPE and the case closure page in the case management system;
- b. Analyze the decline in the number of individuals who have SE goals on their IPEs and achieve SE to determine the reasons underlying the decline in these respective performance measures and develop strategies to address the reasons identified; and
- c. Review and analyze the case management settings utilized to identify SE goals and SE services on an IPE and the case closure page and develop a systematic process to ensure accurate coding and reporting.

** UPDATE: Goal 3 has been completed*

4. Goal 4: By September 30, 2016, the DVRS will implement quality assurance (QA) processes and conduct the following:

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

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

** UPDATE: Goal 5 has been completed*

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

State Rehabilitation Council Recommendations

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

C.2. Programs operated by the Department of Human Services, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

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

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

CBVI subscribes to the Employment First principles adopted by the Governor in April 2012, and the agency believes that these principles should be accomplished in the context of long-term career development.

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

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

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

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

State Rehabilitation Council Recommendations

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

D. Coordination and Co-enrollment with the WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) program (TANF Employment and Training and SNAP Employment and Training programs)

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

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

D.1.Policies and Procedures

1) Pursuant to the Executive Reorganization Act of 1969, P.L. 1969, c.203 (c.52:14C-1 et seq.), this plan consolidated responsibility in LWD for significant elements of the WFNJ Program, employment-directed and workforce development activities, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program work-related activities previously administered by DHS, Division of Family Development (DFD) for the period beginning July 1, 2004 and thereafter.

2) To the extent not inconsistent with State and Federal statutory authority, all workforce programs and activities funded in whole or part, directly or indirectly, through the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, as amended; the WorkFirst New Jersey Program, P.L. 1997c c.13, c.14, c.37, c.38, as amended; the Federal Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, here in after the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); and the General Public Assistance Law, P.L. 1947, c. 156, as amended, shall be administered by LWD pursuant to Sections I through X of this Memorandum of Understanding.

3) To the extent not inconsistent with State and Federal statutory authority, LWD is responsible for all employment and job readiness activities in the WFNJ, Child Support and SNAP programs.

4) The areas of employment and job readiness activities, which LWD shall be responsible for are as follows:

- a. Career guidance;
- b. Labor market information;
- c. Employability assessment;
- d. Employability plan development;

- e. Employment-directed case management;
- f. Subsidized employment in the private and public sectors;
- g. Unsubsidized employment in the private and public sectors;
- h. On-the-job training (OJT);
- i. Community Work Experience Program (CWEP);
- j. Community service programs;
- k. Job search and job readiness assistance
- l. Vocational education training
- m. Employment-related education and job skills training;
- n. Basic skills/literacy;
- o. Work-related educational enhancements;
- p. A proportionate share of employment and training related expenses;
- q. Referral and access to work support services (e.g., transportation and childcare);
- r. Early Employment Initiative;
- s. Career Advancement Voucher; and
- t. Supplemental Workforce Development Benefits Program (Smart STEPS)

5) Nothing in the Memorandum of Understanding shall alter the role of DHS as to the single state agency for administration of the Title IV-A (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), Title IV-D (Child Support) and the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program.

6) All functions, powers, duties of DHS not transferred to LWD in this Memorandum of Understanding shall remain with DHS.

7) DHS recognizes LWD shall be the state entity responsible for the administration, design, implementation, and where appropriate, operate any or all Workforce programs, activities, and initiatives.

D.2. Funding

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

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

D.3. Process and Customer Flow

New Jersey provides workforce services to TANF recipients who are mandatory work participants, the employable State General Assistance recipients, and SNAP recipients who

are required to participate in work activities as a condition of continued eligibility for benefits. It is the goal of DHS and LWD that as many of these individuals as possible be given access to employment and training services delivered through the One-Stop Career Centers and move toward employment and self-sufficiency.

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

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

WFNJ and SNAP work registrants normally receive funded employment and training services through WFNJ allocated dollars though there is some co-enrollment, in particular when a customer may access training funds or unique training programs that are delivered by the WIOA system.

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

D.4. Smart Steps

LWD provides TANF grant and support services reimbursement to the Division of Family Development for WorkFirst NJ TANF recipients who have been approved by the One-Stop system to pursue a college level program leading to an AAA/AAS or BA/BS degree. The grant and support services reimbursement is through NJ Workforce Development Program

funds and stops the five (5) year TANF eligibility clock while the TANF participant is pursuing their college level degree.

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

E. Coordination and Co-enrollment with Trade Adjustment Act

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

There are currently seven total TAA field representatives in the State. These seven representatives rotate between One-Stops to meet and service clients. TAA staff are located in seven One-Stop Career Centers and contribute to One-Stop operations funds through the local Infrastructure Funding Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding. Currently 10 percent of TAA funding is for staffing costs, with the remaining 90 percent allocated for client training. This commitment to training funding has proven successful. Currently in the State, 53 percent of TAA clients were employed within three months of receiving services. Of the 53 percent that entered employment, 94.9 percent were employed for a period of six months or longer.

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

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

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

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

F. Supportive Services Provision and Coordination

In keeping with WIOA, New Jersey is committed to offering appropriate support services jobseekers need to succeed in the labor market. New Jersey encourages local WDBs to develop partnerships to provide a variety of services through partnerships with local public agencies, private not-for-profits and other entities, and supports them in securing these partnerships. The State requires local WDBs to develop local policies and procedures for the use of WIOA funds for supportive services if they intend to utilize WIOA funds for that purpose. Under these local policies, One-Stop Career Centers may use funds to a reasonable level for services of this kind. Local policies may vary but in general support service expenditures may include such things as childcare, transportation, work clothing or uniforms, equipment or tools for training or work, testing or credentialing fees subsequent to training, and a range of other services needed to address barriers individuals face to succeeding in WIOA programs, training and/or employment.

Homeless Individuals

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

In light of these efforts, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) plans to host a statewide planning meeting on strengthening workforce services for homeless populations in the summer of 2016. The planning meeting will provide an opportunity for state agencies, homeless-serving organizations, and employment services

agencies to convene, highlight best program and community workforce services practices, and identify gaps that exist in delivery of workforce services to homeless individuals.

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

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs 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.

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

With the deployment of the Salesforce client relationship management (CRM) platform in May 2017, New Jersey will better coordinate the business services work within each region. All partners will have access to the system and can enter and view contact notes, status updates, job orders and other interactions with each business customer. For "job orders" the system will better serve employers by dedicating a lead staffer to review jobseeker résumés coming from throughout the system and deliver the qualified candidates to the business. The system is demand-driven, working closely with the employer to understand their specific needs and identifying pre-screened candidates that will be a good match for the positions. New Jersey will continue to focus on work with employers that will give its workers good opportunities for self-sufficiency sustaining employment.

A. Coordination of Business Services with Vocational Rehabilitation

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

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

develop better accessibility plans and make reasonable accommodations when hiring individuals with disabilities.

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

B. Coordination of Business Services with Adult Education

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

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

C. Coordination of Business Services with Veterans Programs

New Jersey is at the forefront in the nation in using its Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) funding to work with businesses. New Jersey's Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) and Disabled Veteran Opportunity Program contacts (DVOPs) have developed national best practices in making outreach to businesses, developing priority hiring partnerships with New Jersey companies, and placing veterans into employment.

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

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

D. Coordination of Business Services with Trade Adjustment Act

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

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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

New Jersey has launched broad initiatives to engage the state's community colleges and area career and technical education schools as partners in the workforce development system and as key stakeholders in the effort to increase the number of adults with an industry-valued degree or credential.

Talent Networks: Innovation has driven New Jersey's growth and prosperity for many years. Maintaining that competitive edge in the 21st Century requires a highly productive workforce that has the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed by employers in the state's key industries. Workforce development and education programs that are directly aligned with the needs of employers will also ensure that more New Jerseyans have pathways to economic opportunity and successful careers.

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) is working closely with employers, state departments, local Workforce Development Boards, educational institutions, and community-based organizations to increase the number of residents with industry-valued credentials or degrees through high-quality partnerships and integrated investments.

At the center of this effort is the expansion of **high-quality, employer-driven partnerships** that meet the following criteria:

- private-sector employers, actively working with their public and nonprofit colleagues, to focus on the specific jobs and skills in demand by the region's leading sectors
- a clear mission and well-defined roles for all partner organizations
- distinct career pathways, defined by a series of degrees, certificates, and other credentials that employers value and look for when hiring
- widespread use of timely industry and workforce data, ensuring that partner employment and training investments target authentic job opportunities—not declining occupations and obsolete skills
- practical, collaborative learning experiences where trainees apply lessons from the classroom in real-world settings through internships, mentorships, or apprenticeships
- clear measures of program effectiveness, so partners can see meaningful outcomes in terms of trainee job placement and credentials earned

At the center of this effort are the state's nine industry-focused Talent Networks. New Jersey's Talent Networks, which are led by higher education institutions and industry associations selected on a competitive basis, operate within the State's talent development system and primarily concentrate on building high-quality, employer-driven partnerships within specific industries in three regions of the state. Talent Networks develop strategies to meet the skills needs of employers and facilitate the creation of career pathways with varying access points. Previously, Talent Networks connected jobseekers, educational institutions, workforce programs, and employers in the key industries. Building on the foundation of information gathered during the initial years, the new focus of Talent Networks centers on:

- **Developing high-quality, employer-driven partnerships:** Talent Networks are working closely with employers, local Workforce Development Boards, community colleges, and area career and technical education schools, and other stakeholders to develop Targeted Industry Partnerships throughout the state. Each Talent Network is engaging employers to identify industry workforce needs and assembling workforce and education stakeholders to assess capacity and facilitate the development of a specific area workforce plan for Targeted Industry Partnerships in three geographic areas of the state. LWD will work with each Talent Network to identify possible funding sources to implement the strongest ideas developed through these partnerships.

Talent Development Centers: New Jersey, using state workforce development funds, has launched seven Talent Development Centers that will serve as "Centers for Excellence" and expand the capacity of the state's community colleges and universities in seven key New Jersey industries: Advanced Manufacturing; Construction & Utilities; Financial Services; Health Care; Life Sciences; Retail, Hospitality & Tourism; and Transportation, Logistics & Distribution industries. The Talent Development Centers are designed to build and implement new career pathways that will meet the workforce needs of employers while allowing individuals to earn industry-valued credentials, college credit, enter an apprenticeship program, and ultimately earn an associate's degree or enter into an articulated agreement towards a baccalaureate degree.

Each Talent Development Center has received $1,200,000 of state funds to provide training to dislocated workers, disadvantaged workers, and incumbent workers and are serving as an "anchor" partner in the Targeted Industry Partnerships. Grants totaling $1,200,000 each were awarded to Camden County College (Advanced Manufacturing); NJ Institute of Technology (NJIT) (Construction & Utilities); Rowan College at Gloucester County (Financial Services); Rutgers University (Health Care); Rutgers University (Life Sciences); Fairleigh Dickinson University (Retail, Hospitality & Tourism); and Rowan College at Burlington County (Transportation, Logistics & Distribution).

Career Connections: New Jersey's community colleges are critical partners in the state's Career Connections initiative. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development, with input from community colleges and other partners, has developed a career navigation framework, consisting of expert insights and actionable guidance, which follows three steps: ***Plan, Prepare,*** and ***Succeed.*** This model simplifies job search and career planning efforts while ensuring that all services are provided in a common manner. The New Jersey Career

Connections Network will consist of nearly 100 locations where individuals can get career navigation assistance. These locations will include all 19 community colleges, 30 One-Stop Career Centers, public libraries throughout the state, and a wide array of community- and faith-based organizations. The New Jersey Career Connections website delivers the service model across the network and directly to users, providing interactive tools, resources, and advice. The website is optimized for mobile use and designed to enable a fluid user experience.

F. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS.

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's other education and training providers, including providers on the state's eligible training provider list, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

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

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

G. LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

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

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

H. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

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

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

<u>Talent Networks:</u>

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

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

ETPL and Industry-Valued Credentials List:

As described elsewhere in this plan, LWD is in the process of developing an Industry-Valued Credential List to guide training investments across federal and state workforce programs. Once developed, the Industry-Valued Credential List will be cross-walked with the ETPL to understand the eligible providers in the state that offer Industry-Valued Credentials. Within the ETPL, training programs that result in a credential found on the Industry-Valued Credentials list will be indicated so users can easily access the information. A draft Industry-Valued Credentials list was released for public comment in March 2016. The Credential Review Board adopted the initial list in October 2016.

Registered Apprenticeship & Pre-Apprenticeship

WIOA has provided an opportunity to expand Registered Apprenticeship programs, increase the number of industry-valued and portable credentials, and provide career pathways. New Jersey welcomes the opportunity to build upon existing Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs and initiatives, and create new opportunities to expand quality Registered Apprenticeships; these will incorporate the appropriate level of classroom theory and work-based/experiential learning that has proven to provide highly skilled workers. The RA model, by design, incorporates both the theory and experiential learning components that business and industry often requests, and simultaneously create career pathways for participants.

New Jersey will continue to work with the Talent Networks to gather intelligence from employers. These dialogues between business, government and educational institutions provide the knowledge about demand occupations; specific skills needed to succeed within an occupation; and credentials and/or certificates in demand by employers, in order to support continued learning and development of career pathways. In addition to the Talent Networks, LWD has invested in Talent Development Centers; these are educational partners who develop high-quality training curricula and programs that industry deems most in need. Opportunities to expand Registered Apprenticeship programs in the nine Talent Networks will be explored, in addition to expanding opportunities for non-traditional careers.

In addition, the SETC continues to staff and support the New Jersey Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education (NJ PLACE) initiative. The NJ PLACE initiative focuses on having college credits awarded to Registered Apprenticeship programs, and other industry-recognized credentials and certificates to authenticate the post-secondary education, learning and knowledge attained through these training experiences. The initiative also guides apprentices through the process of gaining college credits for their apprenticeship

training, and the needed documentation to acquire such credit. This initiative is yet another example of a High Quality Partnership that engages higher education, business and industry, organized labor, national credentialing entities, and government to assist individuals who participate in these types of training programs and services. The SETC will explore avenues to strengthen the existing NJ PLACE initiative, through expansion into new industries and occupations.

In an effort to continue to expand and market Registered Apprenticeship as a post-secondary option for students, the SETC has been facilitating dialogues to expand partnerships between government agencies involving SETC, LWD, United States Department of Labor - Employment and Training Administration (USDOL-ETA) and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJ DOE). This effort focuses on the development of a data sharing agreement between partners that will verify New Jersey high school graduates that engage in post-secondary education through a Registered Apprenticeship program. While the details remain under review, New Jersey is hopeful that a data sharing agreement will be reached to capture the utilization of the Registered Apprenticeship model of post-secondary education and high school graduates.

I. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.

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

New Jersey will use the Talent Networks to further regional coordination, create meaningful employer partnerships, and better understand the current and future talent needs of the state's strategic industries. Talent Networks will engage employers, convene and coordinate state and local economic development agencies, training providers, Workforce Development Boards, and other system stakeholders in order to create a unified approach to workforce and economic development. The Office of Business Services has dedicated a special statewide initiatives coordinator to serve as the liaison with the New Jersey Business Action Center and local economic development agencies. Successful coordination of economic development funds, tax credits, and training grants has facilitated economic development opportunities in several depressed urban areas with high concentrations of unemployed and underemployed workers including Camden, Atlantic City, Jersey City, and Asbury Park.

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

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

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

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

A. State Operating Systems

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

State Operating Systems to Support Coordinated Implementation

Career Connections

AOSOS

OnRamp

Salesforce

New Jersey Career Connections

LWD provides workforce development services to two main customer bases: jobseekers and employers. For each of these customers, LWD offers a diverse array of programs and services that are delivered almost exclusively in-person based on the specific needs of the client. The delivery of these programs and services is influenced most directly by the staff member the client interacts with, as LWD did not historically have a consistent service delivery model around which these products and services are offered.

Working collaboratively with One-Stop Career Center staff, state stakeholders, and community-based and faith-based, non-profit, and library partners, LWD is committed to delivering a consistent approach that seamlessly blends the physical and digital customer experience through a customized mobile solution, defining a broad range of quality services and tools to meet the diverse needs of users to plan, prepare and succeed for life, and facilitating a paradigm shift in how all New Jerseyans engage career guidance, employment search assistance, and labor market information. To that end, LWD launched the New Jersey Career Connections website (CareerConnections.nj.gov), which is the primary tool for Public Labor Exchange and houses the service delivery model. The website offers interactive tools, including OnRamp, the state's job board, and a career navigation module, as well as useful resources, including a directory of training programs, information on hundreds of careers, and advice and guidance on a wide variety of topics such as networking, résumé development, and interview preparation.

Following the same user experience design principles implemented in the CareerConnections.nj.gov website, LWD launched the New Jersey Career Connections Partners website (CareerPartners.nj.gov) to serve as the digital platform where partners of the New Jersey Career Connections network (One-Stop Career Centers, state stakeholders, community-based and faith-based organizations, and nonprofit organizations, and libraries) can connect with agencies and service organizations across the state, utilize the New Jersey Career Connections service delivery model, participate in professional development and information sessions, and access career navigation, job search resources, and marketing materials. LWD's goal is to bring together all of the valuable contributors to the customer

experience, and create one common set of terms, ensuring that clients receive a consistent message regardless of where they go to receive assistance.

In addition, LWD will leverage the Re-employment & System Integration Dislocated Worker Grant (RSI-DWG) awarded by USDOL to enhance the existing Workforce Connect product, which already serves as an entry point for those filing for Unemployment Insurance benefits. These enhancements will enable users of CareerConnections.nj.gov to create their own personal profile page for a customized New Jersey Career Connections experience, offering a truly personalized self-service hub for all dislocated workers and jobseekers.

America's One-Stop Operating System

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

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

OnRamp

In 2011, New Jersey launched OnRamp, the state's job board and a web-based "front door" to AOSOS that allows jobseekers and employers to find each other using a set of state-of-the-art job and talent matching tools. These tools allow jobseekers to create a profile and perform effective job searches by matching their skills to employers' job listings, and employers use the same skills-based matching tools to match their job listings against a database of jobseeker profiles. OnRamp is separate from New Jersey Career Connections and is accessible at the New Jersey Career Connections website (CareerConnections.nj.gov).

Salesforce

New Jersey recognized the need for a more streamlined approach to information sharing and service tracking among the partners that are conducting outreach to and providing services to businesses and jobseekers. LWD and its partners have recently adopted Salesforce as a tool to support the Business Services Unit. Launched in May 2017, the Salesforce application is available to members of the business services team and will be rolled out to include additional user groups over time, to key representatives/liaisons from the following programs: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I; WIOA Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act; Jobs for Veterans State Grants; Trade Adjustment Act (TAA); New Jersey's Workforce Development Partnership Program (WDP);

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

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

B. Data Collection and Reporting

Data Collection and Reporting Processes

AOSOS

LACES (Literacy, Adult and Community Education System)

AWARE Vocational Rehabilitation Case Management System- DVRS/CBVI

FACTS - System 7 Case and Information Management System - CBVI

New Jersey Consumer Report Card

New Jersey Longitudinal Data System

Wage Record Interchange System 2

Salesforce

AMERICA'S ONE-STOP OPERATING SYSTEM

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

LACES

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

enrollment as well as performance, which is evaluated according to NRS indicators through LACES.

AWARE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - DVRS:

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

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

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

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

FACTS - SYSTEM 7 VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - CBVI

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

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

RSA-113: Cumulative Caseload Report

RSA-911: Case Services Report

RSA-2: Cost Report

RSA-15: Vending Facility Programs (Randolph-Sheppard Programs)

RSA-7-OB: Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind Annual Report

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

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

NEW JERSEY CONSUMER REPORT CARD

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

STATE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM

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

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

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

SLDS Update: New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System (NJEEDS)

Beginning in 2012, three state agencies have partnered with the John J. Heldrich Center for Labor and Workforce Development at Rutgers University to build the New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System (NJEEDS), a comprehensive, individual, longitudinal administrative records dataset, including:

- High School student academic performance and completion records provided by the Department of Education (NJ DOE);
- College enrollment, academic performance, and completion records provided by the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (NJ OSHE);
- Unemployment Insurance Wage records of all New Jersey covered employment and earnings, provided by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD).

The initial development of NJEEDS was supported by two competitive federal grants: a U.S. Department of Education State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grant in 2012 and a U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant in 2012 and 2014. To date, NJEEDS includes the high school experiences of the classes of 2011-2015, the New Jersey college experiences of students enrolled since 1994, and the labor market experiences of New Jersey workers since 1998.

Wage Record Interchange System 2

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

* 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.

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

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

- Policy on **Co-enrollment between WIOA Title I and Title III.** As outlined in subsection *(4) Assessment of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners*, below, WIOA Title I and WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser) participants will be co-enrolled in both programs as appropriate, based on the results of the customer assessment. The appropriate staff will utilize a common form, the NJ Intake and Initial Assessment Form, to ensure a consistent intake process statewide.
- Policy on **Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I, Title II and WorkFirst New Jersey** that will support the State's goals including (for some or all programs) measures on:

o Number of program participants served by the program

o Number of program participants exited from the program

o Percentage of program participants served with certain barriers to employment such as disability, ex-offender status, lack of high school diploma, and homeless status.

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

o Local Areas' success in meeting Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification requirements

o Number of High Quality Partnerships established

o Success in regional coordination.

- The development of the nine statewide **Talent Networks** including a number of key statewide activities such as:

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

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

- Policy on **Industry-Valued Credentials** and development of an Industry-Valued Credential List that will guide and support WIOA training that is in-demand, portable, stackable and leads to higher wages, career advancement and increased job security. The Industry-Valued Credential List will be cross-walked with the ETPL so users can easily access the information in making training decisions.
- Policy on the **Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)** with increased expectations for training provider eligibility and performance and an improved Consumer Report Card.
- **Local Workforce Development Board Certification policy** that increases expectations on local boards on performance, governance, regional coordination and other elements of high-functioning WDBs leading strong local WIOA systems. Additional related policies strengthening local systems are being put in place regarding **local WDB Budgeting**, **One-Stop Roles and Responsibilities** and **One-**

Stop Certification, each with renewed expectations for effectiveness, efficiency, collaboration (both across programs and regionally) and high performance.
- **Regional Planning policy** providing expectations for regional Memoranda of Understanding to guide regional collaboration.
- The **Adult Literacy Library Partnership Pilot Program** that will deliver Adult Education and Literacy services sponsored and supported by the LWD Adult Education system at public library locations throughout New Jersey.

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

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

The SETC and LWD worked with the local Workforce Development Boards and One-Stop partners to create a State Funding Mechanism for Infrastructure Costs, SETC Policy Resolution 2017-03. The finalized policy provides guidance for determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure in accordance with sec. 121(h)(1)(B).

WIOA requires that each local board, as part of its MOU with its partners, indicate how partners shall contribute to the infrastructure needs of the one-stop system as part of a local funding mechanism (LFM). Contributions may be made in cash or in appropriately evaluated in-kind contributions. The MOU shall detail in the infrastructure funding agreement (IFA) how infrastructure funding shall be contributed. If a local area cannot reach consensus on a LFM, a state funding mechanism (SFM) shall be utilized. The New Jersey SFM is outlined in SETC Policy Resolution 2017-03. As stated in WIOA, the local WDB has responsibility for the MOU and the LFM.

In consideration of WIOA requirements for the establishment of IFAs for each local Workforce Development Area, the SETC in partnership with LWD developed a model to be used in the event that a local area is unable to develop its own IFA. State-level discussions were held in Summer 2017, and three statewide meetings were convened with local area leaders and staff in Fall 2017. State staff presented the model the State would use in the

event that the local area IFA was not created. LWD Accounting and Audit staff discussed the process in detail and offered technical assistance in IFA design for local areas, including the review of draft IFAs from the local areas. LWD also provided relevant information regarding leases, equipment and technology costs that are associated with infrastructure costs. The SETC adopted SETC Policy Resolution 2017-03 to create the SFM on November 14, 2017; the policy included a process conclusion deadline of January 1, 2018. The policy was disseminated to local areas, with the notification that any local area that intended to use the SFM would need to advise LWD and SETC of their intent by December 1, 2017. SETC Policy 2017-03 is provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

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

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

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

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

- WIOA Title I, Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth
- WIOA Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy (Adult Education and Family Literacy Programs)

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

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

Department of Education (DOE)

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

Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

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

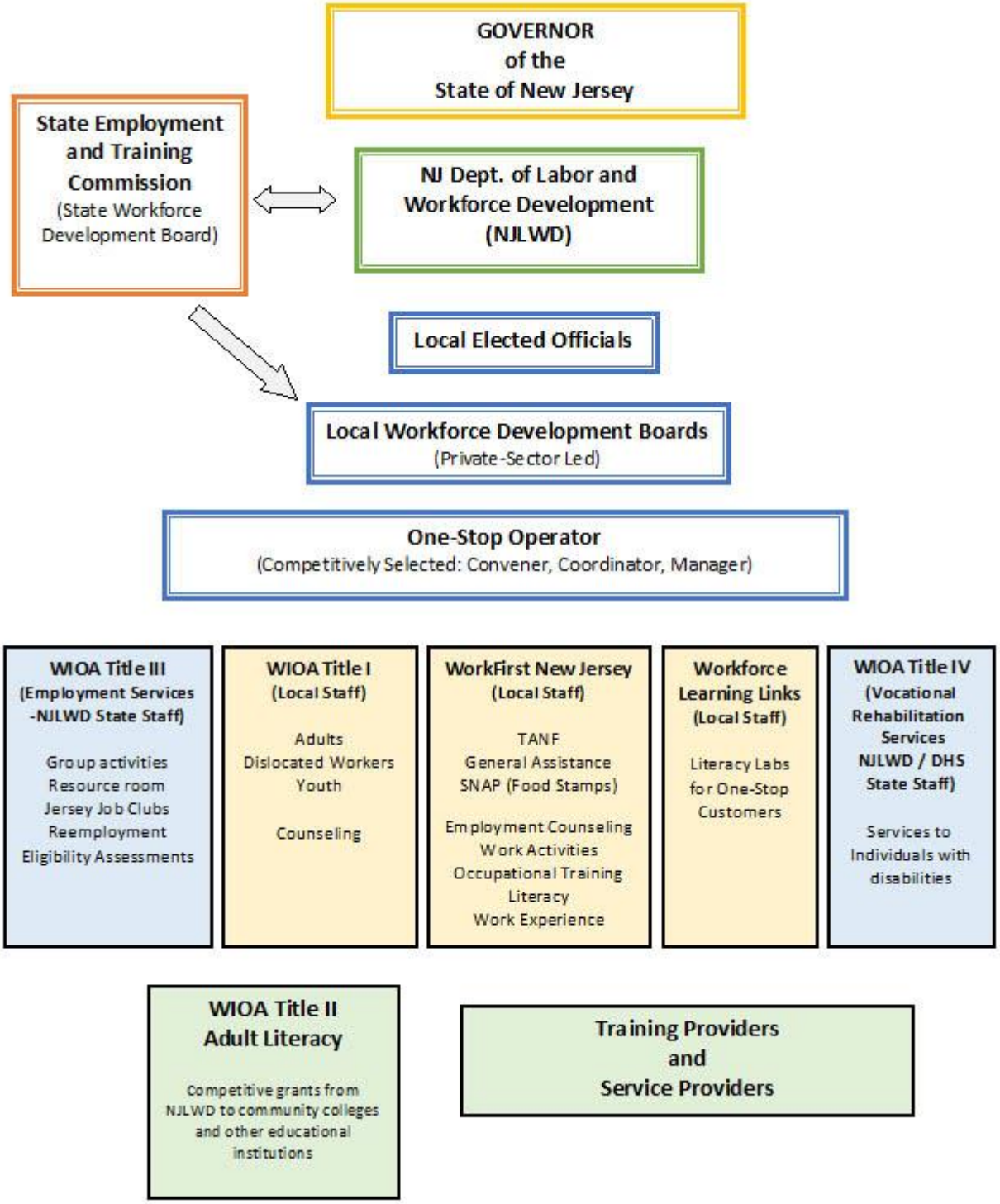

Figure 33

The One-Stop Career Center network and its community partners are New Jersey's front-line for workforce development services and activities. At the local level, there are 18 local Workforce Development Areas overseen by 17 local Workforce Development Boards. These Boards manage a network of 30 One-Stop Career Centers.

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

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

Figure 34

B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

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

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

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

Membership

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

The Governor appoints the Chairman of the SETC and two legislative members. Public members are appointed by the Governor and are confirmed by the Senate. The membership includes representatives from business, organized labor and community-based organizations, state and local education and governmental agencies, and private citizens. Members of the Governor's Cabinet also serve on the SETC: the Commissioners of the Department of Community Affairs, Department of Children and Families, Department of

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

The current Board membership is enshrined in State statute N.J.S.A. 34:15C-6, which created SETC as a Human Resource Investment Council (HRIC) under the Alternative Entity provision of WIA. In keeping with requirements and expectations of WIOA, New Jersey is seeking to amend State statute to move toward a business-driven State Workforce Board in line with WIOA expectations. New Jersey will seek to amend the Statute to require 51 percent business sector membership. It is anticipated that state legislation will be enacted to allow New Jersey to achieve this goal. Specifically, New Jersey expects to present draft legislation transitioning the State Employment and Training Council from an HRIC to a WIOA State Workforce Development Board in the New Jersey Legislature in the current legislative session, 2018-2019. With this guiding legislation in place, New Jersey expects to present the new Board for confirmation, and anticipates the new SETC membership to be in compliance by January 2019.

The New Jersey law that governs the workforce system was passed into legislation in 1989. Included in its requirements are a board that is not consistent with WIOA requirements and other related aspects which require legislative change. To that end, the following reflects the planned actions to facilitate the legislative changes and the target dates for completion:

- Internal Review/Comment on Existing Statute: Conducted in 2016.
- Formal Discussion Process: State legislation was proposed in 2017, but failed to achieve passage by both State legislative bodies.
- Develop Champions/Sponsors: New legislation (S1014) is currently proposed in the New Jersey State Senate. The SETC will work with LWD and the bill sponsors to advance this legislation.
- Legislation: Target is Early Winter 2018.
- Adaptation/Implementation: January 2019.

The existing New Jersey statute that establishes the SETC has more than 40 pages with 20 distinct sections and includes subjects such as Board membership, performance, adult literacy, gender parity and other associated requirements. Potential changes to the legislation were discussed with the Governor's office in 2017. Subsequently, legislation was proposed that changed the board membership to be in compliance with WIOA. That proposed legislation was not passed by both legislative bodies in 2017, however a similar version is currently proposed in the New Jersey State Senate.

I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

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

The current SETC membership roster, as of March 27, 2018, is included in Figure 35 below.

State Employment and Training Commission Membership

Business and Industry	Current Term
Dennis M. Bone, Chairman Director, Feliciano Center for Entrepreneurship at the School of Business, Montclair State University	2014-2017
Michael J. Carey Warren, New Jersey	2014-2017
Nicholas P. Gacos President, Colorado Café Associates	2013-2016
Andrea B. Karsian CEO, Wholesale Auto Supply Company, Inc.	2013-2016
Sally J. Nadler, SPHR Piscataway, NJ	2014-2017
Melanie L. Willoughby Lawrenceville, NJ	2015-2018
Robert P. Wise, FACHE President & CEO, Hunterdon Healthcare System	2015-2018
Organized Labor/Community-Based Organization	**Current Term**
Dana W. Berry Executive Director, Starting Points for Children	2013-2016
John B. Franklin CEO, United Way of Northern New Jersey	2013-2016
Stephen C. Hornik, Sr. President Emeritus, Monmouth-Ocean AFL-CIO	2015-2018
Catherine D. Milone President, Junior Achievement of New Jersey	2015-2018
Clifford R. Reisser Training Director, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 269	2014-2017
Carolyn Carter Wade President, Communication Workers of America, Local 1040	2013-2016
Charles Wowkanech President, NJ State AFL-CIO	2014-2017
Government Representatives	**Current Term**
Robert Asaro-Angelo Commissioner, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development	Ex-Officio
Allison M. Blake, Ph.D., LSW Flemington, NJ	2014-2017
Kevin M. Brown Executive Director, Juvenile Justice Commission	2014-2017
John G. Donnadio, Esq. Executive Director, NJ Association of Counties	2013-2016
Zakiya Smith Ellis Acting NJ Secretary of Higher Education	Ex-Officio
Anthony Ferrera Township Administrator, Hillsborough Township	2013-2016

Business and Industry	Current Term
Carole Johnson Acting Commissioner, NJ Department of Human Services	Ex-Officio
Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver Commissioner, NJ Department of Community Affairs	Ex-Officio
Dr. Lamont Repollet Acting Commissioner, NJ Department of Education	Ex-Officio
Senator Ronald L. Rice New Jersey State Senate	2016-2018
Tim Sullivan CEO, NJ Economic Development Authority	Ex-Officio
Assemblyman Benjie E. Wimberly New Jersey State Assembly	2016-2018
Public Representatives	**Current Term**
Teri Duda Senior Vice President, Government Affairs, Berkeley College	2014-2017
Tapas K. Sen, Ph.D. President, Transformation Strategies International, Inc.	2013-2016

Figure 35

II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

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

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

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

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

Under New Jersey law, the SETC performs the duties required of the State Workforce Development Board. As described in *N.J.S.A. 34:15C-5,* "the purpose of the commission shall be to develop and assist in the implementation of a State workforce investment policy with the goal of creating a coherent, integrated system of workforce investment programs and services which, in concert with the efforts of the private sector, will provide each citizen of

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

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

1) Issue the New Jersey Workforce Investment Plan pursuant to the provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2801* et seq.) and section 10 of P.L.1989, c.293 (*C.34:15C-7*); [This duty is in keeping with WIOA Section 101(d)(1), "the development, implementation and modification of the State Plan."]

2) Establish performance standards for workforce investment programs pursuant to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2801* et seq.) and section 11 of P.L.1989, c.293 (*C.34:15C-8*); [This duty is in keeping with WIOA Section 101(d)(4), "(4) the development and updating of comprehensive State performance accountability measures, including State adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the State as required under section 116(b)."]

3) Act to ensure the full participation of Workforce Investment Boards [and now Workforce Development Boards] in the planning and supervision of local workforce investment systems. The commission shall be responsible to oversee and develop appropriate standards to ensure Workforce Investment Board compliance with state and federal law, the State Plan, and other relevant requirements regarding membership, staffing, meetings, and functions;

4) Foster and coordinate initiatives of the Department of Education and Higher Education to enhance the contributions of public schools and institutions of higher education to the implementation of the state workforce investment policy;

5) Examine federal and state laws and regulations to assess whether those laws and regulations present barriers to achieving any of the goals of this act. The commission shall, from time to time as it deems appropriate, issue to the Governor and the Legislature reports on its findings, including recommendations for changes in state or federal laws or regulations concerning workforce investment programs or services, including, when appropriate, recommendations to merge other State advisory structures and functions into the commission;

6) Perform the duties assigned to a State Workforce Investment Board pursuant to subsection (d) of section 111 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub.L.105-220 *(29 U.S.C. § 2821) [and now Section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Public Law 113-128]*;

7) Have the authority to enter into agreements with the head of each state department or commission which administers or funds education, employment or training programs,

including, but not limited to, the Departments of Labor and Workforce Development, Community Affairs, Education, and Human Services and Higher Education, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, and the Juvenile Justice Commission, which agreements are for the purpose of assigning planning, policy guidance and oversight functions to each Workforce Investment Board with respect to any workforce investment program funded or administered by the state department or commission within the Workforce Investment Board's respective labor market area or local area, as the case may be; and

8) Establish guidelines to be used by the Workforce Investment Boards in performing the planning, policy guidance, and oversight functions assigned to the boards under any agreement reached by the commission with a department or commission pursuant to subsection g. of this section. The commission shall approve all local Workforce Investment Board plans that meet the criteria established by the commission for the establishment of One-Stop systems. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development shall approve the operational portion of the plans for programs administered by the department.

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

4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNERS

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

Assessment of Core Programs and One-Stop Partner Programs

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

A. Primary Indicators of Performance

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

1. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program

2. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program

3. The median earning of programs participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program

4. The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized industry credential or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program

5. The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and

6. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

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

B. Primary Indicators For Eligible Youth

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

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

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

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

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

Explanation: Performance Measures for the WorkFirst New Jersey Program

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

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

187. Number of program participants served by the program
188. Number of program participants exited from the program

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

Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I ONLY

191. Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification

The State will evaluate the WDB's local area achievement based on its ability to meet all WDB certification requirements.

- Number of High Quality Partnerships established:

High Quality Partnerships are those workforce and education efforts that are employer-driven and have developed a clearly defined mission and vision statement, with defined roles, responsibilities and impact measures for all partners. These partnerships will drive programs and investments with current industry and workforce data, and will focus on collaborative curriculum development based on industry need. All programs will integrate the use of career pathways, and provide both interim process measures as well as outcome measures, which will be particularly focused on industry-valued credentials, employability skills, and experiential learning. It is additionally expected that programs will develop plans for sustainability beyond the life of any one funding stream. High Quality Partnerships are characterized by some or all of these factors:

a. **Employer Driven Partnerships:**Partnerships shall include private sector employers, and may include but are not limited to: educational institutions; nonprofit organizations or industry associations; and local or state government agencies.
b. **Clear Roles and Responsibilities:**The program shall have clearly delineated roles and responsibilities for all partner participants, including a clear coordinator, convener, or backbone organization. Participants should have a shared vision and mission around a challenge area, and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions, such as may be found in a strategic plan.
c. **Employer Valued Degree or Credential:**The education and/or training provided by the program leads to skills, degrees, or credentials that create advanced opportunities for students or jobseekers in high-demand fields or identifiable career

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

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

3. Regional Coordination

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

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

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

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.

See Section A response above.

C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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

New Jersey met or exceeded all WIA Program Year 2014 and 2015 common measures performance standards negotiated with the U.S. Department of Labor. Since the inception of the Workforce Investment Act, New Jersey has consistently demonstrated its commitment to provide outstanding workforce services to the individuals and employers of the State.

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

The State used the three adult and dislocated worker common performance measures to negotiate goals and report outcomes for the WIA adult and dislocated worker programs. The State used the three youth common performance measures to negotiate goals and report outcomes for the WIA youth program. The following tables display the State's common measures goals and the actual outcomes for Program Years 2014 and 2015.

During Program Year 2015, New Jersey continued to utilize the Common Measures Performance Reporting waiver, as provided under WIA. Other waivers available under WIA ended in Program Year 2014. New Jersey did not request any waivers under WIOA, which commenced in Program Year 2015.

Program Year 2014

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Adult Program				
Entered Employment	85.10%	83.60%	98.20%	Met
Retention	86.40%	84.30%	97.60%	Met
6 Month Avg. Earnings	$13,039	$14,281	109.50%	Exceeded
Dislocated Worker Program				
Entered Employment	83.30%	84.30%	101.20%	Exceeded
Retention	87.50%	87.40%	99.90%	Met
6 Month Avg. Earnings	$18,500	$18,983	102.60%	Exceeded
Youth Program				
Youth Placement	68.50%	65.90%	96.20%	Met
Youth Degree Attainment	75.00%	68.90%	91.90%	Met
Literacy & Numeracy	60.00%	61.20%	102.00%	Exceeded

FIGURE 36

Program Year 2015

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Adult Program				
Entered Employment	85.10%	78.20%	91.90%	Met
Retention	86.40%	85.70%	99.20%	Met
6 Month Avg. Earnings	$13,039	$14,058	107.80%	Exceeded
Dislocated Worker Program				
Entered Employment	83.30%	81.60%	98.00%	Met
Retention	87.50%	86.20%	98.50%	Met
6 Month Avg. Earnings	$18,500	$18,971	102.50%	Exceeded
Youth Program				
Youth Placement	68.50%	61.20%	89.30%	Met

Common Measures	Goal	Actual	Percent of Goal Achieved	Measure Results
Youth Degree Attainment	75.00%	62.00%	82.70%	Met
Literacy & Numeracy	60.00%	53.40%	89.00%	Met

FIGURE 37

The State will use the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) primary indicators performance measures to negotiate goals and report outcomes for the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, beginning with Program Year 2016.

D. EVALUATION

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

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

In 2016, the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, contracted through the SETC, provided an Evaluation of One-Stop Career Centers in New Jersey. A report of the evaluation findings was presented to the SETC on June 21, 2016. The findings and the LWD response to the evaluation were discussed at subsequent SETC meetings held in September and November 2016. The report and LWD response are available on the SETC website at njsetc.net/njsetc/performance.

Also, during PY 2016, Title I customers who visited New Jersey's One-Stop offices were surveyed regarding the services provided by the One-Stop Career Centers. Participants were surveyed on their satisfaction with the services provided, the availability of desired services, and their opinions on various aspects of the One-Stop Career Center that they visited. In Program Year 2017, customer satisfaction surveys will be distributed on a quarterly basis to program exiters.

In 2017, the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) implemented a dashboard to display high-level performance data in order to support evidence-based policy decisions. The dashboard will enable Commission members to better understand the scope of state programs and their related populations. The dashboard will help the Commission explore data trends, highlight potential program issues, and coordinate with other state agencies to advance the workforce needs of New Jersey. The dashboard is publicly available on the SETC website at njsetc.net/njsetc/performance.

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),

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

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

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

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

State Workforce Development Program (WDP) funds and partnerships with the Talent Networks will be leveraged to train jobseekers in a manner that ensures readily available employment opportunities by greater use of On-the-Job Training (OJT) instead of traditional Individual Training Accounts (ITA). OJT requires employers' selection and employment of those jobseekers approved for such training, thus providing employers a workforce with

the exact skills and training desired. Both jobseekers and employers positively participate in New Jersey's talent development system exchange through the use of OJT. This is a more effective strategy to align ITA with economic or labor market needs.

The State will also engage in employer-focused training developed in partnership with the Talent Networks to address specific industry demand. Through broader partnerships with community colleges and other accredited training providers, these customized training programs are steadily becoming feeder programs to skilled trades' employment in New Jersey. Closer ties with the New Jersey Business & Industry Association recently led to the development of a training program for fabricated metal manufacturing employers. Unlike the traditional ITA-based training where participants enter a labor demand occupational training program in the hopes of finding a job upon completion, the model used with the fabricated metal manufacturing training brought together employers, education, and the State's talent development system in an innovative program that offers a promise of employment to participants who successfully complete the training program.

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

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

(A) FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS, PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE WRITTEN POLICIES THAT ESTABLISH THE STATE'S METHODS AND FACTORS USED TO DISTRIBUTE FUNDS TO LOCAL AREAS FOR—

(I) YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 128(B)(2) OR (B)(3),

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

- **33.3%** based on the relative number of **Disadvantaged Youth** in each local area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state;
- **33.3%** based on relative number of unemployed individuals in **Areas of Substantial Unemployment** in each local area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- **33.3%** based on the relative number of **Disadvantaged Adults** in each local area as compared to the total number of adults in the state;
- **33.3%** based on the relative **Excess Number of Unemployed Individuals** in the local area as compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state;
- **33.3%** based on the relative number of unemployed individuals in **Areas of Substantial Unemployment** in the local area as compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.

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

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

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

WIOA New Jersey Weights, Indicators; and Explanations:

- 25% based on declining industries, based on the total projected employment change in declining industries;
- 25% based on insured unemployment data, based on the number of unemployment insurance claimants;
- 25% based on long-term unemployment, based on the number of claimants who have exhausted unemployment insurance;
- 25% based on unemployment concentration, the number of unemployed individuals, in a local area;
- 0% based on plant closing and mass layoff data; an accurate source of data is not available at the state or local level.
- 0% based on farmer-rancher economic hardship data; an accurate source of data is not available at the state or local level.

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

B. FOR TITLE II:

I. 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.

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) is the eligible agency that will provide 3 to 5 year grant opportunities in Adult Literacy Education on a competitive basis to all eligible entities in the state of New Jersey through our Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) process. The NGO process is the public notice of available funds for the purposes of proposal submittals (RFP). All NGO announcements follow prescribed New Jersey statute publication requirements. Beginning January 2017, a new multi-year NGO announcement was published allowing for an open competitive process to all eligible applicants providing adult literacy services. The NGO was published on the LWD website public notice section, the NJ State Register, and emailed to local area workforce development boards and One-Stop partners. All LWD Workforce Staff were notified as well. Finally, an email blast to all parties listed on the Constant Contact list also publicized the NGO. These practices are used each time an NGO is published for these purposes.

This open competitive process ensures that no break in service occurs between current contracts and future service delivery. The funds are allocated on state fiscal year which is July 1 through June 30. At this time, the final length of contract term will be a three-year grant award covering Fiscal Years (FY) 18, 19, and 20. Future contract awards will follow the current process of funding, and will be allocated by formula to local geographic sub-divisions, which are county-based and based on population, drop-out rate, and other

weighted need factors. Applicants will be required to apply in accordance with all NGO instructions including alignment to local WDB literacy plans.

All WIOA eligible entities are open to apply for the State's Eligible Training Provider List. The Notice of Grant Opportunity requires that eligible entities must be registered on the State's Eligible Training Providers List, and must be licensed to provide education and training services in the State of New Jersey. The agency must be a direct provider of adult education services and demonstrate this in the grant application narrative.

In addition, to demonstrate effectiveness, eligible providers will include in their proposal at least three years of credible performance data and all data provided must be verifiable by LWD Title II staff. Data should speak to a deeper analysis which captures program trends, strengths and weaknesses. New potential grantees must speak to demonstrated program success in serving the literacy needs of adults and include a self- reflection of the supports your organization will provide to enable participants' successful completion of the program and to ensure overall program quality. Furthermore, demonstrated effectiveness will be determined by comparing grant applicant performance outcomes against annual performance benchmarks negotiated with USDOE/OCTAE for Title II funding. This will ensure all providers of adult literacy services are held to the same standard regardless of whether they are funded or not.

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.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) will ensure direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds, and it will ensure that it is using the same grant announcement and application procedure for all eligible providers through the following:

LWD will issue public notice through these venues:

- Publication of the NGO on the NJ LWD website under Public Notices;
- Emailing a copy of the NGO to all existing adult education and family literacy services;
- Publication of the NGO on the NJ State Register;
- Emailing a copy of the NGO to all LWD Workforce Development staff;
- Emailing a copy to local Workforce Development Boards, One-Stop agencies and those listed on Constant Contact; and,
- Sending a copy of the NGO to all who request it;

All applicants eligible under Sections 225, 231, and 243 of WIOA submit applications directly to LWD, the eligible agency. They are not required to apply through another agency or agencies in a multi-tiered process. LWD requires all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243 to use the same application process. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. LWD ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts through a common

procedure and internal staff review. It also ensures that the same grant or contract announcement, application, and proposal process is used for all eligible providers through the grant management system.

Pre-application Technical Assistance: LWD holds a mandatory technical assistance workshop for the purpose of reviewing the requirements of the NGO and all application specifics. All interested parties must send representation to the technical assistance workshop to be considered for the grant. Additionally, all grant related questions and answers generated from the technical assistance workshop are shared with those in attendance to maintain and uphold the competitive nature of the grant award. Applicants are subject to LWD internal reviews and an impartial panel review. Applicants are notified of the status of their application and any requested revisions within 20 business days of the conclusion of the panel review.

General Proposal Requirements: All proposals must be submitted by the deadline presented in the NGO. Each applicant organization shall submit an application to NJ LWD according to the instructions contained in the NGO. Any application not including all the information and assurances required will be deemed incomplete and rejected. NJ LWD will forward all responsive applications to the local workforce board in the region from which they applied for review and ask for comment on their alignment with the regional WIOA plan. The local workforce board will complete a form attesting to the information provided by the applicant agency and share directly with the NJ State Director for Adult Education. All applicants must demonstrate the capacity to equitably deliver services within the local areas that are county-based, while coordinating programs and services with their local One-Stop Career Centers. Coordination between the local area Title II providers and One-Stop Career Centers must be based on the community's collective needs. The WDB boards need to work in partnership with the Title II awardees to develop clearly articulated local literacy plans that are in alignment with the regional and state plan. The literacy plans for both regional and local workforce areas must define the unique needs of all levels of literacy learners as defined in Title II regulations. The plans must articulate the process in which, WDBs, local One-Stop Career Centers, Title II providers and the various local area literacy stakeholders should collaborate, the methods for improving accessibility of Title II programs and services and strategies for strengthening curriculum content and professional development activities for the state.

C. TITLE IV VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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

As outlined in Section III, New Jersey utilizes an option to deliver Vocational Rehabilitation services through two distinct programs. The majority of services are delivered through Vocational Rehabilitation staff at the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, for any individuals with disabilities. A portion of funds is segmented and delivered to the separate Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired within the New Jersey Department of Human Services with a focus on serving individuals who are blind, vision—

impaired or deaf—blind. These services and how they will coordinate with the wider WIOA services will be discussed in the following two subsections. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) work under a Memorandum of Understanding at the beginning of the WIA system in 2000, outlining:

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

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

1. Population: The distribution takes into account the proportion of persons with disabilities who are expected to be served by each agency, based on prior history. This factor has been quite stable since the MOU was first signed in 2000.

2. Level of services. In general, it is understood that delivering high—quality vocational rehabilitation services to blind, vision—impaired, and deaf—blind consumers is more expensive on average than it is to deliver similar services to persons with other disabilities, because of the extra training required to enable these consumers to function successfully and independently with limited or no vision. Specifically:

θ. CBVI administers a year—round, residential program to provide blind, vision—impaired, and deaf—blind consumers with training in pre—employment blindness skills, e.g. Orientation and Mobility; Braille or other low—vision communication strategies; assistive technology instruction; skills of independent living (techniques for independently managing in the home, including cooking, dressing, cleaning, money management, etc.); and classes on Adjusting to Blindness or Vision Loss.
ρ. Similarly, these same services are offered to some consumers in their homes, where they are unable or unwilling to invest an extended period, on average approximately twenty weeks, in New Jersey's intensive residential program.
σ. Additionally, some consumers are sent out—of—state for blindness—specific, pre—employment training, where CBVI does not offer the particular instruction needed for a given consumer's employment objective.
τ. Due to the nature of the disability, a disproportionate number of blind, vision—impaired, and deaf—blind consumers require substantial amounts of post—secondary education in order to qualify for the types of jobs where blind, vision—impaired, and deaf—blind consumers have traditionally been most successful and accepted within the labor market.
υ. The cost of assistive technology that enables blind, vision—impaired, and deaf—blind consumers to function effectively remains disproportionately high, as compared to unmodified technology used by non—disabled or non—blind consumers of vocational rehabilitation.

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

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

I. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO MAKE THE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS INTEROPERABLE TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFICIENT EXCHANGE OF COMMON DATA ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION.

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

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

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

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

offer clients a more seamless experience, would increase the flow of communication among programs, and would help to eliminate duplication of services.

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

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.

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

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

III. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL ASSIST THE GOVERNOR IN ALIGNING TECHNOLOGY AND DATA SYSTEMS ACROSS REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS (INCLUDING DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON INTAKE, DATA COLLECTION, ETC.) AND HOW SUCH ALIGNMENT WILL IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY TO INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS.

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

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

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

• Quarterly reports documenting primary indicators of performance against goals for each WDB area (similar to the ETA 9090 report used by LWD for federal reporting)

• Quarterly or monthly reports (depending on the specific measure) documenting performance outcomes for the New Jersey Balanced Scorecard and additional performance measures for each WDB area.

• Quarterly basic rosters of WIOA participants

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.

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

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

ADULT MEASURES:

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

DISLOCATED WORKER MEASURES:

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

YOUTH MEASURES:

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

EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS:

- Employer Penetration Rate
- Repeat Business Customer Rate

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

C. USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) WAGE RECORD DATA

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

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

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

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

LWD has issued guidance to the local Workforce Development Areas regarding privacy. This guidance provided the local areas with the federal requirements pertaining to the handling of personally identifiable information for both hard and electronic records. The guidance also required all local areas to develop documented policies that ensure compliance with the federal requirements. As part of its regular monitoring, the Program Compliance Unit will verify that these polices have been developed and are being implemented. Additionally, the WDB Coordination and Support Team will incorporate privacy safeguards into the professional development that will be provided to all one-stop staff. Training and monitoring will be updated to reflect the most current statutes and interpretations to ensure that all staff are regularly made aware of, and comply with, the provisions of the law. Requirements related to the General Education Provisions Act are covered by Department

of Education funded programs as indicated in the definition of applicable program in 20 U.S.C.S. 1221.

The DVRS Case Service Policy Manual, listed under A-7, provides guidance regarding confidentiality and the release of information. The guidance reflects 361.38 in Title IV. Training is provided to every counselor to ensure understanding of confidentiality and ethical standards and practices, especially related to new challenges in use of social media, new partnerships, and data sharing.

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

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS

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

Local Workforce Development Areas will, with assistance from the LWD WDB Coordination and Support Team, develop memoranda of understanding with relevant partners that can assist veterans with significant barriers to employment. This includes the state and federal partners, such as New Jersey Veterans Reintegration Initiative, Housing and Urban Development, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, adult literacy, TANF, and ex-offender programs. A common initial intake process which helps intake staff identify individuals with barriers to employments will be implemented, and the staff will be cross-trained in partner programs to ensure referrals are appropriate. The LWD Office of Internal Audit (OIA) will, as part of its regular monitoring of one-stop operations, review veterans records to determine whether appropriate referrals are being made. The OIA program monitoring unit will then review services provided to veterans in other Department of Labor-funded programs and other partner agencies such as TANF. OIA monitoring reports will cite when veterans who have been identified as having significant barriers to employment are not being referred to appropriate agencies, and the LWD WDB Coordination and Support Team will provide technical assistance to the One-Stop Career Centers that have been cited.

Priority of service provisions for veterans is embedded in the eligibility guidance provided to local Workforce Development Areas. In addition, local Boards will also be required to

develop their own priority of service policy that meets the requirements codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C.

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

Through the Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Employment Veterans Representatives (LVER) help veterans with significant barriers to employment successfully navigate the job market and receive the support they need to return to the workforce. When a veteran comes into the One-Stop Career Center, he or she is triaged at intake to determine if he/she has a significant barrier to employment. One-Stop Career Centers utilize a standard form to determine if barriers exist and if a veteran should be referred to a DVOP for mentorship.

8. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

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

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

The SETC has a relationship with the two State Rehabilitation Councils, outlined in prior sections, dedicated to the cause of increasing the number of individuals with disabilities in the workforce. Through the recommendations of the Councils, policies and practices are examined to ensure that One-Stop services are fully accessible to all. Members from both Councils assisted in the creation of an Accessibility Checklist. The Accessibility Checklist will be used to analyze the competency of a One-Stop Career Center in the areas of: staff training and knowledge; employer engagement; customer focus; quality of programs; and technology. The Accessibility Checklist is used as a foundational element of the One-Stop Career Center Certification process established by the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) in its Policy Resolution 2016-14 on September 20, 2016. Specifically the One-Stop Certification policy maintains objective criteria and processes through which local boards will certify their One-Stops. New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center Certification

by local WDBs includes as a pre-requisite that the WDB verifies the accessibility of its physical locations. This is not limited to physical accommodations; accessibility considers staff knowledge, technology, signage, marketing materials and access to programs and services, through the use of the One-Stop Accessibility Checklist. SETC Policy 2016-14 is provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

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

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

Other specific strategies include the following:

Participation by DVRS leadership and staff in all of the LWD efforts to coordinate services to all customers.

Participation by DVRS leadership and staff with LWD Office of Research and Information committees that identify seven key industry sectors, in order to ensure consideration of employment for people with disabilities in the Talent Network and other sector planning activities.

Availability of CBVI's first point of contact team to support efforts at the One-Stops. Due to their itinerant nature, CBVI is not on-site at all One-Stop Career Centers, but is able to bridge with them to offer services and provide expertise and technical assistance where needed in serving persons with disabilities.

LWD has a workgroup that includes representatives from the core partners (DVRS, Labor Exchange, WIOA and Adult Education) as well as TANF and CBVI. This workgroup will develop a common intake policy for all the programs. As part of the implementation of this policy, One-Stop staff will be cross-trained in each program so that all customers, including individuals with disabilities, are provided efficient intake and appropriate referral.

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

9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS.

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials.

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

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

Reentry Employment Opportunities Program

When Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO), also known as Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (authorized by Section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532)), is included in the Combined State Plan, the State and REO grantee(s) will describe efforts to coordinate services for justice-involved individuals with other employment and training activities as part of a larger employment strategy. As part of the Combined State Plan, the State should:

(a) describe how the State and the REO grantee(s) will coordinate services and activities for justice involved individuals to successfully attain employment and transition into their communities with Statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems; and may

Ensuring continuity of services for offenders transitioning from prison back to their communities is an important goal for New Jersey. WIOA Title II and State Literacy funds (Workforce Learning Link) are provided to the correctional system so that work-readiness services can be implemented prior to release to help promote a seamless transition to community-based One-Stop Career Center services and then into employment.

Wagner-Peyser provides accessibility for all populations to the full range of One-Stop Career Center employment and training programs. Programs designed to serve the needs of special populations with or without significant barriers to employment are integrated into the universal access provided by Wagner-Peyser and WIOA. Members of special populations, however, identified as having significant barriers to employment often require more intensive services to reach the employment goal. Significant barriers include poor previous attachment to the workforce, literacy or language barriers, ex-offender status, educational or occupational skills gap or lack of a credential, physical or mental disability, and driver's license suspension.

To help special populations with significant barriers to employment, New Jersey has created targeted programs and dedicated staff to help ensure positive outcomes. The challenge is to meet customers where they are by creating a proactive approach to promote and serve

special populations. Once special populations enter the One-Stop Career Center system, ensuring that customers receive the services needed to reach their goal becomes a staff responsibility. All One-Stop Career Center staff members need to take ownership for the customer experience by providing warm handoffs when referrals to other service providers are appropriate. That involves taking the extra time to walk customers to where they need to go, introducing them to staff that can help them, and then circling back with customers to make sure their needs were met. Staff need to follow-up with customers to ensure all jobseekers remain engaged and focused on overcoming barriers to enable them to successfully (re)enter the workforce. Maintaining a stronger, more supportive connection to customers will result in better outcomes and improve the perceived value of the One-Stop Career Centers.

The Department is a participant in a monthly workgroup, the Vocational Training Planning Board, which is addressing employment and training services for inmates in the State Penal system. Representatives include:

- NJ Department of Corrections
- NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD)
- NJ Department of Education
- NJ State Building and Construction Trades Council
- NJ Business & Industry Association
- NJ Council of County Vocational-Technical Schools
- Three public members

The goal of the Planning Board is to establish a pilot program within one the Department of Corrections facilities in vocational trades. A report is to be filed annually with the Governor and the Legislature. The objectives of the planning board are to improve upon the facility's most successful vocational programming offerings; introduce new vocational programming offerings to inmates of the facility; and provide vocational programming which is consistent with actual post-release employment opportunities and reflects the State's emerging industry and business workforce needs.

It should also be noted that LWD, by State Statute, is required to evaluate the relevance of vocational training services in the Department of Corrections to insure that training services are in job demand occupations. The evaluation of vocational training services is to be accomplished on a semi-annual basis.

The LWD Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program ensures that not more than 10 percent of 82.5 percent of the funding for the cost of educational programs is allocated for programs for criminal offenders in the correctional facilities as well as for other institutional individuals. Emphasis is on programs that promote:

- Adult Basic Education
- Programs for individuals with disabilities as well as other special needs
- English literacy programs
- Secondary school credit programs
- Transitional support to prepare students to make a successful transition to the community

- Life skills and employability skill development to prepare students to gain employment.

LWD will use the same grant announcement and application process to provide funds to serve individuals in correctional facilities and other institutions that is being used for all other eligible providers.

Providers that receive funds to provide programs and services to correctional facilities and other institutions will be required to describe in their grant application, in addition to all other program requirements, how they will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

LWD has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Jersey State Parole Board to provide employment assistance and case management services to men and women under supervision of the State Parole Board. The State Parole Board has provided financial resources (the current allocation is $2.0 million for the period of July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018) to LWD for the past five program years to fund the Parolee Employment Placement Program (PEPP).

LWD has vended direct services to PEPP program enrollees to two community based agencies, utilizing performance based contacts. Grantee deliverables and fee-for-service schedule is:

- Assessment/Job Coaching/Case Management - $600 per participant
- Job Placement with 30-day employment retention - $900 per participant
- 60-day retention - $700 per participant
- 90-day retention - $700 per participant
- 150-day retention - $1,100 per participant
- Maximum payment for participant who completes all deliverables is $4,000

Agency Roles:

Regional Parole Offices

- Identification of eligible parolees and referral to designated grantees
- Monitor the progress and attendance of all program participants

Grantees

- Coordinate case management services for parolees enrolled in the program
- Placement of the program participants into sustainable employment
- Case management of all program participants
- Referral of program participants to the One-Stop Career Center for employment registration
- Employment verification for all program participants who secure employment
- One-Stop Career Centers
- Registration of all PEPP trainees in AOSOS
- Assignment of PEPP, Parole and Wagner-Peyser identifiers in AOSOS Programs and Public Assistance drop-down screen

- Delivery of appropriate labor exchange and employability development services per needs of registrant
- Federal Bonding and WOTC certification, when appropriate
- Linkage with special population' service staff (Veterans Services, WorkFirst New jersey, Vocational Rehabilitation, etc.)

As noted previously, the SETC also works with the Department of Corrections and the Juvenile Justice Commission to align educational and training opportunities for incarcerated individuals.

(b) provide examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by Faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs), State reentry councils, and justice organizations in coordination with education and training providers, one-stop centers and other supportive services, which improve employment outcomes for justice-involved individuals.

In October 2010, LWD secured grant funding from USDOL for a youth-centered Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). DVRS was identified as the lead division to increase the capacity of pilot Workforce Development Board areas to serve youth with disabilities (ages 16 - 26), in particular youth offender populations and returning veteran youth. This funding also includes ability to promote universal design in One-Stop Career Centers throughout the entire state.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

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

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

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

• ***Workgroups***: Workgroups addressing six key opportunities for transformational change were created in December 2014 to inform the development of the Blueprint. Workgroups, consisting of approximately 10 - 15 members representing LWD, SETC, local WDBs, One-Stop Operators and other key stakeholders, were charged with reviewing the provisions of WIOA, identifying opportunities for policy and operations recommendations, obtaining feedback from stakeholders and coordinating their work with that of the associated SETC Committee. Workgroups focused on the following topics, and reported upward to the respective SETC Committees:

o Governance and Planning - coordinating with the Governance Committee

o Performance Accountability - coordinating with the Performance Committee

o Career Pathways and Industry Partnerships - coordinating with the State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES) and the Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education (GPC)

o One-Stop Operations - coordinating with the full SETC

o Services to Youth - coordinating with the Shared Youth Vision Council

o Services to Individuals with Disabilities - coordinating with the State Rehabilitation Councils

- ***NJ WIOA Website***: The website http://www.nj.gov/labor/wioa/ was launched in January 2015 to provide a place where stakeholders could receive up-to-date national and New Jersey-specific WIOA information. Individuals were encouraged to submit comments on WIOA implementation to a WIOA Blueprint e-mail address: WIOABlueprint@dol.nj.gov.
- ***Workgroup Webinars:*** Each Workgroup hosted informational, interactive webinars to provide an overview of WIOA provisions and to provide an additional opportunity for feedback to be received about the various opportunities and challenges stakeholders felt WIOA presented.

- ***Pathways and Partnerships Two-Day Conference:*** In Spring 2015, SETC and LWD jointly hosted the "Pathways and Partnerships: Building New Jersey's Blueprint for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity" Conference. The conference included more than 300 stakeholders from across the state representing all the key stakeholders and partners in workforce development. Breakout sessions were held on each Workgroup topic, offering opportunities for smaller group discussion and participation. The conference featured:

o Overview presentations from national experts about WIOA and critical trends in workforce development.

o Extensive breakout sessions were held on each of the six Workgroup topics, offering the participants an opportunity for smaller group discussions and comments on key questions and issues relating to WIOA implementation.

o Panel of national experts from the National Governors Association, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, the National Skills Coalition and the Council of Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation.

o Panel of promising employer-driven partnerships in New Jersey.

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

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

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

For the Combined State Plan modification, a public comment period was held in March 2018. The draft Plan was posted on the SETC website for a public comment period from March 14 to March 22, 2018; the comments received are summarized in Appendix 2 of this Plan.

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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.

New Jersey Workforce Regions:

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

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

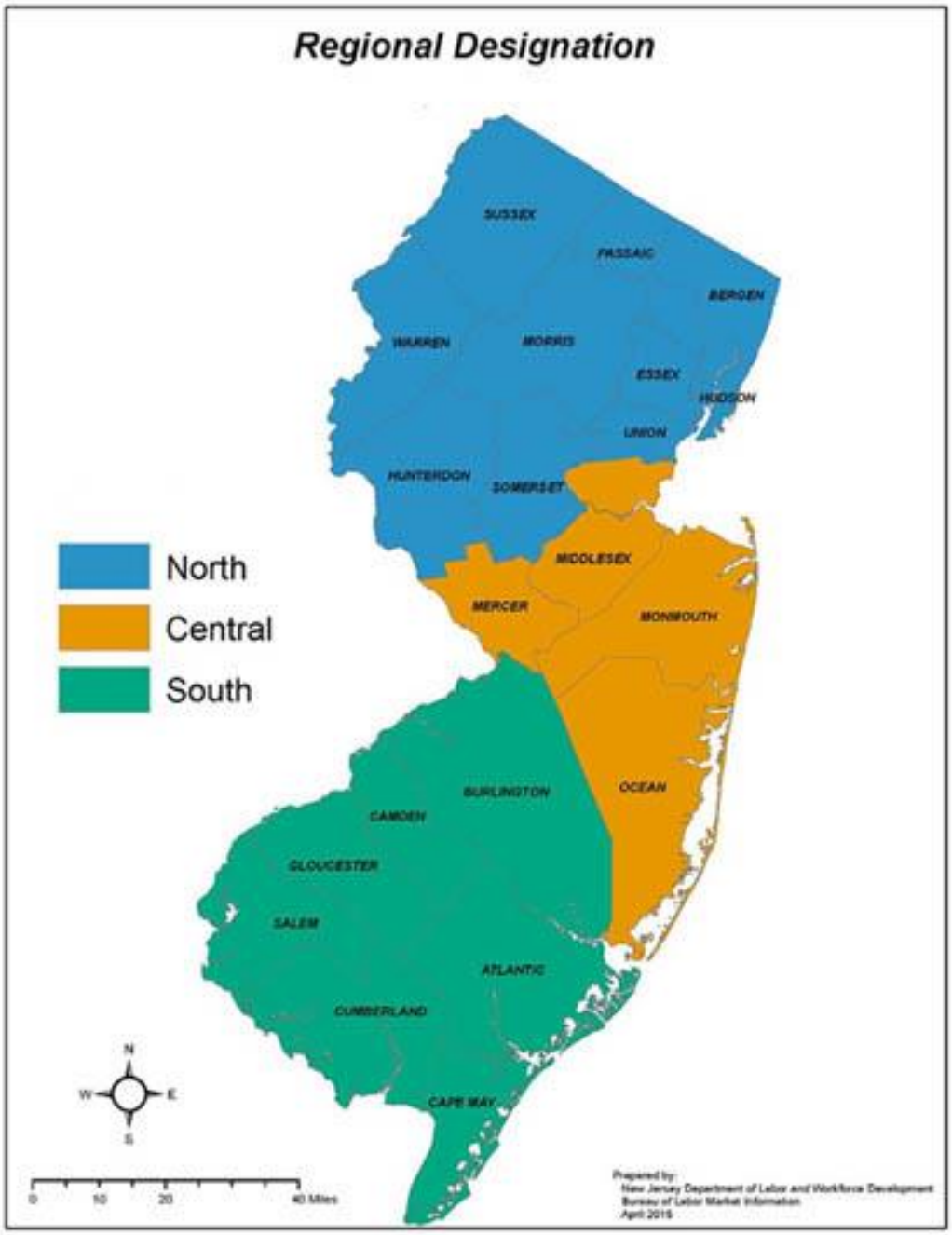

Figure 38

<u>New Jersey Local Workforce Development Areas:</u>

The 18 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) in New Jersey have been designated after reviewing county areas, population size, and the factors and process for initial local area designation described below in Section VI(a)(1)B) of this plan. Subsequent to the 2016 submission of this Plan, a local area designation was modified; Cape May County joined the Cumberland-Salem local area. The local area designation was approved by SETC Policy Resolution 2016-13, which can be found in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

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

Figure 39

B. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED FOR DESIGNATING LOCAL AREAS, INCLUDING PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING WHETHER THE LOCAL AREA MET THE CRITERIA FOR "PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY" AND "SUSTAINED FISCAL INTEGRITY" IN ACCORDANCE WITH 106(B)(2) AND (3) OF WIOA. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED FOR IDENTIFYING REGIONS AND PLANNING REGIONS UNDER SECTION 106(A) OF WIOA. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE CONSULTED WITH THE LOCAL BOARDS AND CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS IN IDENTIFYING THE REGIONS.

As required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, the State Employment and Training Commission designated local areas for a period of initial designation from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017. The process described below is outlined in SETC Policy 2015-02, which is provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

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

After receiving Initial Designation Request letters, SETC and LWD verified local area performance and fiscal integrity for PY 2012 and PY 2013.

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

a) the local area has met or exceeded all common measures under WIA in the two preceding years, Program Years 2012 and 2013. To meet the measure, the local area must have achieved at least 80% of the performance target

OR

b) the local area did not meet one or more of the common measures in either/both of these program years and subsequently created a performance improvement plan or corrective action plan, which was approved by the SETC. The area must have followed through on the planned improvements and subsequently met or exceeded that measure in the following program year.

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

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

The SETC approved 18 local area requests on March 29, 2016, under SETC Policy Resolution 2016-09, which is provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

The SETC also approved Policy Resolution 2016-02 outlining the process for subsequent local area designations. This process is anticipated to be implemented in 2018. SETC Policy Resolution 2016-02 is provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

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

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

- If a local area and/or local board disagrees with the corrective action and/or penalty determination of the Assistant Commissioner under N.J.A.C. 12:42-3.10, the local area and/or local board may submit an appeal to the Commissioner in writing no later than 30 days after having received notice of the corrective action and/or penalty determination being appealed.
- All appeals submitted to the Commissioner in writing under (a) above shall state the basis for the appeal and shall include any documentary evidence that the local area and/or local board would like the Commissioner to review prior to rendering his or her decision.
- The Commissioner shall review the documentary evidence presented by the local area and/or local board and shall request any additional information or conduct any investigation necessary to render a decision.
- The Commissioner's decision shall be based on the written record and shall be rendered within 30 days after receipt of the appeal.

- If a local area and/or local board disagrees with the decision of the Commissioner under (d) above, it may appeal that decision to the Secretary of the United States Department of Labor under 20 CFR 667.650(b) not later than 30 days after the local area receives the decision of the Commissioner.

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

SETC and LWD worked with the local Workforce Development Boards and One-Stop partners to create a State Funding Mechanism for Infrastructure Costs, SETC Policy Resolution 2017-03. The finalized policy details an appeals process in compliance with WIOA requirements. SETC Policy 2017-03 is provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan.

2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

A. PROVIDE STATE POLICIES OR GUIDANCE FOR THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND FOR USE OF STATE FUNDS FOR WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES.

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

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

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

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

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

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO USE GOVERNOR'S SET ASIDE FUNDING. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE RAPID RESPONSE FUNDS TO RESPOND TO LAYOFFS AND PLANT CLOSINGS AND COORDINATE SERVICES TO QUICKLY AID

COMPANIES AND THEIR AFFECTED WORKERS. STATES ALSO SHOULD DESCRIBE ANY LAYOFF AVERSION STRATEGIES THEY HAVE IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS AT RISK COMPANIES AND WORKERS

Governor's Set Aside

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

1) Expansion of the Career Connections Initiative: This broad partnership of One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, libraries, educational institutions and community and faith-based organizations is designed to strengthen career navigation services for all New Jersey residents.

2) Expansion of high-quality- employer-driven partnerships: The state's nine industry-focused Talent Networks are working with employers, local Workforce Development Boards, community colleges and other key stakeholders to develop Targeted Industry Partnerships across the state. The statewide set aside may be used to fund the implementation of career pathways programs resulting in an industry-valued credential developed through this and related efforts.

3) Investment in Technology Tools and Integrated Data Systems: New Jersey is developing the Career Connections website to deliver career navigation content and tools to jobseekers and employers. The state may use the statewide set aside to fund the development of new tools and the expansion of existing tools. New Jersey may also use the statewide set aside to support the implementation of case management systems and integrated data and reporting systems to support workforce development activities.

The State also intends to utilize set-aside funding to test pay-for-performance contracting strategies to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of limited formula funds to improve outcomes for WIOA participants, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment. The State will offer technical assistance to local workforce areas on how to implement pay-for performance with local formula funds and expects to enhance overall outcome-based strategies by utilizing existing performance-based contracting in combination with new WIOA pay-for-performance for the achievement of high bar outcomes as outlined in Title I of the NPRM (20 CFR 683.520).

Rapid Response Funds

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

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

explains Unemployment Insurance, Re-employment Services, Training Assistance, and additional services and resources available.

Unemployment Insurance:

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

Re-Employment Services:

- One-Stop Career Center Registration
- Labor Market Information
- Referrals to available jobs
- Introduction to CareerConnections.nj.gov
- Referral to Jersey Job Clubs
- Résumé Review and Development

Training Assistance**:**

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

Additional Customized Services can be provided in the following areas:

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

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

Successful layoff aversion strategies employed by the Rapid Response Team have focused on using technology tools to seamlessly transition workers from downsizing companies to growing companies. Workers from downsizing companies are entered into the One-Stop case management system with an identified tying them to the layoff event. This creates a ready pool of qualified and dependable candidates for hiring companies to tap. The real life example documenting this success was the downsizing of A&P/Pathmark and the seamless

transition of these workers to expanding grocers including Shoprite, Acme, Wegmans Food Markets, and Aldi. Some of these transitioning workers moved to new opportunities with no intervening period of unemployment saving New Jersey's UI Trust Fund on benefit costs.

State funds supplement Rapid Response funds in New Jersey's layoff aversion efforts. Skills Partnership (customized training) is integral to this effort. Companies at a competitive disadvantage due to changing technology, inefficient operations, and/or poorly trained staff can take advantage of incumbent workers training funds to regain competitive advantage and avert contraction.

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

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

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

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

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

C. IN ADDITION, DESCRIBE THE STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSES IN CASES OF NATURAL DISASTERS INCLUDING COORDINATION WITH FEMA AND OTHER ENTITIES.

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

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE PROVIDES EARLY INTERVENTION (E.G., RAPID RESPONSE) TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) PETITION HAS BEEN FILED. (SECTION 134(A)(2)(A).) THIS DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE HOW THE STATE DISSEMINATES BENEFIT INFORMATION TO PROVIDE TRADE-AFFECTED WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE TAA PETITIONS WITH AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROVISION OF TAA BENEFITS AND SERVICES IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY ARE TRANSPARENT TO THE TRADE-AFFECTED DISLOCATED WORKER APPLYING FOR THEM (TRADE ACT SEC. 221(A)(2)(A) AND SEC. 225; GOVERNOR-SECRETARY AGREEMENT). DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR RAPID RESPONSE TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR EVERY WORKER GROUP THAT FILES A TAA PETITION.

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

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

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

The Rapid Response team coordinator contacts the company immediately upon receiving the notice of a planned layoff. The coordinator makes every effort to schedule a meeting

between the management of the company and the Rapid Response team specialists. These meetings are scheduled with the convenience of the employer in mind and are sometimes held before their regularly scheduled work day, or after their workers have left for the day.

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

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

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

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

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

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

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

In addition to on-the-job training and customized training under Title I, New Jersey also provides OJT to businesses utilizing state Workforce Development Program funds and on-the-job training funds available through the New Jersey WorkFirst (TANF) program. When

possible and appropriate, these tools for OJT are utilized in complement with one another to maximize the benefit for businesses and individuals.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

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

Registered Apprenticeship initiatives have been and will remain a continued strategy for New Jersey. This model, by design, incorporates both the theory and work-based/experiential learning components that business and industry often request, and simultaneously creates career pathways for participants. WIOA has provided an increased focus on Registered Apprenticeship as a model for education and training. New Jersey welcomes the opportunity to build upon existing initiatives and create new opportunities to expand quality Registered Apprenticeship programs that incorporate the appropriate level of classroom theory and work-based/experiential learning that has been proven to provide highly skilled workers to many industries. These high-quality Registered Apprenticeship programs provide industry-valued credentials that are both portable and stackable. Strategies to incorporate Registered Apprenticeships are project-specific, allowing LWD and its partners to build specific solutions to identified needs and incorporate promising practices gleaned from previous projects.

As described in previous sections, New Jersey intends to utilize its sector initiatives towards increasing its Registered Apprenticeship efforts. The highlights of some prior initiatives include:

Community Health Worker Pilot: LWD worked collaboratively with Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations through the Health Care Talent Network to launch a pilot Community Health Worker (CHW) apprenticeship program. The CHW apprenticeship training was funded through the Bergen County College Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant program. CHWs receive employment experience, placement and a nationally recognized apprenticeship certificate. The pilot program recruited 20 participants from various counties to serve in advocacy and outreach capacities for the community and help individuals to access appropriate health resources. CHWs complete 160 hours of mandatory in-class training, offered at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, followed by 2,100 hours of on-the job training and finally employment placement. Rutgers anticipates expanding this apprenticeship opportunity throughout New Jersey to other low income and dislocated workers over the next few years and has set an enrollment target of 1,500 participants.

The SETC and the Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education will continue to work with partners, to identify Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities within demand industries. In addition, efforts to strengthen or create linkages between these programs and WIOA and One-Stop services for eligible candidates will become a priority as part of their mission to advocate for equitable gender, labor practices and pay in educational programs and workforce training. Some efforts already underway, with support of the SETC and GPC are:

Sisters in the Brotherhood (SIB)

A recruitment and retention effort imparted upon the New Jersey Locals of the Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters (NRCC) by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters (International). The initiative focuses on reaching a goal to have women represent a minimum of 10 percent of all registered apprentices within the trade by 2019, and maintaining that percentage moving forward. The lessons learned have influenced positive modifications to the recruitment, support, education and training programs within the NRCC. Since its inception, the effort has established relationships with community and faith-based partners, vocational schools, guidance counselors, Workforce Development Boards, One-Stop Career Centers, correctional institutions, and other government agencies, to name a few. The NRCC has created a pre-apprenticeship program to support women who have expressed an interest in the field but require additional preparation. The implementation of the SIB pre-apprenticeship program has had a positive influence on the outcomes and success of the program. This program is a win-win for non-traditional careers for women, as it provides equal pay for equal work, demonstrates career pathways and utilizes Registered Apprenticeship as the method of training and education.

Women in Sustainable Employment (WISE) Pathways

A career-exploration course designed for women to explore nontraditional, in-demand jobs in the construction, gas, water, electric and energy industries, with some occupations being Registered Apprenticeship programs. This forty-hour program was created to educate women about the career paths in these industries, and provide strategies in conflict management, team building, and workplace expectations. Additional focus is placed on résumé writing, practice online applications and interviewing; and participants can be connected with recruiters from participating companies. This program was designed and implemented through a quality partnership between employers, organized labor and higher education, to design and implement this career exploration program. The goal is to expand the initiative into other counties, post-secondary educational institutions and employers in the future.

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

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

New Jersey State Law (C:34:15C-10.2) requires the creation of the ETPL and states that "[n]o training provider who is not an approved training provider included on the [ETPL] shall receive any federal job training funds or State job training funds." Federal job training funds include, but are not limited to: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Titles I, II and IV; WorkFirst; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; and SNAP Employment and Training. State job training funds include, but are not limited to: the Workforce Development Partnership Fund and the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills. Job training is defined as occupational training, remedial instruction or occupational

safety and health training. New Jersey State law (C:34:1A-86) also mandates the collection and display of specific provider and program performance data on a publically available Consumer Report Card.

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

ETPL Eligibility:

All training providers seeking ETPL placement must first obtain approval from a qualified government agency in order to offer training programs. Only after this approval is obtained can a training provider apply for ETPL placement. A qualified government agency is an agency authorized by law or regulation to approve a training program. A list of agencies that are currently qualified to approve providers and training programs for schools located in New Jersey is available online at http://njtopps.com/VendorFaqs.aspx.

All training providers seeking placement on the ETPL under WIOA or State law are required to submit a formal application to COEI. An application will not be considered complete unless the provider has submitted up to date student record data or provided a certification that no such data exits (applicable only for new providers). New providers will be added to the ETPL on a continuing basis as they are determined eligible. ETPL eligibility is valid for one year from the date of approval. All providers are required to submit a renewal application to maintain ETPL listing past the initial year.

Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same application requirements as all other training providers. Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors that request to be listed on the ETPL are automatically included on the list and will remain as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor notifies the State that it no longer wants to be included on the list. Registered Apprenticeship programs are subject to all other requirements of the ETPL including the submission of student record data.

Pursuant to State law (C:34:15D-5), "[a]n employer who directly provides training and employment services to his own employees shall not be regarded as a service provider and shall not be subject to any requirement to obtain approval by the State as a service provider, including the requirements of section 13 of P.L.2005, c.354 (C.34:15C-10.1) to be approved as a qualifying school or the requirements of section 14 of P.L.2005, c.354 (C.34:15C-10.2) to be included on the State Eligible Training Provider List." Training providers that are contracted by employers to provide customized training services funded by state or federal sources must be listed on the ETPL.

A training provider and/or its program(s) may be deemed ineligible for ETPL placement, or removed from the ETPL for the following reasons:

a. A training provider does not possess; fails to submit; or loses its certificate/letter of approval from a qualified government agency;

b. The initial and/or renewal application was not completed, was not completed by the established due date, or failed to contain all the required information;

c. A training provider failed to submit timely and accurate student record data;

d. A training provider failed to meet required performance outcomes (if established).

e. A training provider intentionally supplied inaccurate or false information, including student records; or

f. A training provider substantially violated a provision of Title I of WIOA or its implementation regulations.

If a provider is removed from the ETPL pursuant to items a-d above, the provider may be reinstated upon COEI's receipt of all required information. If a provider is removed from the ETPL pursuant to items e-f above, the provider shall be removed for a period of not less than 2 years. Providers are liable to repay all adult and dislocated worker funds received during the period of non-compliance.

Performance Standards:

All training providers listed on the ETPL are required to submit data annually for all students enrolled in the programs listed on the ETPL regardless of funding source (private pay and funded students). Failure to submit the required data in a timely manner will result in the provider's removal from the ETPL. Student social security numbers submitted by training providers are matched with wage records collected from employers covered by the Unemployment Compensation Law in New Jersey and other states in order to produce performance metrics that are displayed on the Consumer Report Card.

Metrics that are currently calculated are:

• Number of individuals exiting;

• Percentage of program participants in unsubsidized employment 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit;

• Average quarterly earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit; and

• Estimated annual earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment at 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit.

Statewide minimum performance standards will not be set during the implementation year as eligibility criteria for training programs to be placed on the ETPL. In subsequent years, COEI will report to the State Employment and Training Commission on the status of the performance data available and submit a recommendation regarding whether statewide minimum performance standards should be set for ETPL eligibility. However, the local areas may establish additional criteria for program eligibility within a local area, including

the establishment of minimum required levels of performance as criteria for training providers to become or remain eligible to provide services in that particular local area. Training providers should be aware that programs may be approved for some local areas and denied for others based on local criteria and the approved local areas for each training provider will be listed as part of the ETPL.

All performance information for each provider and program will be posted on the Consumer Report Card to help New Jerseyans make an informed decision regarding available training opportunities.

Consumer Report Card:

The Consumer Report Card as currently structured displays the following performance information for training providers and their individual programs:

• Number of individuals exiting;

• Percentage of program participants in unsubsidized employment 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit;

• Average quarterly earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit; and

• Estimated annual earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment at 6 months, 1 year and 2 years after exit.

COEI is currently working to upgrade the ETPL and Consumer Report Card system in order to display additional performance data.

ETPL and Industry-Valued Credentials List:

As described previously in this plan, LWD is in the process of developing an Industry-Valued Credential List to guide training investments across federal and state workforce programs. Once developed, the Industry-Valued Credential List will be cross-walked with the ETPL to understand the eligible providers in the state that offer Industry-Valued Credentials. Within the ETPL, training programs that result in a credential found on the Industry-Valued Credential list will be indicated so users can easily access the information.

This effort is currently underway and a draft Industry-Valued Credentials list was released for public comment in March 2016. The Credential Review Board adopted the initial list in October 2016.

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.

As part of its One-Stop Carer Center Certification process, New Jersey will require local workforce areas to identify the process for implementing and monitoring the priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the requirements of WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E).

Furthermore, New Jersey will reinforce these efforts through its policy on Additional Performance Measures for WIOA Title I, Title II, and WorkFirst New Jersey which include the percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment such as disability, ex-offender status, lack of a high school diploma, and homeless status.

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

Through work with the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), the state workforce board, has developed a series of dashboards as a tool for monitoring and oversight of programs. The dashboards have been designed to provide state and local perspective regarding program measurements and services to special populations including income and literacy. Over time, these tools will be available for programs under all WIOA Titles and are anticipated to include other State-level programming.

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

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

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

LWD established the following criteria for the local area transfer of funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs:

Dislocated Worker Funds Transfer to Adult: (both criteria must be met)

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

o Public Assistance Recipients

o Other Low-Income Individuals

o Basic Skills Deficient Individuals

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

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

These criteria were disseminated to the local areas in New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notice (WIN) 4-15, Change 1. This guidance is available online at http://www.nj.gov/labor/wioa/documents/techassistance/NJWIN%204-15.pdf.

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)

New Jersey lists 10 criteria established by the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC). These criteria, which must be incorporated into the evaluation of youth service programs during procurement, are listed below:

136. The program will have a record of demonstrated effectiveness.
137. The program will not discriminate in any way and will be in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- The provider must have the capacity to identify issues that are hindering youth from succeeding in the program and recommend the appropriate support services.
- The provider must be able to detail how linkages between communities, academic, occupational learning, and work experience will be used to enhance the youth development and employability. They should also demonstrate the involvement of the business/employer community.
- The program will maintain a close working relationship with the local One-Stop Career Center.
- Programs with industry-valued credentials as a goal will make arrangements for participants to test for and obtain the credential.
- Any program offering summer employment opportunities must be linked to academic and occupational learning as a complement to overall year-round program

goals. Summer employment opportunities operated as a stand-alone Summer Youth Program are specifically prohibited.

- The provider must establish specific timeframes for evaluation of participant performance, attendance and progress, including level of academic performance, vocational abilities/skills, aptitudes, and interests.
- The provider must identify process and strategies to be used to ensure that participants receive planned services and reach planned goals and what corrective actions will be available for participants who are not meeting the requirement of each activity or goals. The provider must detail the internal systems that will be used to report and monitor programmatic and fiscal activities.
- The provider must permit federal, state, and local area staff and designated agents to conduct regular monitoring activities, including communication with customers and contractor staff at instructional sites.

Therefore, while the framework services can be provided by the grant recipient, all 14 program elements, with the exception of follow-up services, must be procured competitively. Local boards must ensure that they are able to conduct competitive procurement of youth services that will be provided in Program Year 2016. This is a required function of each local board. While a fiscal agent designated by the local chief elected official may be designated to conduct procurement, the One-Stop Operator should not participate in procurement due to conflict of interest.

Program Elements

In order to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants, the programs described in paragraph (1) shall provide elements consisting of—

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential;

2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education, which may include—

i. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;

ii. Pre-apprenticeship programs;

iii. Internships and job shadowing; and

iv. On-The-job training opportunities;

4. Occupational skill training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved, if the local board determines that the programs meet the quality criteria described in section 123;

5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;

6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate;

7. Supportive services;

8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;

9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate;

11. Financial literacy education;

12. Entrepreneurial skills training;

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and

14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.

USDOL has indicated that there is no expectation that any one provider should be responsible for the delivery of all program elements in an area [*WIOA Sec. 129(c)(5)*].Local boards should identify the existing providers of program elements in their area and procure as necessary where there are gaps in services.

Leveraging Available Resources

20 CFR 681.470 states that non-WIOA funds can be used to provide WIOA youth program elements under certain conditions:

The Department does not require local programs to use WIOA youth funds for each of the program elements. Local programs may leverage partner resources to provide some of the readily available program elements. However, the local area must ensure that if a program element is not funded with WIOA Title I youth funds, the local program has an agreement in place with a partner organization to ensure that the program element will be offered. The Local Board must ensure that the program element is closely connected and coordinated with the WIOA youth program.

For example, YouthBuild is a required one-stop system partner that provides work experience (a program element). A local area could enter into an agreement with a YouthBuild entity, and refer appropriate WIOA-enrolled youth to YouthBuild to receive a WIOA program element with non-WIOA funds. This does not preclude an agency from also responding to an RFP and serving additional WIOA enrolled youth with WIOA funds.

Leveraging of youth funds will expand local program capacity and demonstrate greater fiscal responsibility with the limited funds available. Local areas must demonstrate efforts to identify and enter into agreements with agencies which are already providing program elements. The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the State Employment and Training Commission will provide technical assistance in these efforts.

Individual Training Accounts

Under WIOA, youth age 18 or older may be provided the occupational training program element through an Individual Training Account (ITA). *(20 CFR 681.550).*This is not a waiver, and there is no need to utilize the waiver log in America's One-Stop Operating System when serving youth with an ITA using WIOA funds.

Program vs. Service

WIOA Youth Program - All the WIOA youth services (program elements) that are made available throughout a local area.

WIOA Youth Service **-** An individual WIOA program element. WIOA requires these fourteen elements to be made available by the local area, though they do not have to be provided to every youth. Individual RFPs should be designed to procure particular service(s) (not all).

Program Design

Before issuing requests for proposal, each local area, with the participation of the youth standing committee, should take the following steps:

1. Conduct an environmental scan to identify partner agencies that are providing program elements in the area/region. The local board can then enter into agreements for these program elements to be provided using non-WIOA funds.

2. Consider the WIOA priorities: 75 percent of funds must be spent on out-of-school youth (not counting administrative funds; must be services to this population only) 20 percent of all youth funds must be spent on work experience

3. Review records to estimate the total funds that will spent on ITAs in the program year.

4. Consider other relevant factors such as the local labor market.

After taking these steps, the local area can identify the particular services that needs to be procured for which groups of youth (in-school/out-of-school) and at what funding and service levels.

Note on Work Experience Expenditure Requirement: Training and Employment Guidance Letter 8-15 states that allowable expenditures for the work experience expenditure requirement beyond wages include staff time spent on the following: identifying potential work experience opportunities; working with employers to develop the work experience; working with employers to ensure a successful work experience; evaluating the work experience; conducting work experience orientation sessions; classroom training or the required academic education component directly related to the work experience; orientation for employers.

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AS DESCRIBED IN 129(A)(1)(B), INCLUDING HOW IT WILL LEVERAGE AND ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

Out-of-School Youth will be served through New Jersey's Youth programs described in detail in the immediately prior section C(1) "State developed criteria" and New Jersey commits to deliver the 14 Youth Program Elements in keeping with the WIOA requirements as outlined in section C(3). In the request for proposals from Youth WIOA sub-grantees, New Jersey has required that 75 percent of WIOA Youth funds must be spent to serve Out-of-School Youth.

New Jersey operates the New Jersey Youth Corps program, which is one of the largest youth service and conservation corps in the United States. Youth Corps is a year-round, voluntary program which engages young adults (ages 16-25) in full-time community service, training, and educational activities. Guided by staff who serve as mentors and role models, teams of youth called "crews" carry out a wide range of service projects. Corps members receive a stipend while enrolled in Youth Corps. Additionally, in return for their efforts to restore and strengthen communities, Corps members also receive:

• Education development in basic skills and preparation to obtain a GED or locally issued Adult High School Diploma;

• Life skills and employability skills instruction;

• Personal and career counseling to build self-esteem, clarify values, and develop leadership skills while they are developing their career portfolio;

• Transition services and continuing support services as they transition to college, training, employment or other national and domestic service opportunities; and

• Community service opportunities which develop positive employability skills while addressing unmet community needs.

Out-of-School Youth over age 18 are also able to participate in the full menu of services available at New Jersey's One-Stop Career Centers, including all of the job search, job preparation, career planning, and training services. These Youth may access Individual Training Account (ITA) training in the same ways that Adult and Dislocated Worker participants may, through the opportunities listed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Youth services collaborate with other WIOA system partners including: Wagner-Peyser in cases where Youth have been employed and are subsequently laid off from their employment; Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) for Youth with disabilities; and WorkFirst New Jersey through coordinated efforts for families and services for young adult TANF or SNAP recipients. In all these cases coordination is substantially the same as the other methods of coordination outlined in Section III on Operational Planning Elements, subsection on State Strategy Implementation, and subsections on Coordination with WIOA Partner programs.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT ALL 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2) ARE MADE AVAILABLE AND EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS UNDER THE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM ELEMENT.*

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

New Jersey has developed a comprehensive strategy that will connect secondary education, community organizations, workforce development programs and other stakeholders to assist youth to successfully navigate the labor market and to obtain the skills they need for employment. New Jersey's Shared Vision for Youth includes strategies to focus on career awareness, pilot innovative programs, such as pre-apprenticeship programs that create pathways to employment.

The goals for the New Jersey's Shared Youth Vision Council are aligned with the New Jersey Combined State Plan. The strategies of the Council are also aligned with the identified key industries in New Jersey and rooted in the Combined State Plan's core values. The Council's mission is to empower the State's youth to become productive members of their communities through workforce readiness preparation, leadership development and community engagement. Furthermore, the Council focuses on outreach and retention efforts, youth leadership development, youth system capacity building, and employer-led inclusionary workforce programs.

New Jersey is creating an integrated, coherent system of workforce development programs and services that will effectively prepare youth for career-path employment that meets the labor market needs.

Youth services and activities to be used as the strategy for development include:

- Creating a unified policy and interlocking system of supports that recognizes the unique needs of young people and appropriately prepares them for lifelong learning and employment success through the State to local partnerships
- Engaging in ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders, businesses; schools; youth providers; parents and youth themselves, to identify local needs, gaps in service and to map available resources
- Setting service priorities and determining how local resources can best be used to meet the needs of young people
- Setting standards of service that clearly communicates high expectations, accountability, and a focus on youth customers. These standards integrate best practices in youth and workforce development and focus specifically on ensuring that youth have the opportunity to develop career plans that will engage them in lifelong learning and future employment.
- Developing policies grounded in best practices for youth that support the State and local vision
- Coordinating local resources, programs and policies with federal, state and regional initiatives to make the most effective use of funds for youth who face significant barriers to future success

Local WDBs are responsible for developing local program models and delivering the program within the parameters set by federal and state guidelines. They are required to

ensure that the WIOA youth program elements are available and included in local proposal designs. The WDB is responsible for creating and maintaining an active Youth Investment Council that effectively leads the development of the local youth workforce investment system. Its mission is to actively engage business, community and educational stakeholders around local needs and priorities for youth services.

Through the work of the Youth Investment Council (YIC), the WDB provides strategic direction and coordination with other programs and initiatives in their communities to make the best use of limited resources. The SETC, the state board, issued guidelines for the development of local plans. LWD provides the monitoring arm of the State to ensure compliance.

The YIC is responsible for developing a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated system of youth services that effectively prepares young people for higher education and future employment by implementing the elements noted below:

- Paid and unpaid work experience, internships, summer employment
- Adult mentoring
- Leadership development
- Occupational skills training
- Alternative secondary school services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Support services
- Tutoring, study skills training/dropout prevention strategies
- Follow-up services
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster
- Financial Literacy Education
- Entrepreneurial Skills Training
- Services that provide labor market information 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 and transition to post-secondary education and training

Successful models that are used nationally are researched and often customized to meet the needs of New Jersey employers or are designed to meet New Jersey needs and then shared nationally. Job training programs for youth, YTTW models, YouthBuild and others are piloted and expanded or enhanced as funds become available. Experiential education models that incorporate academics with hands-on job readiness, such as the nationally recognized NJ Youth Corps become the basis for the development of alternative in-school and out-of-school education models as well.

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM,

OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). 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 stated in the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development policy document, "Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title I: Youth Eligibility Determination and Documentation Guidelines for Local Workforce Development Areas" issued in June 2015, the following is the State's definition of **Requires Additional Assistance:**

Any local area utilizing the criterion "An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment" must document their policy for defining and documenting the criteria in their local plan. A hard copy of the document(s) used to verify this criterion (see the WIOA Eligibility Desk Aid) **must** be provided and kept in the participant's folder. This criterion is recorded in AOSOS by selecting "Yes" from the drop-down list on the **Employment** tab in the **Comprehensive Assessment** window. The assistance needed and justification must be documented in the fields below "Job Behavior and Skills." The two types of justifications are: (1) to complete an educational program, and (2) to secure and hold employment. The specific issue **must** be recorded.

5. INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION, AS DEFINED IN LAW, FOR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL AND ATTENDING SCHOOL AS SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(I) AND SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(I). IF STATE LAW DOES NOT DEFINE "NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL" OR "ATTENDING SCHOOL," INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE AND PROVIDE THE STATE POLICY FOR DETERMINING WHETHER A YOUTH IS ATTENDING OR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL.

"Attending school" and "not attending school" are not defined in New Jersey state law or regulation.

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

Not Applicable. New Jersey is using the definition under WIOA Section 3(5)(A).

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)). States with a single workforce area must include—

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)

2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)

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

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

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

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:

ϑϑϑϑϑϑϑ. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;
KKKKKKK. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;
ΛΛΛΛΛΛΛ. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;
MMMMMMM. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND
NNNNNNN. 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:

OOOOOOO. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;
ΠΠΠΠΠΠΠΠ. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;
ΘΘΘΘΘΘΘ. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;
PPPPPPP. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.
ΣΣΣΣΣΣΣ. COLLECT AND REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT WAIVER OUTCOMES IN THE STATE'S WIOA ANNUAL REPORT

7. THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE THAT STATES PROVIDE THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE ABOUT THE OUTCOMES OF THE EXISTING WAIVER IN CASES WHERE THE STATE SEEKS RENEWAL OF A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WAIVER;

New Jersey is not requesting a waiver at this time.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

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.

Employment Service staff, as well as other program areas, will participate in professional development that is provided directly by, or coordinated by, the LWD's WDB Coordination

and Support Team. This professional development will take several forms, including online, in-person training and webinars. Additionally, professional development resources will be made available to all One-Stop Career Center staff through the WIOA Technical Assistance webpage. LWD also will incorporate training opportunities for One-Stop staff relating the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, in coordination with DVRS and CBVI.

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

The LWD's WDB Coordination and Support Team will provide cross-training to Employment Service and WIOA staff members regarding the services available through the core partner programs (WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, DVRS, and Adult Education) as well as UI and TANF. Cross-training in UI will include eligibility and filing procedures to ensure that all One-Stop Career Centers are able to provide customers with meaningful assistance in filing UI claims. The WIOA Technical Assistance webpage will provide staff with cross-training resources.

B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE.

New Jersey operates 30 comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers. UI staff has been gradually transforming its service delivery model from in-person services at all sites to a focus on concentrating staff at three regional Reemployment Call Centers. While UI will continue to offer in-person services at nine or ten One-Stops, UI customers will be directed to courtesy telephones and online resources at the majority of One-Stops. Wagner-Peyser staff are trained to resolve common and simple non-monetary issues for UI customers, to assist UI customers with access to online resources and the courtesy phones, to maintain accessibility for customers with disabilities, and to provide translation services to non-English speaking claimants.

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

Unemployment insurance claimants receive a worker profiling score upon filing for benefits. The score measures the probability of the claimant exhausting benefits before finding new employment. Those claimants determined most likely to exhaust benefits before finding employment are placed into a pool for participation in the Project Reemployment Orientation System (PROS) program for mandatory services designed to assist these claimants with better structuring their job search. The PROS program consists of an orientation followed by a series of workshops covering self-assessment skills, résumé writing, interviewing skills, job search and résumé marketing. Integration of the required PROS workshops with Jersey Job Club offerings will transform PROS into a more robust reemployment program as the two programs become strongly aligned over the next two years.

For those least likely to exhaust benefits, as determined by the worker profiling model, claimants are identified for mandatory Re-employment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) participation during the third week of their claim and generally scheduled around the fifth week of their claim for a ½ day workshop. The REA workshop offers claimants One-Stop Career Center and career assessment information, labor market information, an individualized work search plan, and a review of their eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits. New Jersey will conduct about 20,000 REAs in the current program year, but hopes to dramatically increase the number moving forward due to the proven value of this effective reemployment tool.

Consistent with the goal of targeting services more strategically and moving away from the one-size fits all model employed in the past, PROS and an expanded REA program are hallmarks of LWD's efforts to ensure that services are value-added for jobseeker customers and that mandatory participation services are not perceived as punitive from the perspective of those required to attend.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

1. COORDINATION OF AND PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS AS REQUIRED BY THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT;

Specifically, New Jersey will utilize Wagner-Peyser funds to support UI claimants in the following ways:

- The State automatically pre-registers reemployment service-eligible UI claimants into the One-Stop case management system, America's One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS), which feeds the OnRamp tool accessible at CareerConnections.nj.gov. This pre-registration is accomplished through a daily electronic batch data transfer from the UI mainframe system to New Jersey's AOSOS database. Almost all UI claimants are pre-registered in AOSOS; only those claimants who are coded as temporarily laid off and those who are attached to a union hiring hall are exempt from this pre-registration. This electronic data transfer enables all One-Stop partners to access identifying information on UI claimants in order to offer reemployment services.
- Strategic targeting of new UI claimants for services based on their likelihood of exhausting UI benefits has gradually replaced in person reemployment orientations that gave claimants an equal chance of selection, but due to capacity limitations only served a small fraction of new claimants. Fine-tuning of the UI claimant profiling model and targeting claimants for services by veteran status, industry or occupational affiliation, and duration of unemployment will increase in frequency over the next two years. This will result in One-Stop Career Center staff more effectively serving jobseeker customers translating into better employment outcomes.
- Federal legislation requires all states to provide reemployment assistance to those claimants who are permanently laid off and are identified as most likely to benefit from One-Stop services. Selected claimants are required to participate in this mandatory program of reemployment services. Unemployment claimants who are identified and referred to reemployment services through the profiling system, Re-

Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment, must participate in reemployment services as a condition of continued UI benefit eligibility. The goal is to keep jobseekers focused on the search for new employment and to ensure that those no longer looking for work do not continue to receive UI benefits.

- New Jersey Unemployment Compensation law requires that a claimant for UI benefits be able to work, be available for work and be actively seeking work. Generally, the Division of Unemployment Insurance considers a minimum of three employer contacts each week a reasonable search for work. Telephone, in-person contacts, and applying for job openings or sending résumés electronically using the Onramp tool accessible at CareerConnections.nj.gov or directly at employer websites, are all acceptable work search methods.
- UI claimants calling LWD for assistance or information may be placed on hold while waiting for the next available customer service representative. Information on One-Stop Career Center reemployment services are shared with claimants as they wait including virtual services available at CareerConnections.nj.gov.

Data regarding reemployment rates for UI claimants is captured and reported quarterly. The comparison of the reemployment rate for those receiving One-Stop Career Center services is compared to a control group of claimants not receiving services in order to determine effectiveness of service delivery.

Claimants filing online are directed to the online re-employment orientation video (http://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/plan/start/reemployment_orientation.shtml) after completing their application for unemployment benefits. This orientation provides information on re-employment services including labor exchange, basic and occupational skills training, career exploration, and staff-assisted services such as Jersey Job Club workshops, employment counseling, and program eligibility/assessment services available at CareerConnections.nj.gov and at the One-Stop Career Centers, respectively. Upon filing, claimant information automatically populates the One-Stop case management system (currently AOSOS) to facilitate service delivery and minimize duplicate data entry. Claimants required to attend mandatory workshops receive eligibility reviews, group workshops, one-on-one LMI and re-employment planning, and referral to re-employment services such as basic and occupational skills training, Jersey Job Club workshops, and OnRamp, the state's job board. In order to provide more proactive services to UI claimants, the balance of UI claimants not selected for REA/PROS/RESEA will be required to attend a mandatory re-employment orientation with four weeks of first payment starting in early CY 2016. Claimants not reporting to any mandatory session are referred to UI adjudication staff for a non-monetary review. Claimants and UI applicants visiting a One-Stop Career Center for filing or resolving claims issues are directed by Wagner-Peyser staff to resource room PCs and provided technical assistance on filing or directed to the UI phone bank for priority connection to a UI call center. While Wagner-Peyser staff are not UI issues experts, they can assist with technology tools, resolve simple and common UI issues, and encourage claimants to engage in re-employment services. Technology improvements in CY 2018 include the launch of a single sign-on application for UI claimants that will provide them with a convenient and common vehicle for UI and re-employment services. And, since UI claimants will be required to use the single sign-on to certify the continuation of benefits on a weekly basis, engagement with re-employment services will happen on a more frequent basis.

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

See above response in Item (D)1.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORK TEST FOR THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING MAKING ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTS (FOR REFERRAL TO UI ADJUDICATION, IF NEEDED), AND PROVIDING JOB FINDING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS; AND

See above response in Item (D)1.

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

See above response in Item (D)1.

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

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED

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

Despite New Jersey's densely populated northeastern and southwestern regions close to New York and Philadelphia, farming continues to be a significant economic force in the state's rural areas. Approximately 730,000 acres or 15.6 percent of the state's area is used for farming. In order of sales, Cumberland, Atlantic, Monmouth, Gloucester, and Burlington lead New Jersey's 21 counties, accounting for about 60 percent of agricultural production statewide.

New Jersey had 10,300 operating farms in 2010 (latest available data) producing and selling about one billion dollars in crops (including nursery and greenhouse). However, the MSFW outreach program and H-2A activities of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development are limited to a sampling of the roughly 1,300 farms that use Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs).

Most farm employers are able to attract and retain a well-established workforce each year. However, large employers are more likely to experience worker shortages - some become H2-A employers as a result. From PY 2015 to PY 2016, the number of number of H-2A visa program employers doubled in New Jersey; the number of employers continued to increase in PY 2017. These increases in employer participation were likely due to a lack domestic workers who were qualified to fill these occupations. New Jersey H-2A farmer-employers typically seek to hire qualified workers with a minimum of three months prior work experience.

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.

In 2010, New Jersey's **top-selling** agricultural commodities included greenhouse/nursery products (43.3 percent of agricultural sale), blueberries (6.0 percent), tomatoes (3.1 percent) and peaches (3.0 percent). New Jersey ranked 40th overall among the states in agricultural production in 2010, but ranked significantly higher in selected categories such as cranberries and blueberries:

- New Jersey ranked third in the nation that year in total production of cranberries (562,000 barrels, up 1 percent from the 2009 crop of 555,000 barrels). Harvested cranberry acreage remained unchanged from the 2009 growing season at 3,100 acres.
- The state ranked fourth in the production of cultivated blueberries, with a total value of $62.5 million. Harvested acres and yield were down 3 percent and 5 percent respectively from 2009-2010, but prices were up 4 percent.

In 2015, New Jersey's top five **most labor-intensive** agricultural commodities were:

1) Blueberries (*Peak month*: July)

2) Cranberries (*Peak*: October)

3) Orchards (Peaches, Apples) (*Peak*: Peaches—August; Apples—September)

4) Vegetables (*Peak*: Asparagus-May; Tomatoes-July; Mixed Vegetables-August;

Sweet Potatoes-October)

5) Nurseries (*Peak*: March)

These crops were concentrated in the following New Jersey counties:

- Blueberries (Atlantic County)
- Cranberries (Burlington County)
- Orchards (Gloucester, Salem and Cumberland Counties)
- Vegetables (Gloucester, Salem and Cumberland Counties)
- Nurseries (Gloucester, Salem and Cumberland)

Beyond workforce issues, New Jersey farm employers believe the state's agriculture industry is also impacted by price hikes in fuel and chemicals -- and by wage rate increases due to hiring competition from other sectors.

B. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN

COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWS IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION.

There is no officially published count of the number of farm workers in the state during the growing season. Estimates are complicated due to the mobility of migrant and seasonal farm workers as they move from crop to crop.

However, a statewide estimate of 12,000 - 14,000 workers during New Jersey's 2014 growing season is based on past estimates, wage and crop surveys and input from partners such as WIA Section 167 grantee PathStone. In addition, data from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, USDA, and New Jersey Farm Bureau was used to further inform and support statistics used in the State's agricultural plan.

The makeup of New Jersey's farm labor workforce is:

- *Seasonal farmworkers* - who during the prior 12 months worked at least 25 full or partial days performing farm work, earned at least half of their income from farm work, and did not do farm work year-round for the same employer.
- *Migrant farmworkers* - who travel to perform farm work and who are unable to return to their permanent residence the same day. The migrant farmworker labor force in New Jersey consists of intrastate and interstate as well as H-2A farmworkers. The department places particular emphasis in providing services to migrant farmworkers as it recognizes that these workers may be less aware of local area resources and support services.
- *Intrastate migrant farmworkers* - individuals who followed migrant streams within the state. These farmworkers usually migrate throughout MSFW areas within the state.
- *Interstate migrant farmworkers* - individuals who follow migrant streams from state to state. Most interstate migrant farmworkers in New Jersey migrate through Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, New York and Pennsylvania.
- *H-2A foreign labor certified farmworkers* - individuals with temporary visas authorizing them to work in the United States on a seasonal basis for a predetermined employer under specific terms and conditions.

Spanish and Creole/French are common languages spoken by foreign workers in New Jersey, whose three largest countries of origin are Mexico, Haiti and Puerto Rico. The numerous migrant workers always have a need for employer-provided housing. Other leading needs of farm workers include on-site assistance accessing employment services, benefits and worker protections as well as help with unemployment insurance claims.

Farmworkers are especially likely to be disadvantaged in terms of access to information about new or changing labor market conditions or job opportunities. They are also

disproportionately poor, and their economic status may limit their physical access to public labor market information and assistance resources.

The physical distances and relative social isolation typical of many rural environments slows the transmission of information by word-of-mouth. Even though seasonal migrant workers may move great distances from one crop area to another over the course of planting, tending and harvesting seasons, their knowledge is often limited to a familiar circuit of employment opportunities, and they often lack rapid access to information that would enable them to alter routine migration patterns to take advantage of new opportunities. The low educational attainment of farmworkers is a major barrier to efficient access and rapid response to changing labor market conditions.

Workers in agricultural labor or services often perform work in remote locations for short periods of time and therefore may have little or no access to community or government resources, decreasing their ability to obtain information about alternative employment opportunities that could enable them to bargain more effectively.

Past and Projected Agricultural and Farmworker Activity

Outreach Service activities for the period of July 2014 through June 2015 were as follows:

Vineland Office:

Number of MSFWs Personally Contacted - 5,129

Approximate Staff Days Performing Outreach - 103

Number of Applications for Job Orders Taken - 19

Number of One-Stop Career Center Complaints Taken from MSFWs - 6

Number of Apparent Violations Referred to Enforcement Agencies - 0

Hammonton Office (Will be covered by Pleasantville NJ Office 2015-16)

Number of MSFWs Personally Contacted - 6,998

Approximate Staff Days Performing Outreach - 99

Number of Applications for Job Orders Taken - 40

Number of One-Stop Career Center Complaints Taken from MSFWs - 1

Number of Apparent Violations Referred to Enforcement Agencies - 1

The projected activity for July 2015 through June 2016 is that number of MSFW contacts and job orders in the two locations will be comparable to - or slightly higher than- the 2014-15 results.

Available Resources for Outreach

By PY 2015, two Outreach Workers, who formerly were Temporary Employment Service (TES) staff, became permanent year-round bilingual Interviewers - one each stationed in the One-Stop Career Centers in Hammonton, NJ and Vineland, NJ. State vehicles were provided to the Outreach Workers year-round. During 2015, MSFW services in Vineland, NJ moved to the new One-Stop Career Center office on the Vineland campus of Cumberland

County College, sharing space with the school's Center for Workforce and Economic Development. The Hammonton, NJ office was closed as part of a statewide consolidation of One-Stop Career Centers, but services continued to be offered through Atlantic County's other OSCC in Pleasantville. For PY 2016, one of the MSFW Outreach Workers was promoted to an Employment and Training (E&T) Specialist 2, conducting the H-2A surveys for the southern region of New Jersey. At the start of PY 2017, another E&T Specialist position was approved, to conduct the H-2A surveys for the northern region of New Jersey. This will allow New Jersey to continue to obtain accurate information on common practices for the H-2A program. At the same time, a reduction of Outreach Workers occurred, which resulted in a decrease in the number of MSFWs served during PY 2015 and during the early part of PY 2016.

The Outreach Workers are trained in Complaint System procedures and are prepared to take on-site complaints as needed. In addition, apparent violations observed by the Outreach Workers will be referred to the appropriate enforcement agencies. Outreach Workers will be required to maintain a daily Outreach Log.

Depending on local circumstances (such as MSFW and employer preferences), outreach contacts may occur in agricultural fields during the workday. However, many MSFWs prefer to continue working rather than stopping to talk with an Outreach Worker. In that situation, the Outreach Workers may need to meet MSFWs during lunch or after MSFWs finish their work (usually returning to their living quarters or gathering areas).

Employer Services has plenty of funding currently available. Based upon LWD's analysis of resources available to support outreach and an assessment, there is an adequate and sufficient amount of resources available.

2. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

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

In Program Year 2015, the designation of Significant and Bilingual Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) offices were two One-Stop Career Centers in South Jersey:

- Atlantic County: One-Stop Career Center - Pleasantville 2 South Main Street Pleasantville, New Jersey 08232
- Cumberland County: One-Stop Career Center - Vineland: 3322 College Drive, PO Box 1500, Vineland, NJ 08362-1500

Pleasantville covers over 130 farm employers and handles two H-2A and one ARS applications in its outreach service area. It is strategically located with access to South Central and Central New Jersey outreach service areas. It is a Farm Labor Contractors registration site and is located in a town with a crop of national interest which attracts over 8,000 farmworkers during the peak season.

Vineland covers over 300 farm employers and handles nine H-2A applications in its outreach service area. It is strategically located with access to the most farming intensive counties of the State and it is a Farm Labor Contractors registration site.

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

Outreach

Outreach staff will contact 40 MSFWs per day on average with a goal of reaching a total of 8,160 through the Pleasantville and Vineland local offices during the growing season.

Local Office	Number of MSFWs to be Contacted during PY 16	Staff Days Conducting Outreach	Number of Days per Week	Number of Farms, Campsites or Gathering Places per Day	Number of MSFW Contact per Day
Vineland	4,080	102	4	5	40
Pleasantville	4,080	102	4	5	40

FIGURE 40

Significant MSFW office management, outreach workers and other appropriate personnel will be provided with the computer-based training on services to farmworkers and farm employers.

LWD has assigned the necessary personnel to provide effective outreach services to MSFWs. One permanent Outreach Worker works from the two designated significant MSFW offices to make visitations into the farmworker community so that a majority of MSFWs are made aware of the full range of Department services, benefits and protections. Self-assessments of One-Stop Career Centers include reviews of MSFW daily outreach logs and plans, Complaint System logs, MSFW program performance and compliance reports. Field office reports to the State Monitor Advocate (SMA) include information compiled through internal and external customer contacts, customer satisfaction surveys, system-generated reports, and input provided by stakeholders.

Outreach visits are made to the agricultural community between March and November to locate and contact MSFWs at their working, living and /or gathering areas to inform them of current One-Stop Career Center/America's JobBank (AJB), PathStone Inc., and other Community-Based Organization services which may be of interest. Outreach activities are consistent with 20 CFR Part 653.107 and serve to implement strategies aimed to identify, document and track MSFWs as they access core, intensive, and training services within the state's One-Stop Career Centers.

Outreach Strategies

Since Program Year 2011, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has worked to recruit an MSFW Outreach team that includes two permanent, year-round, bi-lingual staff. It has also sought to develop a broader MSFW outreach effort in which outreach workers, local office management, and partners from community-based

MSFW service organizations have 1) ongoing communication with one another and 2) a better understanding of their respective roles in ensuring MSFWs the same quality services as non-MSFW customers.

In recent years, the focus of outreach worker training has been on making the staff subject matter experts in MSFW procedures and regulations, such as the:

- Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA)
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- OSHA/ETA/State Housing Standards and Field Sanitation rules
- Federal/State Farm Labor Contractor Registration rules and Child Labor laws
- and others

The acting State Monitor Advocate also emphasized the importance of providing employment service and benefit information in Spanish and other MSFW languages; Limited English Proficiency resources; and a unified complaint system.

Consistent with DOLETA strategies for enhancing opportunities for agricultural employers, limited-English proficient individuals, and farmworker adults and youth, New Jersey's outreach priorities have included:

- Retaining the permanent status of Outreach Workers.
- Increasing the number of MSFW participating in labor exchange activities.
- Increasing the number of agricultural employers utilizing labor exchange services.
- Promoting the use of the Agricultural (Intrastate and Interstate Clearance) Recruitment System (ARS).
- Encouraging participation of MSFWs seeking to transition to higher-wage jobs and permanent non-agricultural employment.
- Enhancing collaboration with MSFW service provider organizations.
- Integrating MSFWs and organizations providing service to MSFWs in One-Stop Career Centers (OSCCs).

Passage of the 2014 Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) has moved New Jersey to review its current outreach strategies and push its staff and outside partners to address new issues. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development was represented at the 2016 Monitor Advocate National Training session in July 2016, and will now expand its MSFW services and training to reflect new language in Wagner-Peyser Employment Service regulations.

From Program Year 2016 on, outreach training for all parties will place more emphasis on several MSFW strategies:

(A) Contacting farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices.

The New Jersey outreach program will focus on locating and contacting farmworkers not reached through normal intake activities conducted by local OSCCs. LWD will explore and implement processes intended to meet and exceed DOLETA compliance requirements in

providing qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate service delivery to MSFWs.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program (MSFW) outreach training and information will be extended to all of the state's One-Stop Career Centers, not just to staff at the two Significant MSFW offices in Vineland and Pleasantville. The incoming State Monitor Advocate started in January 2017. The focus at that time was, and continues to be, to provide unified understanding of the MSFW program to all One-Stop Career Centers in New Jersey. These visits will help the SMA identify the specific information and training materials needed by each office, especially those where MSFW service requests and job orders have been less frequent. All local offices could help more MSFWs if internal procedures, such as handling complaints, were more consistent and informal.

Networking with community-based organizations will be more frequent and pursued in regions of the state that have not had as much MSFW staff attention in the past as the major agricultural areas of South Jersey. The traditional approach of boosting MSFW awareness of local services through outreach worker field visits needs to be balanced by alerting more local community colleges, churches, legal services, health clinics, agricultural extension services and others to the importance of them actively directing more of the MSFWs they encounter back to the Employment Service offices. A marketing plan is also needed to identify both physical and online locations -- beyond the local offices -- where MSFWs can become aware of key services in their own language.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development is also looking for ways that the outreach team and community-based organizations can work together to collect and analyze more data on who the MSFW population encompasses, where they are concentrated statewide, and what their specific service needs. Understanding why some MSFWs have failed to connect to support services may require new approaches to traditional survey techniques as well. Training outreach workers how to take advantage of the state's AOSOS customer case management system will remain a high priority in the coming years.

Outreach program staff will consider the feasibility of meetings and program-related events in agricultural areas throughout the state. Offices in MSFW significant areas will host events that will include, but may not be limited to, meetings coordinated with federal, state, and local entities to ensure maximum coverage and representation. Increasing the number of significant offices in the state will help to create regions that will cover multiple counties. By establishing these significant offices or regions, the Outreach Worker will be responsible for a smaller area of coverage, to better serve the MSFW population in that region. Recently, New Jersey sent a request to USDOL-ETA to increase the number of significant offices in the state. In addition to the current two offices in Atlantic and Cumberland Counties, New Jersey has requested to add offices in Gloucester County (215 Crown Point Road, Suite 200, Thorofare, NJ 08086) and Somerset County (75 Veterans Memorial Drive East, Somerville, NJ 08876). Like the current offices, these new offices have a significant amount of farm land and a large number of potential MSFW customers within the region.

(B) Providing technical assistance to outreach workers.

More training events for outreach workers, local office staff and community organizations is an important vehicle for getting the word out on new MSFW concerns, such as harassment

on the job, career service resources, and native language materials summarizing farmworker rights under state and Federal law. Additional emphasis needs to be placed on recurring technical problems, such as staff coding errors that undermine valuable service data that could otherwise help state and local program managers identify the specific needs of MSFWs.

Adding MSFW questions to local office monitoring interviews is an area where technical guidance could help do more to bring MSFW services closer to the levels offered to non-MSFW clients. New Jersey is also looking at ways to take greater advantage of direct technical assistance through its Regional Monitor Advocate and the National Monitor Advocate office.

(C) Increasing outreach worker training

Training opportunities for outreach workers are being expanded beyond traditional MSFW Laws on the Federal level, such as the Fair Labor Standards Act and Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, to give the staff a deeper understanding of updated Department of Labor and Workforce Development programs involving eligibility for state Unemployment Insurance assistance, Wage & Hour guidelines, and state standards for safety and housing. Online surveys and webinars can also educate professional staff on topics such as how to determine if a worker has enough days worked and enough farm work income to qualify as an authentic "Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker".

(D) Providing State merit staff outreach workers professional development activities

The arrival of a new State Monitor Advocate and the likely need for additional outreach recruits makes it especially important for the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development to actively support state and national training options for outreach staff. Critical topics include understanding different MSFW complaint standards among partner agencies; proper conduct of field checks and site visits; discontinuation of employer services due to violations; data collection and performance accountability; and reporting/addressing incidents of workplace harassment, discrimination and retaliation.

With input from the Regional Monitor Advocate and National Monitor Advocate, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development will seek to create an updated list of upcoming professional development events available in-person, online or through webinars.

(E) Coordinating outreach efforts with NFJP grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.

New Jersey's outreach workers and One-Stop Career Centers, in collaboration with strategic partners and affiliated sites, will coordinate service delivery including, but not limited to:

- Providing a full range of employment services, benefits, and protections on a basis that is qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to services provided to non-MSFWs.
- Accessing and using job order information effectively.
- Facilitating activities in accessing self-assisted services via electronic technologies.

- Referring individuals to agricultural and non-agricultural jobs, training, and supportive services as well as available testing, counseling, and other job development services.
- Referring individuals and family members to supportive services for which they may be eligible.
- Conducting follow-up contacts as necessary and appropriate to ensure desired outcomes.
- Marketing services available in the local office and providing location information for the nearest One-Stop Career Center or community-based partner offices.
- Assisting in posting résumés on-line and conducting on-line job searches through the Department of Labor and Workforce Development's CareerConnections.nj.gov website.
- Assisting in communicating between limited English proficient individuals referred to jobs and employers.

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.

See response in Section 2 (A) above.

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.

See response in Section 2 (A) above.

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.

See response in Section 2 (A) above.

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

See response in Section 2 (A) above.

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:

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

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

Agricultural employers are provided with a single point of contact, a Business Representative at the Business Resource Center who will provide them with information regarding the One-Stop Career Center services, such as how to submit job orders to OnRamp, the state's job board, accessible at CareerConnections.nj.gov, and utilize the New Jersey Automated Call-in System and the Internet. Business Representatives will also be trained in the H-2A program, while Agricultural survey staff members explain the H-2A program and distribute the H-2A Employer Handbook during their field-survey visits. Services and assistance for agricultural employers also include:

- Personalized employer services.
- Information on how to register and use OnRamp at CareerConnections.nj.gov for talent needs.
- Current information on applicant availability and labor market information.
- Suggestions and assistance to improve workforce utilization and personnel practices.
- Use of OSCC Labor Exchange System sites for interviewing prospective employees.
- Assistance in conducting job searches online using OnRamp, the state's job board, which is accessible at CareerConnections.nj.gov.
- Assistance in obtaining bonding.
- Assistance in writing effective job orders.
- Solicitation and acceptance of job orders, as well as related jobseeker referral and placement services.
- Assistance with pre-occupancy housing inspections for employers requesting approval for participation in intrastate and/or interstate recruitment through the Agricultural Recruitment System, and/or H-2A foreign labor certification.
- Assistance with special and mass recruitments, including best practices to identify and locate intended farm labor pools through appropriate use of media modes and service delivery partnership networks.
- Assistance with processing and obtaining initial and renewed farm labor contractor and/or farm labor contractor employer certifications.
- Assistance with workshops tailored to agricultural employer needs.
- Assistance with internet website linkages.
- Assistance with information on employment and training programs, tax incentives, and subsidized employment.
- Assistance utilizing Work Opportunity Tax Credits, subsidized employment resources, and other employer incentives to promote employment and job upgrades for MSFWs.

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

Both farm workers and farm worker advocacy groups are provided with information throughout the year on how to utilize the Employment Service complaint system whenever Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker customers do not receive the same level of service as non-MSFWs at any of the state's One-Stop Career Centers.

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

H2-A agricultural survey staff members and Outreach Workers disseminate on-site information on the ARS to agricultural employers as part of any field visits. Offering more information online and expanding farm employer partnerships are being explored as a way to reach additional employers.

4. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

New Jersey's One-Stop Career Centers, in collaboration with strategic partners and affiliated sites, will coordinate service delivery including marketing services available in the local office and providing location information for the nearest One-Stop Career Center or affiliated partner offices. In PY 2013, a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between LWD and PathStone Inc., the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee, continued to facilitate the exchange of data pertaining to services provided to MSFWs. As of February 2018, an updated MOU is in the process of being signed by both the State Monitor Advocate and Pathstone, Inc. This MOU has updated information on the agreement of shared services between both parties.

To expand beyond the central partnership with Pathstone Inc, the SWA and staff host monthly meetings with a wide range of local, regional and state organizations engaged in MSFW support services which is known as the Helping Hands Coalition. Appropriate LWD personnel will also participate in the USDOL Region I annual Pre-Harvest conference and other Post Harvest meetings, as available. Additionally, agricultural services staff will participate in other local meetings (as well as other important events) conducted by farm-related agencies and organizations (as well as other important events) to promote the use of LWD services.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT.

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an

interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has routinely shared draft Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker policies and procedures via e-mail with a number of South Jersey community based organizations interested in farm worker issues, including: PathStone, Inc.; Legal Services of New Jersey/Farmworkers Project; Comité de Apoyo a Trabajadores Agrícolas (CATA); and the New Jersey Farm Bureau. These groups are also solicited for comments whenever an updated AOP is released for public comment, and respond with input.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT.

Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

With guidance from the Regional Monitor Advocate, New Jersey is moving toward a two-year cycle of on-site reviews that will reach all 25 One-Stop Career Centers - particularly those that are "non-significant" offices far from the main agricultural areas - to ensure that MSFW services are on par with non-MSFW customers. These on-site reviews and presentations, which began in January 2018 for the newly-appointed State Monitor Advocate, will continue to address past problems identified by New Jersey through an assessment of Equity Ratio Indicators.

New Jersey's Labor Exchange Agricultural Reporting System (LEARS) reports for Program Years 2011, 2012, and 2013 reflect the prior acting State Monitor Advocate's efforts to get both the local office Employment Service staff members and the Outreach workers to increase the number of job and career guidance referrals made for the state's MSFW population. Two out of 5 equity indicators were met in PY 2011 and 3 out of 5 were met in PY 2012. Only 1 out of 5 equity indicators were met in PY 2013, although this poor outcome resulted more from the improper entry of data on MSFW services into the LWD local office case management system than an actual failure to offer MSFW services.

A significant turnaround in performance can be seen in the LEARS June 2015 quarterly report for Program Year 2014. Equity indicators showed that MSFW services were on par with non-MSFW customers in 4 out of 5 categories: Received Staff Assisted Services; Referred to Support Services; Career Guidance; and Job Development Contacts. These enhanced outcomes were made possible by joint efforts by the prior acting State Monitor Advocate and senior LWD staff to:

1) Change MSFW Outreach Team staff from temporary seasonal staff to full-time, year-round permanent LWD employees;

2) Train the outreach workers to enter all delivered services into the LWD AOSOS case management system;

3) Encourage outreach workers, local office staff and managers to make use of the National Monitor Advocate's easily accessible computer-based training modules;

4) Offer ongoing technical assistance to managers and staff at Significant MSFW local offices.

With the efforts of LWD staff and the MSFW Outreach Worker, two of the five Equity Ratio Indicators were reached during the peak of the season in PY 2015, and three of the five were reached in PY 2016. An effort to hire more Outreach Workers will be implemented to sustain or improve the services that are offered to the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers in New Jersey.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

A review of New Jersey's Labor Exchange Agricultural Reporting System (LEARS) reports for the four Program Years of 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 (see chart below) shows significant progress in contacting an increasing percentage of Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers as part of the state's MSFW outreach efforts. Specifically, the LEARS' Number of MSFW contacts by Employment Service staff rose to more than 78% in PY 2013 and 84% in PY 2014.

The number of New Jersey's MSFW Contacts were measured as a percentage of the 14,162 Hired Farm Labor workers statewide during the 2012 Census of Agriculture (minus unpaid workers).

.	PY 2011	PY 2012	PY 2013	PY 2014
Hired Farm Labor (unpaid not included) - 2012 NJ Census of Agriculture	14,162	14,162	14,162	14,162
Number of MSFW Contacts by ES Staff - New Jersey LEARS Report	1,317	9,277	11,151	12,027
Percent of MSFWs Contacted	9.20%	65.50%	78.70%	84.90%

FIGURE 41

The improved outreach outcomes resulted from the joint efforts of the Acting State Monitor Advocate, the MSFW Outreach Team, and the Employment Services local office management

in the Vineland and Hammonton, NJ. Key elements of the expanded MSFW outreach plan were:

- Greater use of computer-based training modules for MSFW staff for Agricultural Outreach Workers, State Monitor Advocates, and business-service units (for farm employer services).
- Greater understanding of the New Jersey's Employment Service staff's Customer Complaint Procedures, including longer time periods for non-discrimination appeals resulting from implementation of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act;
- Increased local office engagement in job referral and career guidance for the MSFW population;
- Permanent year-round job placement for MSFW outreach workers instead of the previous practice of hiring temporary staff on a seasonal basis; and
- Higher annual goals for the number of both agricultural and non-agricultural job placements.

Ongoing efforts to increase the number of MSFW contacts and narrow service quality between MSFW and non-MSFW customers in PY 2015 and beyond include:

1) Expanded National Monitor Advocate computer-based MSFW training for local staff and Outreach workers;

2) Continued case management system (AOSOS) training for Outreach workers to improve data quality on MSFW services;

3) Adequate supplies of Outreach worker brochures/literature translated into Spanish (or language readily understood by MSFWs);

4) Regular SMA participation in Monitor Advocate National Training sessions to ensure that New Jersey Outreach workers, local office staff and state WIOA partners engaged in MSFW community services are kept update on new WIOA regulations impacting MSFW services and complaints; and

5) Timely training of outreach workers on key issues such as MSFW sexual harassment, complaint procedures and English language assistance.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

The State Monitor Advocate has been afforded the opportunity to review and approve this AOP.

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)).

The State of New Jersey has adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards as the adult literacy content standards for its WIOA Adult Education and Literacy programs effective January 2016. These standards are aligned with the State's Common Core K-12 content standards. New Jersey has adopted these standards for the adult literacy systems, in order to meet the new requirements under WIOA. which is an upgrade from our previous Equipped for the Future (EFF) standards.The College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Literacy not only meet the requirements of WIOA, the standards measure proficiencies up to a 12th grade level and beyond. LWD staff continues to monitor curricula and programs to confirm alignment and to research and disseminate best practices.

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—

    0. 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
    1. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

In New Jersey, the Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) process will ensure equal access to all eligible providers for the local activities described below.

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act services in New Jersey are delivered through "Programs of Instruction" that receive AEFLA funds via a competitive grant process. Because of disparate demographics and economic climates within the State, the resultant variety of student needs, and the dissimilar nature of the institutions and organizations through which ABE is delivered, Programs of Instruction are encouraged to deliver services in the way that most effectively meets the needs in their communities.

Instruction is delivered through classes, small group instruction, and tutoring. In general:

- Instruction is delivered at community colleges, schools, community-based organizations, businesses, community buildings, prisons, jails and honor camps, faith-based organizations, or anywhere students can be accommodated
- Instruction is year-round, from July 1 through June 30 (fiscal year)
- Instruction is offered during daytime, evening and weekend hours to enable certain working adults to participate and effectively utilize available resources

The following types of programs are provided:

- *Adult Basic Education (ABE):* These are classes below the high school level where the primary objective is teaching basic literacy skills. Each course of study describes the focus population; the functioning level of the learners served; the basic literacy and life skills taught; and how these skills will be integrated into a competency-based adult education program. Adult education in elementary basic skills focus on native English speakers whose inability to effectively use these basic skills constitutes a substantial impairment to either obtain or retain employment or to function in society.
- *English as a Second Language (ESL) - now referred to as ELA (English Language Acquisition):* This program of instruction is designed to help individuals of limited English proficiency achieve competence in the English language. The inability to understand, speak, read, or write the English language may constitute a substantial impairment to obtain or retain employment commensurate with their abilities, and interfere with functioning successfully in society.
- *Adult Secondary Education (ASE or GED):* Adult secondary subjects consist of courses in mathematics, reading, history, science, government, language arts, and other courses leading to a high school diploma. The NJ DOE has approved three high school equivalency exams; the TASC developed by Data Recognition Corporation

(DRC), the HiSET developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS), and the GED developed by Pearson Vue. The TASC is composed of five sub-tests covering the areas of Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The HiSET is composed of five sub-tests covering the areas of Language Arts-Reading, Language Arts-Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The GED is composed of four sub-tests covering the areas of Reasoning Through Language Arts, Mathematical Reasoning, Science, and Social Studies. These tests are offered in an online format; a paper-based test may be provided for those with a qualifying disability.

- *Family Literacy (ABE or ESL):* Family Literacy programs provide services of sufficient intensity and duration to promote sustainable changes in a family, and integrate all of the following activities: (1) increasing parental involvement in children's education, including helping more frequently with school activities, increasing contact with children's teachers, and being more involved in children's school activities; and (2) increasing parental involvement in children's literacy activities, including reading to children, visiting libraries and purchasing books or magazines.
- *Integrated Education and Training:* An Integrated Education and Training (IET) program must meet the definition and requirements set forth in WIOA and the final regulations as established by the Department of Education on August 19, 2016 in the Federal Register. IET Programs utilize a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement (§463.35). An IET program must include the following three components: adult education and literacy activities; workforce preparation activities; and workforce training (§463.36). In addition, as part of a career pathway (§463.37), the intention of an IET program should support the state workforce development plan and local Workforce Development Board plans under WIOA; the programs must align services with state and local workforce needs. Each Title II provider consortium in New Jersey maintains a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the local Workforce Development Board (WDB) to support alignment and coordination. By the end of FY 2018, all local programs must have two IET courses, which draw on regional job sector and employment demands. IET courses will be internally monitored by LWD staff to determine/ensure the overall scope of the IET program, intensity, and to recognize how well the three required components occurring simultaneously within the overall scope of the program function for a successful IET course.
- *Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Programs:* This program focuses on serving English Language Learners under AEFLA and must meet the definition and requirements set forth in WIOA. The IELCE program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training (IET) activities and will be designed to prepare adult who are ELLs for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations which lead to economic self-sufficiency and integrate with the local workforce development system. All programs must document student eligibility, required instructional components and Workforce Development requirements. All programs receiving section 243 funds will be monitored by LWD staff through official visits and monthly desk audits to determine student eligibility and proper

use of program services provided in combination with IET and required instructional components.

Currently, New Jersey's Consolidated Adult Basic Skills (ABS) and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Grant Program is the mechanism for funding local adult education and literacy activities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 (P.L. 113-128), Title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

In Fiscal Year 2018, the total amount of federal funds available for this grant program is $14,569,560 and New Jersey awarded continuation awards to eligible providers ranging from $288,680 to $1,706,390. Historically, LWD has offered a one-year continuation, competitive grant program open to eligible providers to provide adult education and literacy services. The term **"eligible provider"** means an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities that may include -

(A) a local educational agency;

(B) a community-based organization or faith-based organization;

(C) a volunteer literacy organization;

(D) an institution of higher education;

(E) a public or private nonprofit agency;

(F) a library;

(G) a public housing authority;

(H) a nonprofit institution that is not described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (G) and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals;

(I) a consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries or authorities described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (H); and

(J) a partnership between an employer and an entity described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (I).

Proposals from potential grant applicants included a 3-year data comparison spreadsheet to show past effectiveness by summarizing program trends, strengths and weaknesses.The awarding of continuation grants to eligible applicants has been based, and will continue to be based, upon educational attainment level for each local area and the following 13 elements:

- The degree to which the eligible provider is responsive to:

o Regional needs as identified in the local plan under section 108; and

o Serving individuals in the community who were identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities.

- The ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities; including eligible individuals with learning disabilities;
- The past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, to meet State-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in section 116, especially with respect to eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy;
- The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under section 108, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners;
- Whether the eligible provider's program -

o is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and

o uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction;

- Whether activities, including whether reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice;
- Whether activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems to increase the amount and quality of learning and how such technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance;
- Whether activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;
- Whether activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who have access to high quality professional development;
- Whether activities are coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community for the development of career pathways;
- Whether activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with Federal, State, and local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs;
- Whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section 116) and to monitor program performance; and
- Whether the local areas in which the eligible provider is located have a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

The relationship between the local Workforce Development Board (WDB) and the Title II ABS/IELCE grant awardee is on of collaboration and cooperation. Title II grant proposals shall detail their proposed service plan within the framework of their local WDB service structure. Additionally, in developing a proposal for this grant program, all applicants must

consult with the local WDB for the area in which proposed services are expected to be provided. Local WDBs received all applications for the AEFLA award in their respective area; WDBs were required to read through the applicant's proposal and to submit feedback to LWD staff regarding alignment to local plans and to share any comments or concerns with the proposal.

While many of the Consolidated Adult Basic Skills (ABS) and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Grant Program requirements will remain the same for eligible providers in the future, New Jersey is interested in exploring approaches that encourage regionalism and further system alignment among adult education and literacy and other workforce programs available in the One-Stop Career Centers. In the next grant cycle (FY 2020), LWD will consider releasing funding at the regional level rather than to sub-regional consortia as well as requiring eligible applicants to demonstrate how they will:

- Work toward co-location at the One-Stop Career Centers at least on a part-time basis;
- Integrate occupational skills into program activities and/or contextualize learning; and
- Leverage adult education and literacy as a tool to make career pathways available for individuals from all educational backgrounds.

In doing so, LWD will ensure regions and local providers are provided with the training and support to make these changes.

In addition, New Jersey is streamlining the Adult Education and Literacy programs delivery system and leveraging other funding streams to support those populations that are most in need, including TANF, GA, and SNAP participants. New Jersey will work with its partners and Title II providers to facilitate provision of services to a greater number of these customers, as funding allows. To help facilitate service needs, the formation of the SETC-LWD Title I and Title II workgroup is intended to bring stakeholders together to discern and address areas of concern and to propose possible solutions.

Adult Literacy and Community Library Pilot Program:

In early 2016, LWD launched the Adult Literacy and Community Library Partnership (ALCLP) pilot program to create direct partnerships between local libraries and New Jersey's Federal WIOA Title II adult literacy instructional service providers. Eleven grantees were selected for the pilot year. The accomplishments of the pilot program led to an expansion in the second grant year, in which the number of grantees was increased to 17. New Jersey libraries are an essential partner in providing adult literacy services within their communities. LWD views the services provided by New Jersey libraries as complimentary to the WIOA Title II system and as such wants to create new and/or expand existing partnerships between the two groups. The ALCLP grant program is subsidized with state funds. This grant program is designed to improve access and instructional opportunities for New Jersey residents to increase their Adult Basic Education and/or English Language proficiency skills through the state's library system. WIOA Title II providers are envisioned to best provide traditional classroom instruction and the libraries to provide the delivery setting and wrap-around support services to achieve success.

The Department sets a priority on awarding grants that demonstrate clear and meaningful outcomes. The key outcomes established by LWD for this pilot training grant program are one or more of the following:

1. Functional grade level advancement based on WIOA Title II metrics;

2. Increase in the student's Workplace, Financial, or Health Literacy Skills; or

3. Connection and enrollment to a credential bearing career pathway opportunity.

All funded training efforts must contribute towards greater employability opportunities and/or career advancement for New Jersey residents in need of jobs as well as those in low-wage, lower skilled occupations.

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.

In New Jersey, the section 225 services are competitively procured through the LWD competitive Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) process. As part of the competitive NGO process, the State issues the application guidelines, receives all proposals for services, reviews proposals and makes all determinations of funding. In addition, LWD manages the contract, makes all service provider payments, and reviews performance, in accordance with Title II requirements.

The LWD Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program ensures that not more than 10 percent of 82.5 percent of the funding for the cost of educational programs is allocated for programs for criminal offenders in the correctional facilities as well as for other institutional individuals. Emphasis is on programs that promote: 1) adult basic education; 2) programs for individuals with disabilities as well as other special needs; 3) English literacy programs; 4) secondary school credit programs; 5) transitional support to prepare students to make a successful transition to the community; and 6) life skills and employability skill development to prepare students to gain employment.

LWD utilizes the same grant announcement and application process to provide funds to serve individuals in correctional facilities and other institutions that is being used for all other eligible providers.

Providers that receive funds to provide programs and services to correctional facilities and other institutions will be required to describe in their grant application, in addition to all other program requirements, how they will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

Ensuring continuity of services for offenders transitioning from prison back to their communities is an important goal for New Jersey. WIOA Title II and State Literacy funds (Workforce Learning Link) are provided to the correctional system so that work-readiness services can be implemented prior to release to help promote a seamless transition to community-based One-Stop Career Center services and then into employment.

Wagner-Peyser provides accessibility for all populations to the full range of One-Stop Career Center employment and training programs. Programs designed to serve the needs of special populations with or without significant barriers to employment are integrated into the universal access provided by Wagner-Peyser and WIOA. Members of special populations, however, identified as having significant barriers to employment often require more intensive services to reach the employment goal. Significant barriers include poor previous attachment to the workforce, literacy or language barriers, ex-offender status, educational or occupational skills gap or lack of a credential, physical or mental disability, and driver's license suspension.

To help special populations with significant barriers to employment, New Jersey has created targeted programs and dedicated staff to help ensure positive outcomes. The challenge is to meet customers where they are by creating a proactive approach to promote and serve special populations. Once special populations enter the One-Stop Career Center system, ensuring that customers receive the services needed to reach their goal becomes a staff responsibility. All One-Stop Career Center staff members need to take ownership for the customer experience by providing warm handoffs when referrals to other service providers are appropriate. That involves taking the extra time to walk customers to where they need to go, introducing them to staff that can help them, and then circling back with customers to

make sure their needs were met. Staff need to follow-up with customers to ensure all jobseekers remain engaged and focused on overcoming barriers to enable them to successfully (re)enter the workforce. Maintaining a stronger, more supportive connection to customers will result in better outcomes and improve the perceived value of the One-Stop Career Centers.

As noted previously, the SETC also works with the Department of Corrections and the Juvenile Justice Commission to align educational and training opportunities for incarcerated individuals.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

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.

See section (b) above. The State's NGO process for Adult Basic Skills and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Grant Programs will continue to ensure that all funded proposals include an integrated English Literacy and Civics program compliant with Section 243. All program applicants will include a portion of the program narrative dedicated to describing how their program will provide services that focus on career pathways, employer connections, Integrated Education and Training (IET) and workforce preparation. All programs funded under WIOA Title II are tracked for performance outcomes. All service providers complete performance dashboards and have the ability to track themselves. If they are members of a consortium, a consortia manager can also track performance outcomes as reported. Additionally, all information is tracked by the LWD Office of Adult Literacy Services. LWD provides both technical assistance and programmatic improvement best practice forums. It should be made clear no level of ELA instruction can be ignored when submitting a proposal. Proposals that are incomplete are rejected. New Jersey has an established state goal of "obtained citizenship" which is a potential result of integrated ESL (now ELA) and Civics education.

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.

All funds under Section 243 are awarded through a competitive NGO process as outlined above. This application process includes a required description of the service delivery model being proposed by the applicant as well as comment from the local WDB. Any grantee/agency receiving IELCE funds must offer a minimum of two IET classes per program year. These IET classes must include instruction in reading, writing, mathematics and English proficiency that occur simultaneously while building an employable occupational skillset. All proposals are vetted by the LWD Office of Adult Literacy Services for compliance with WIOA and determination of quality. Additionally, all grant applications are reviewed by the local WDB to determine if the services proposed are aligned with the

locally developed literacy services plan. LWD staff will monitor all new courses with in-person site visits and monthly desk audits to verify data.

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.

Required Activities:

The state will develop, and fund, a comprehensive, ongoing professional development system that enables adult literacy staff to meet new WIOA requirements. Key to this professional development system is the requirement that Workforce Development Boards conduct joint planning and training for One-Stop, adult literacy and WDB staff directed toward establishing partnerships, resource sharing and appropriate and necessary student referrals. The inclusion of the development of career pathways to provide further access to employment and training services for adults will be a multi-faceted effort across many agencies and titles.

Professional development will utilize multiple delivery modes to reach part-time and other hard to reach staff. This includes a mix of in-person meetings, synchronous online events and resources made available online. Professional development topics will include a review of NRS-approved assessments and administration certification for staff, distance learning pilots, and growing IET models across agencies.

Monitoring visits and on-going programmatic review of best practices will be conducted to ensure compliance with any and all regulatory requirements. Monitoring visits will be conducted in-house through desk audits to ensure the MIS is being properly and fully utilized. Additional in-person monitoring teams seek to review the quality and frequency of instruction related to specific needs of adult learners.

Joint collaborative meeting between local providers and WDBs will help to grow technical assistance topics aimed at leveraging eligible providers' position as a one-stop partner to facilitate access to employment, training, and supportive services necessary for progress through career pathways.

To reinforce the professional development strategies, technical assistance will be provided to eligible providers of adult education and literacy on programmatic and instructional practices that take into account the educational needs of all learners, including access to career pathways, and strategies to tailor curriculum to each student's level. Monitoring visits will be conducted to ensure compliance with any and all regulatory requirements. Upon review of the findings from the monitoring visits if corrective action is necessary proof of completion would be required.

Technical assistance will also include practices aimed at leveraging eligible providers' position as a one-stop partner to facilitate access to employment, training, and supportive services necessary for progress through career pathways.

Current professional development efforts include an analysis of quality professional development needs and a road map for future planning. Additionally, College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) will continue to be implemented through professional

development workshops and reinforced through staff supported services, including the addition of three regional coordinators who are tasked with reviewing curricula from Title II lead and partner agencies to discern and discover which materials and standards are in use. LWD convenes lead agency directors at required quarterly roundtable meetings; analysis and best practices are an ongoing topic at these meetings, to strengthen collaboration and support the drive towards full adoption of the CCRS.

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

See response in Section E (1) above. Leadership funds are utilized to support the State's management information system. This includes intensive technical support for all grantees in an effort to improve data quality resulting in improved performance outcomes. The use of leadership funds to grow and develop distance learning via possible technology initiatives will result in more adults gaining 21st century skills to help them fill in-demand positions.

An ongoing collaborative partnership with New Jersey's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has resulted in workshops for grantees to educate them in disability awareness and to provide them with essential tools and resources. In an effort to expand literacy resources, a partnership with local libraries has been established to create greater access to literacy services.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

LWD provides Technical Assistance to all program providers through monitoring and corrective action, Report Cards detailing program performance year to date as it pertains to their goals, monthly data quality review, and targeted trainings to review data for accuracy and to find missing details.

The State continues other activities funded under 223 allocations. LWD believes in and is committed to high-quality professional development, which includes the many facets of adult education. In Program Year 2016, LWD developed a comprehensive collaboration with the Rutgers University Graduate School of Education, to build and maintain professional development leadership with directors and instructional leaders of Title II programs statewide. The Professional Development Leadership Initiative (PDLI) included participants from each of New Jersey's 17 literacy provider consortia. The goal of the PDLI was to increase capacity among leaders from New Jersey's state Title II agencies and lead instructors from Title II agencies, to broker and/or facilitate high quality professional development. The longer term goal is to lay the groundwork for the development of a state professional development system.

The LWD Office of Adult Literacy Services will continue to provide technical assistance specific to system alignment, role of eligible providers, and dissemination of instructional practice. Additionally, the Office of Adult Literacy Services will provide all monitoring and evaluation of program performance. New Jersey is proud of the fact that we have seen almost a doubling of our outcome performance standards in the last four years. We have

worked to not only educate providers to the expected outcomes, but also provided forums for best practices in program operations, to assist providers in achieving better outcomes. All performance is tracked in our LACES database using a dashboard from a statewide perspective, as well as from an individual program level. Each program year, literacy provider grantees are provided a report card by LWD, detailing strengths and weaknesses in achieving mandated performance standards. The LWD Office of Adult Literacy Services is committed to serving the diverse student population throughout the state. LWD is continuing its work to ensure that program activities are integrated with the local workforce development system. To that end, strategic partnerships between local Workforce Development Boards and local literacy providers, through guided statewide efforts, will be an ongoing part of the literacy landscape in New Jersey.

Current professional development efforts include an analysis of quality professional development needs and a road map for future planning. These efforts include a four phase implementation plan which will build capacity and leadership skills as they relate to professional development. Additionally, College and Career Readiness Standards will be implemented through professional development workshops and reinforced through staff supported services. The Department has added four additional staff whose expertise lie in education and curriculum development. The State has established "Best Practice Committees" to facilitate and drive continuous improvement.

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 **NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Robert Asaro-Angelo**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Commissioner**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to OCTAE_MAT@ed.gov

ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal

requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions). Yes

2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA. Yes

3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA. Yes

4. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities; Yes

5. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program; and Yes

6. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Yes

7. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303). Yes

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the instructions posted at https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.doc.

The LWD Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services oversees the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act services in New Jersey, which are delivered through "Programs of Instruction" that receive AEFLA funds via a competitive grant process. To ensure equitable access to these programs, in accordance with Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), the Notices of Grant Opportunity are issued with the following language:

Methods to Overcome Barriers to Equitable Participation and Ensure Equitable Access to, and participation in this grant program by all eligible participants, teachers, and program beneficiaries with special needs in compliance with the requirements of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427 must be described. The agency must address and describe steps it will take to overcome barriers to equitable participation so as to allow potential

beneficiaries to fully participate in the program and to achieve high standards. Section 427 of GEPA highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access of participation that may be addressed: gender, race, color, national origin, disability and age. Based on local circumstances, the agency can determine whether these or other barriers may prevent students, teachers and other beneficiaries from equitable access or participation.

These steps must include an agency's process in assisting participants to obtain supportive services in overcoming barriers to participation in the program. This should include contacting any referral agencies prior to the participant's visit. The goal of contacting the referral agency prior to the visit is to ensure a proper referral is being made for the needs of the participant.

Additionally, LWD has developed a compulsory attestation form for use by applicant agencies when submitting grant applications. This form asks the applicant to identify the specific steps the agency will take to ensure equitable access to and equitable participation in the program or activity to be conducted with federal adult education assistance by addressing the access needs of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries in order to overcome barriers to equitable participation, including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability and age. The form also indicates that the GEPA highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age, and asked the applicant agency to determine, based on local circumstances, whether these or other barriers may prevent students, teachers, etc., from such access or participation in the federally-funded program or activity, and to attest to the steps to be taken to comply with the GEPA requirements.

Past grantees in New Jersey have partnered with DVRS, utilized adaptive equipment, hired American Sign Language interpreters, hired individuals certified as NJ Teacher of the Handicapped and certified Teacher of the Deaf; grantees have also provided bi-lingual staff and provided on-site support services for community and family counseling, among other activities.

To ensure compliance, LWD is moving towards more comprehensive on-site program evaluation activities to ensure compliance with the requirements WIOA, fiscal accountability, quality program operation, and administrative responsibility. LWD seeks to ensure all programs are evaluated through an on-site visit at least bi-annually for quality and compliance through site visits and monthly desk monitoring. LWD is developing a site monitoring checklist and will make it available to all service providers as a performance guide. Ongoing professional development is conducted to ensure that all service providers are knowledgeable of the requirements and procedures. If, at any time, a program is found to be out of compliance with Federal or State requirements, the provider will be placed on probation for up to a year as they fulfill a corrective action plan. Failure to comply with the plan may lead to reduction of removal of funding pursuant to State Adult Education policies and procedures.

In addition to monthly desk audits and on-site program visits, service providers are also required to submit an interim progress report by mid-January to detail the following:

1. Briefly outline your consortium's progress, successes and challenges related to student EFL gains during this program year to date.

2. Briefly outline your consortium's progress, successes and challenges related to student enrollment, attendance and retention during this program year to date.

3. Briefly outline your consortium's progress, successes and challenges related to student attainment of High School Equivalency certification during this program year to date.

4. Briefly outline your consortium's progress, successes and challenges related to students' increased citizenship skills and community involvement this program year to date. If not applicable, please respond N/A.

5. Briefly outline your consortium's progress, successes and challenges related to students obtaining citizenship this program year to date. If not applicable, please respond N/A.

6. Briefly outline your consortium's progress, successes and challenges related to students' increased involvement with their children's education and literacy this program year to date. If not applicable, please respond N/A.

7. Briefly outline any noteworthy innovations and/or challenges your consortium has encountered related to student intake, data entry and/or LACES maintenance during this program year to date. If not applicable, please respond N/A.

8. Briefly outline your consortium's progress, successes and challenges related to the implementation of IET programs thus far. Please include budgetary details if possible.

9. Briefly outline any noteworthy innovations and/or challenges your consortium has encountered related to Professional Development this program year to date. Please include suggestions for PD offerings as well as explanations of any specific PD needs.

10. Please provide any additional relevant information regarding your consortium's operation and performance this program year to date.

Final activity reports similar to the aforementioned for all service providers are due annually in early October for internal LWD review.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (GENERAL)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

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

DVRS subscribes to the Employment First principles adopted by the Governor in April 2012, and the agency believes that these principles should be accomplished in the context of long-term career pathway development.

DVRS is committed to working with all WIOA partners, and currently 16 of the 18 Vocational Rehabilitation offices throughout the State of New Jersey are co-located at One-Stop Career Centers.

The New Jersey State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) provides oversight and advises the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), the designated state unit (DSU) within the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD). LWD is the designated state agency (DSA). The SRC is a partnership of people with disabilities, advocates, and other interested persons who are committed to ensuring through policy development, implementation, and advocacy that New Jersey has a rehabilitation program that is not only comprehensive and consumer-responsive but also effective, efficient, and significantly funded. The SRC is dedicated to ensuring that people with disabilities receive rehabilitation services that result in gainful employment. Representing the myriad of diversity that is New Jersey, council members believe that individuals with disabilities are the "untapped resource" to the business community and assert that disability is a natural part of the human experience that in no way diminishes a person's right to fully participate in all aspects of American life. Members of the SRC in New Jersey believe in a public system of vocational rehabilitation that is responsible and accountable to those it serves and to those who fund it; they believe that competitive jobs generate tax revenue and enable all individuals, includingindividuals with disabilities, to spend discretionary income which contributes to the state's economy.

SRC Recommendations for DVRS:

- The SRC understands that the job of the counselor is unique and requires knowledge of vocational rehabilitation specific to individuals with disabilities. The SRC recommends continued requirement of the New Jersey DVRS counselor position to include a master's degree in vocational rehabilitation or a closely related field as per current civil service description.
- The SRC recommends that the DVRS continue to educate the community and policy makers as to the services, successes and outcomes of the state public vocational rehabilitation program, including the return on investment from using vocational rehabilitation services.

- The SRC recognizes that the DVRS program is affected by state funding cuts. The SRC recommends that the DVRS identifies and advocates strategies to ensure that state matching funds will be consistently available for future fiscal years and that there is funding for maintenance of effort.
- The SRC recognizes that jobseekers with disabilities sometimes require innovative approaches to enhance their chance to garner gainful integrated employment. The SRC recommends that the DVRS pursue strategies such as using paid internships for DVRS consumers and increase the use of on-the-job training (OJT) opportunities for qualified DVRS jobseekers as appropriate.
- The SRC further recommends that the DVRS develop strategies that will enhance opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities currently participating in segregated employment programs who, through informed choice, identify the desire to move into integrated employment.
- The SRC recognizes that public satisfaction for DVRS services is critical and recommends that DVRS establish yearly public forums throughout the state that focus on specific topics based on the goals established by the comprehensive statewide needs assessment.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

- DVRS accepts the recommendation to maintain the requirement of a VR counselor to include a master's degree in vocational rehabilitation or a closely related field as per current civil service description.
- DVRS accepts the recommendation to educate the community and policy makers as to the services, successes and outcomes of the public VR program and will implement marketing strategies to educate the public about its services.
- DVRS accepts the recommendation to identify new sources of state match in order to be able to draw down the total federal allotment and ensure maintenance of effort is funded.
- DVRS accepts the recommendation to develop processes that will encourage the use of paid internships for DVRS consumers and increase the use of on-the-job training opportunities for qualified DVRS jobseekers.
- DVRS accepts the recommendation to enhance opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities currently participating in segregated employment programs who, through informed choice, identify the desire to move into integrated employment.
- DVRS accepts the recommendation to establish yearly public forums throughout the state that will focus on specific topics based on the goals established by the comprehensive statewide needs assessment and looks forward to further suggestions from the SRC for any additional topic areas.

DVRS approves of all recommendations from the SRC.

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3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

DVRS approves of all recommendations from the SRC.

B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

1. A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;

DVRS is waiting on approval of a waiver of statewideness from USDOE-Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) in order to develop third-party cooperative agreements with local education agencies (LEAs), public higher education agencies, and county human services agencies. DVRS has not yet established a third-party cooperative agreement (TPCA) but plans to work with LEAs to create third-party cooperative agreements relating to the provision of pre-employment transition services. This is a new service under WIOA. In order to establish a TPCA DVRS will assure that the LEA(s) will provide the non-Federal share of costs associated with the services to be provided in accordance with the waiver request. Cooperative agreements will include the following required federal assurances:

- Local funds used as match are certified as non-federal monies. The non-federal share of funds are made available by the local public agencies to DVRS and are either paid through a cash match contribution or reported as certified expenditures of redirected agency staff time to provide a unique pattern of VR services exclusively to DVRS applicants/consumers. Each cooperative agreement identifies the type and amount of match to be provided by the local public agency.
- The types of VR services provided to DVRS applicants/consumers by the local public agency or associated vendor are identified by the VR counselor.
- Prior written approval is issued by DVRS to the local public agency or associated CRP, which designates the specific type of VR services to be provided to DVRS applicants/ consumers.
- The VR services provided are only for DVRS applicants/consumers and are new services that have a VR focus or existing services that have been modified, adapted, expanded, or reconfigured to have a VR focus; and, that are not customary services the local public agency is legally mandated to provide. The services included in each cooperative agreement are based on the local needs of DVRS applicants/consumers and the local public agency.
- Program expenses for cooperative agreement services are under the administrative supervision of DVRS through the cooperative agreement.
- Each cooperative program and DVRS District establishes a mutual referral system for individuals to apply for VR services.
- All State Plan requirements will apply to all services provided to DVRS applicants/consumers under the cooperative agreement.

DVRS has established Project SEARCH programs in four counties through a waiver of statewideness. Our eventual goal is to support sites in every county; however, it is critical that DVRS pilots this effort before moving to a statewide implementation.

Requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

See above response in Section (b) 1.

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.

See above response in Section (b) 1.

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) believes that collaboration with stakeholders is essential to assisting people with disabilities to successfully become employed. Such an ongoing effort maximizes resources and addresses the quality of life issues that can impact the ability of a person with a disability to obtain and maintain employment. The DVRS is part of Workforce Development within LWD and is a strong partner with the One-Stop Career Center Workforce Investment System throughout the state. The agency also enjoys a cooperative relationship with state and community-based agencies to collaborate on programs that will promote the empowerment and economic independence of individuals with disabilities in an effort to encourage employment. The agency arranges memoranda of understanding (MOUs) for the purpose of carrying out activities that require a formalized response or protocol in the delivery of services. Since the Governor has declared through Executive Order, that New Jersey become the 14th Employment First state, the DVRS is reexamining all of the current MOUs in order to ensure policy aligns with the intent of Employment First.

Employment First: What Will Be Different?

2013:

• Many individuals with significant developmental disabilities (DD) don't come through the doors of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS.)

• There are low expectations of employment for Individuals with significant developmental disabilities (DD)

• Transition students with DD and adults in sheltered workshops do not have a clear path to DVRS, state partners & employment

• DD individuals have limited opportunities in the workforce to make commensurate wages

• Individuals with DD have a high rate of unemployment as well as being underemployed

• DVRS currently provides services to approximately 2,500 individuals with developmental disabilities

2016:

• More individuals with significant developmental disabilities (DD) will have greater access to become DVRS consumers

• DVRS staff, vendors, and state partners will have the expectation that employment is the first and preferred option for adult activity for those with DD

• DD consumers including transition students and persons in workshops will have increased opportunities for a smooth transition into employment via a defined process established by DVRS and state partners

• DD consumers will be provided with programs and services that offer job targeted skill development, education and training

• DD individuals will have increased opportunities to become DVRS consumers, obtain job skills, and obtain competitive employment that matches their interests, skills & capabilities

• Through a leverage of services with DDD, DVRS will serve an increased amount of DD individuals

Figure 42

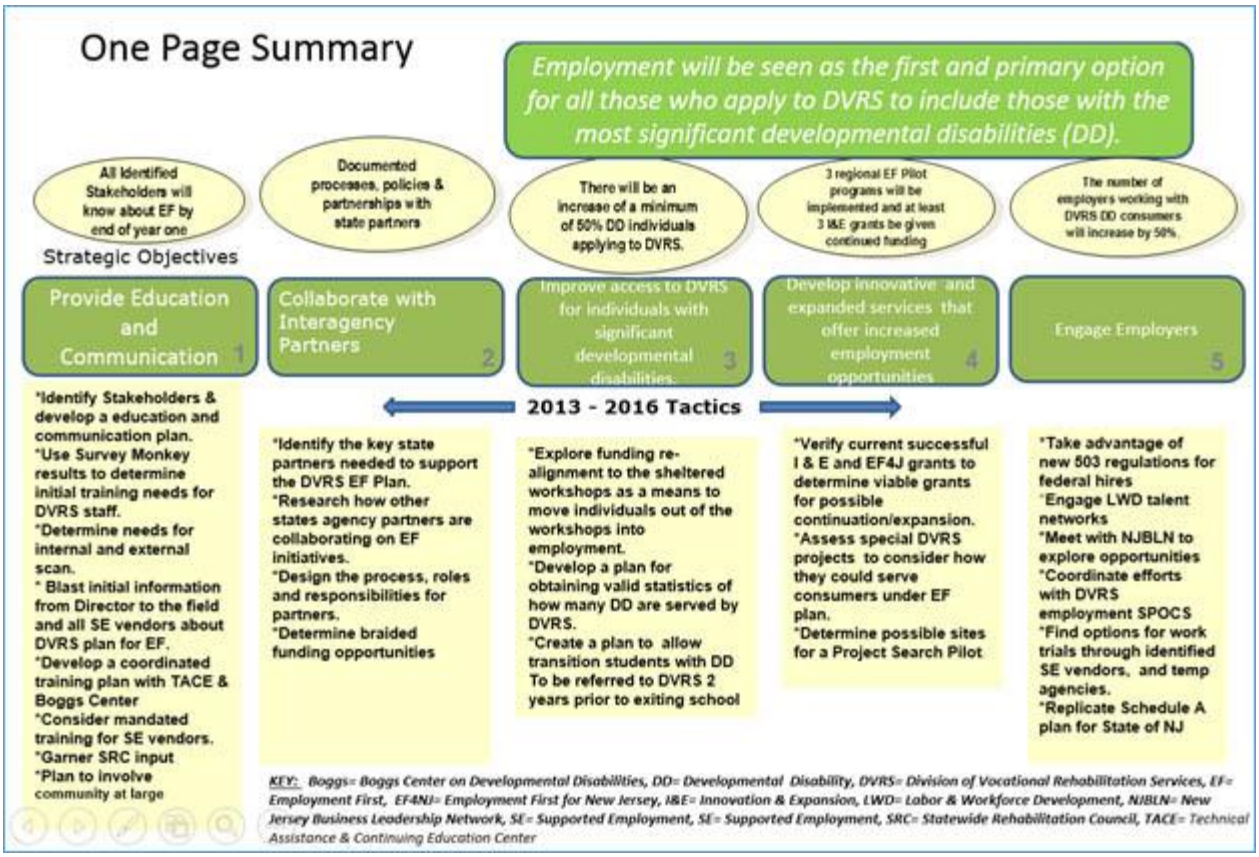

Figure 43

MOUs that have been revised include the following:

- The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) - DVRS and CBVI entered into a formal MOU with DDD in FFY 2015. The MOU outlines the process for DDD consumers who are interested in competitive integrated employment to access VR services.

MOUs are continuing to be developed for:

- Offices of Special Education Programs (OSEP) - DVRS will develop an MOU with OSEP to coordinate efforts for students with disabilities to ensure that all students in transition have the opportunity to receive pre-employment transition services.
- Department of Children and Families (DCF) - DVRS will reach out to DCF to develop an MOU relating to students with disabilities that are under their system of care. This includes students with intellectual and developmental disabilities under the age of 21 as well as students with disabilities with significant and pervasive psychiatric and behavioral health needs who are being served by DCF.
- Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS), DHS - DVRS will establish an MOU with DMAHS, the lead agency administering Medicaid Waivers.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

The DDD serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, who meet the functional criteria of having a developmental disability, are eligible for and maintain Medicaid eligibility, and are at least 18 years of age at the time of application and 21 years of age to receive services. Conditions generally considered developmental disabilities include intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, spina bifida, and autism. Part of DDD's implementation of the Employment First Initiative includes an annual discussion with individuals served, family members, and Support Coordinators providing care management services to identify each individual's current employment status and identify how to assist the individual in reaching his/her employment outcomes. In addition, an employment-related outcome is required within the Individualized Service Plan (ISP) of every individual served through DDD. When an individual is not pursuing employment, a statement explaining why the individual is not pursuing employment at that time is included in the ISP. When an individual is in need of employment services to assist him/her in obtaining and/or maintaining employment, he/she must seek those services through DVRS initially. DDD provides other needed services while the eligibility determination is being made with DVRS or in addition to the employment services provided through DVRS. Once an eligibility determination is made with DVRS, DDD is able to provide employment services not available through DVRS, as well as the other services that are available through DDD. Because the DDD has transferred all of their children services to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF), the DVRS will be reaching out to the DCF to develop an MOU for the purpose of supporting students in transition who will need DVRS services in order to access employment.

The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education

In order to define the most appropriate resource to cover expenses such as interpreter services, personal care attendants and other accessibility areas while an individual with a disability participates in a school program, the division has agreements with all four-year state colleges and all county colleges in New Jersey. These MOUs have been in place for many years and will be updated in program year 2016.

The Division of Wage and Hour Compliance

In conjunction with community-based rehabilitation programs, the DVRS maintains an MOU with the CBVI, the DDD, and the Division of Wage and Hour, which outlines the criteria for an employment relationship under New Jersey Wage and Hour Law in such a way that vocational rehabilitation activities may take place in community settings without undue restriction. Consequently, situational assessments and similar "on-the-job" work experience may take place without violating employment law. **Agrability** The southern part of New Jersey works with Agrability to ensure that farmers who have become disabled have the opportunity for rehabilitation services. There is currently no formal agreement with the US Department of Agriculture.

Coordination with Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and Centers for Independent Living

In New Jersey, the DVRS has a positive relationship with the SILC and has supported its growth throughout the years. The DVRS uses Title I innovation and expansion funds to support the operation of the SILC and includes them in all agency activities. A SILC member has a seat on the SRC and the DVRS supports the SILC through its active participation at

their meetings and in the preparation of the state plan for independent living (SPIL) and the RSA Section 704 Report. The state currently has eight federally-funded centers for independent living (CILs). The DVRS expanded the network through the RSA Part B grant and a line item in the state budget to add five CILs to the group. The DVRS has dedicated a program specialist to offer the CILs consultation and technical assistance. The DVRS feels that these centers offer a dynamic that is necessary for individuals with disabilities before, during, and after their employment experience.

The reauthorization of WIOA transferred the Independent Living program to the Administration for Community Living (ACL) from the U.S. Department of Education. The Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILC), along with the IL directors in each state were given the authority to choose the designated state entity (DSE) to administer the state program. The New Jersey SILC required interested agencies to apply. DVRS was chosen to remain the DSE and will continue to administer the IL programs in New Jersey.

The DVRS continues to value the partnership that exists between the DVRS and is working with them to establish a viable pre-employment transition services strategy that will help DVRS provide this service to all students with disabilities.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

DVRS works in collaboration with Disability Rights New Jersey (DRNJ) as the grantee that coordinates programs under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. DVRS is a member of DRNJ's Assistive Technology Council to ensure that appropriate assistive technology assessments, equipment, and support are done in a timely manner for DVRS consumers. DVRS also contracts with three Deaf centers that have established equipment libraries to show assistive technology to individuals who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Late Deafened adults, and individuals with cochlear implants.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

Agrability

The southern part of New Jersey works with Agrability to ensure that farmers who have become disabled have the opportunity for rehabilitation services. There is currently no formal agreement with the US Department of Agriculture.

4. NONEDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

DVRS collaborates with the Centers for Independent Living throughout the state. Many IL centers contract with their local workforce areas and provide services to out-of-school youth. DVRS also works in partnership with the court system, in particular with efforts to help youth with substance abuse histories to obtain employment. Counselors in the local offices also participate in faith-based efforts to reach out-of-school youth to provide services to youth with disabilities.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

The DVRS state director is a voting member on the Commodities and Exchange Commission; this is the entity that directs the state's set-aside program for state use contracts. DVRS has been working with New Jersey's Central Nonprofit Agency (CNA) to establish training that will provide national credentials to participants with disabilities currently working in these programs. With appropriate accessible training and testing participants would be able to make prevailing wages.

D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

Describe:

1. DSU'S PLANS

The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) understands the critical relationship that exists among education and employment that in turn affects independence and quality of life. Transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities is a top priority for the DVRS. The Division has had a long-standing formal interagency agreement for transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities. This agreement is with the DVRS, the Offices of Special Education Programs and the Office of Career Readiness in the New Jersey Department of Education, and the CBVI in the New Jersey Department of Human Services. Since the Governor declared through proclamation in April 2012, that New Jersey become the 14th Employment First state, it is critical that the DVRS reexamine this agreement to ensure policy aligns with the intent of Employment First. The DVRS will identify policy alignment with the SEA to ensure that employment is the first and presumed outcome for students with disabilities.

The DVRS does not have formal agreements with local school districts. The 605 school districts in the state of New Jersey are autonomous. Accordingly, districts provide special education to students with disabilities in unique ways. Some rely on the DVRS counselors to provide consultation when students turn 14; others ensure that students are connected with the DVRS within two years of a student graduating from public education entitlement. However, there remain a number of districts that identify credit requirements for graduation rather than transition services; these districts make no effort to comply with the IDEA requirements to link students prior to graduation. Consequently, it is virtually impossible to pursue LEA agreements with every district. There are 21 counties in New Jersey; the New Jersey Department of Education employs a county superintendent to supervise the LEAs in each county. Upon reauthorization the DVRS will pursue county-based MOUs with each county superintendent for the purposes of clarifying the DVRS role in the transition process for students with disabilities.

The reauthorization of WIOA established new services requirements for the public VR program. Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) must be offered to all students with disabilities. This includes students in school who are under the entitlement to special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), or who receive

accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. In New Jersey, transition begins in the school year in which a student turns 14 and ends with graduation. DVRS has identified a program development specialist who will take the lead for Pre-ETS planning. Goals will be developed to ensure appropriate services are offered. In order to meet this new requirement DVRS has established a Pre-ETS unit. This unit will coordinate required activities and ensure consistent delivery of Pre-ETS services throughout the state.The Pre-ETS unit will contact all LEAs to coordinate the following:

- Identification of all students with disabilities;
- Timely submission of relevant documents to the local office that will establish eligibility for students, through informed choice, when they turn 14;
- Parental agreement for the student to receive Pre-ETS services; and
- Development of appropriate IPE.

The new Pre-ETS requirement requires DVRS to provide five specific activities to all students with disabilities; at the same time the law is not meant to supplant entitled transition services through IDEA. Procedures will be developed to make sure there is a coordinated strategy with defined roles and responsibilities between LEAs and DVRS. DVRS will pursue an MOU with the SEA to identify these roles and responsibilities. There are over 75,000 students with disabilities ages 14 - 21 in New Jersey's public schools. Currently a counselor is assigned to each public high school throughout the state. DVRS plans to increase the number of counselors in counties where there are high numbers of students with disabilities, in particular Bergen, Essex, Monmouth, Middlesex, Camden and Passaic counties.

DVRS provides consultation and TA that assists LEAs to plan for the transition of students with disabilities. Counselors provide information about VR services in a variety of ways, including distribution of brochures about VR services, classroom visits to discuss services, and evening sessions with families. Additionally, each local Workforce Development Board has a disability subcommittee that includes the DVRS manager and the county superintendent. County-wide transition fairs are common throughout the state and counselors participate in them.

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;

A DVRS counselor is assigned to every public high school in New Jersey. Counselors provide technical assistance to Child Study Teams (CST) that help in the development and implementation of IEPs. While many high schools take advantage of the counselor's expertise in vocational rehabilitation, others prefer not to include DVRS on a regular basis. Counselors provide information to families in a variety of ways, including presentations at conferences sponsored by New Jersey's Parent Training and Information Center, and other disability-specific organizations such as Autism New Jersey.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

DVRS participates in annual student conferences sponsored by the Offices of Special Education Programs. The DVRS transition coordinator and other designated DVRS personnel also participate in inter-agency county-based transition committees and forums as a means to increase awareness of the DVRS services and provide information about the agency.

DVRS has updated the "Director's Letter" to describe Pre-ETS services. Information about the DVRS guidelines, policies and services in relation to transition and Pre-ETS services was updated in the following:

- Guidelines for School Personnel
- Guidelines for students in transition
- What is Pre-employment Transition Services?
- DVRS Myths & Facts

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

The LEA CST case manager takes the lead in transition planning in New Jersey. DVRS counselors provide consultation and technical assistance but do not fund any of the entitlement services provided under IDEA. DVRS helps to identify approved vendors for job coaching in circumstances requiring that service; this ensures a smooth transition of services upon graduation. The IPE may include funding for services, such as paid internships, that are not entitled services under IDEA.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

There is a DVRS counselor assigned to every public high school in New Jersey. Counselors reach out to their assigned schools to establish communication and relationships with CST members responsible for transition in the student's IEP. Counselors are responsible for developing these relationships in order to ensure that students with disabilities who need transition services are given the opportunity to learn about DVRS services. Each local office tracks the number of transition meetings and consultations provided by the counselor; the PDS keeps record for the state.

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.

Cooperative agreements (in the broadest sense of the term) with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers are established and maintained in a variety of

ways including Notice of Grant Opportunities (NGOs) contracts, program approvals, MOUs, technical assistance workshops and ongoing monitoring.

When funding becomes available for new vocational rehabilitation projects and services, the availability of these funds are posted as an NGO on the Department website and also communicated to providers statewide. The NGO will describe the purpose of the funding, the providers that are eligible to apply for the funding, the necessary programmatic requirements, expected outcomes and time frame for the service provision. A technical assistance workshop is held thereafter to explain and clarify the intent of the NGO. Applications are then reviewed for adherence to the NGO specifications and the funds are awarded accordingly. The awards, in turn, are transitioned into contracts. Each provider is assigned a program planning and development specialist (PPDS) to monitor the expenditures and programmatic results of the contract.

Providers may also have their contract (or cooperative agreement) renewed on an annual basis, depending upon the type of service, when the service was established, or when the service last underwent the NGO process. As the contract's end date comes to a close, the previous year's results are reviewed and the contractual relationship is re—established. The contract specifications are reiterated and any changes or modifications to the contract are incorporated therein.

The DVRS also receives requests from new providers to vend an existing service and enter into a cooperative agreement by which the DVRS purchases services from them. Existing providers may also request to expand their services or the counties that they serve, and thereby modify their cooperative agreement.

Most frequently, the DVRS is approached by a new provider to vend supported employment services. It is important to note that most of the services that a private, nonprofit organization would provide to the DVRS are subject to New Jersey Administrative Code 12:51, "Rules and Regulations Governing Community—Based Rehabilitation Organizations." The purpose of this code is to "define the criteria for operation of a program which is eligible to vend specific service to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and to ensure the provision of quality services to persons with disabilities." This code was last updated in 2007 and is consistent with good practice and applicable federal regulation. Consequently, the DVRS has a process in place to vet new vendors and enter into cooperative agreements or not based on providers' adherence to the N.J.A.C. 12:51. Providers are required to have standard business documentation and structure, and the credentials, experience, training and organizational capacity necessary to provide the service they wish to vend. They are also required to maintain national accreditation in order to vendor services with the DVRS. Once providers are approved to enter the cooperative relationship with the DVRS as a vendor of services, they receive further information and training from the DVRS' community rehabilitation programs unit, and receive ongoing monitoring and technical assistance from their assigned PPDS. Approved providers that request to vend new services or expand their services to additional counties undergo a similar vetting process, depending on the request, and must demonstrate that they have been providing quality services in the counties in which they are already operating. New Jersey Administrative Code 12:51, "Rules and Regulations Governing Community—Based Rehabilitation Organizations" must be updated to incorporate WIOA. Committees will be formed in 2016 to begin this effort.

There is an agreement with ACCSES New Jersey to have a representative appointed to chair the oversight and review of the state set—aside program to ensure that individuals with disabilities have the right opportunity for industrial competition. The centralized nonprofit agency (CNA) services in New Jersey works directly with the NJ Office of Management and Budget to develop no—bid contracts.

MOUs are another vehicle by which the DVRS enters into cooperative agreements with private non—profit service providers. Most often, these types of MOUs would be with affiliated agencies that provide support services to the DVRS' clients or interface with the DVRS, but are not vendor/providers. For example, a substance abuse treatment center and the DVRS may wish to provide the relationship with additional structure, and delineate the referral process and the various roles and responsibilities when working together. Oftentimes, private nonprofits will request MOUs with the DVRS to fulfill their own accreditation requirements. This type of MOU is distinct from the type of MOU that the DVRS may have with a large public agency.

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.

Supported employment services, including extended services, are ubiquitous in New Jersey. The DVRS has cooperative agreements in the form of vendor/provider relationships with over 95 individual supported employment service providers. These providers are entirely community—based, or associated with community rehabilitation facilities such as center-based rehabilitation programs. All programs receive funding based upon the fee—for—service, billable job coaching hour model.

DVRS is frequently approached by new providers to vend supported employment services and there is a vetting process in place to ensure that these potential new providers are qualified to provide this service. In New Jersey, approval to vend supported employment services requires strict compliance with N.J.A.C. 12:51, and CARF or equivalent accreditation within three years of initial approval. In addition, there must be an identified need for supported employment services in the county or counties in which the new vendor intends to operate. The manager of the local county field office takes part in the vetting process. At the present time, approximately three new providers are interested in vending supported employment services to the DVRS and are in the vetting process.

New Jersey is an Employment First State, and particular attention is given to youth with the most significant disabilities who, through informed choice, wish to pursue competitive integrated employment. DVRS has approved supported employment vendors who also vendor with DDD. The DDD system provides support coordinators to their participants who identify the individualized services needed and help arrange for those supports. DVRS counselors meet with DDD support coordinators and identify supported employment vendors common to both agencies in order to ensure a smooth transition of funding. DVRS

is piloting “discovery” throughout the state in order to provide counselors with the tools to address the needs of this unique population.

New Jersey is fortunate to have state—appropriated funding for post—employment services which is referred to as the long—term follow—along (LTFA) program. The LTFA funding of approximately $5.4 million went out under an NGO for the third time in FY 2015, and 71 supported employment programs were given contracts to provide extended services.

Since individual LTFA program budgets are limited, a “restabilization fund” was also approved to handle the service needs of clients in need of additional post—employment supports that exceed individual program budgets. Of course, clients may also apply for Title I post—employment services should their support needs exceed the intent of the restabilization fund.

When the individual in need of LTFA services is eligible for the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), funding is provided through DDD as per the MOU between DVRS, CBVI, and DDD.

The DVRS encourages continuing education and training in regard to the provision of supported employment services. The DVRS works closely with the following supported employment training providers to train the DVRS and supported employment program staff 1) the Boggs Center for Developmental Disabilities and related training, and the 2) the integrated employment institute at Rutgers University for supported employment training for staff that work with people diagnosed with psychiatric disabilities.

As for arrangements and cooperative agreements for the provision of supported employment services for CBVI, the New Jersey CBVI is committed to the needs of individuals who may require supported employment services. The Commission contracts for all core supported employment services through a fee—for—service arrangement and maintains a list of approved supported employment providers throughout the state. The Commission currently utilizes the same fee structure and approval process as that which is in place for the DVRS.

A MOU was developed in coordination with the DDD and the DVRS which outlines the protocols and procedures for the collaborative provision of supported employment services to Commission consumers. The MOU defines and delineates the procedures to be followed by the respective agencies in order to ensure maximum effectiveness and delivery of services. The MOU also outlines the roles and responsibilities of each agency as they apply to providing efficient and effective supported employment services.

Extended services are available to individuals who have been determined eligible for services by the DDD. The Commission also provides time—limited job coaching services to consumers needing those services using Title I funds.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(5)). Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

1. VR SERVICES; AND

The reauthorization of WIOA identified that businesses and employers that hire individuals with disabilities are a dual customer of the public VR program. In order to meet the needs of the business community in New Jersey, DVRS has gotten permission to develop a Business Outreach Team (BOT). The BOT will consist of a field chief and six program development specialists who will be assigned regionally. Their major responsibilities will be as follows:

- Assist with onboarding activities for businesses interested in hiring qualified candidates with disabilities;
- Take the lead with DVRS-led targeted hiring events through its Schedule A initiative;
- Provide technical assistance/training on disability employment laws to businesses as requested;
- Assist DVRS counselors to pre-screen qualified candidates with disabilities as needed;
- Assist federal contractors in meeting their 503 requirements;
- Support New Jersey's industry sector strategies;
- Develop relationships with New Jersey talent networks;
- Utilize labor market information to increase DVRS counselors' knowledge of local business needs; and
- Coordinate activities with business services representatives in the one-stops;

These BOT staff will work with employers and the local DVRS offices to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities that will facilitate the provision of VR services.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

The provision of transition is an entitled service under IDEA for students with disabilities. Pre-employment transition services is a new provision under WIOA and must be made available to all students with disabilities regardless of VR status. The DVRS has established a Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) unit to ensure that services are made available to students with disabilities in New Jersey. Additionally, New Jersey is actively engaged in establishing Project SEARCH in four counties. The BOT will be working in these counties with the businesses to establish opportunities for career exploration for students participating in Project SEARCH. DVRS intends to support additional Project SEARCH sites in every county.

Pre-Employment Transition Services will be delivered to students in a variety of ways:

- Collaboration with employers to provide opportunities for career exploration;
- Partnerships with community providers to provide Pre-ETS;
- Career guidance from DVRS personnel;
- Partnerships with CILs to teach students self-advocacy; and
- Opportunities with the New Jersey Talent Networks to provide information about career pathways.

Students with disabilities will have opportunities to learn about the industries in their regions that provide the most private sector employment opportunities.

New Jersey is also an Employment First state, and DVRS has identified goals to increase the number of individuals with significant ID/DD to avail themselves to DVRS services that result in an integrated competitive employment outcome.

In October 2010, LWD secured grant funding from USDOL for a youth-centered Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). DVRS was identified as the lead division to increase the capacity of pilot Workforce Development Board areas to serve youth with disabilities (ages 16 - 26), in particular youth offender populations and returning veteran youth. This funding also includes ability to promote universal design in One-Stop Career Centers throughout the entire state.

H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

DVRS is continuing to establish an MOU with the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS) within the New Jersey Department of Human Services, the lead agency administering Medicaid Waivers in FFY 2016. DMAHS serves more than 1,000,000 people with a staff of over 500 people who work both in Trenton and in Medical Assistance Customer Centers (MACCs) throughout the state. DVRS will ensure that the employment needs of individuals with disabilities are met and that cost services are effective and not duplicative.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

A revised 5 year MOU was executed on July 1, 2015 by DVRS, CBVI, and the Division of Developmental Disabilities within the New Jersey Department of Human Services with the objective to define the roles and responsibilities of State agencies primarily involved in assisting individuals with disabilities in finding and maintaining competitive integrated employment and will assist the State agencies to operate in an efficient and successful manner to improve employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities by operating consistently across agencies ensuring quality service provision. The agreement is in alignment with the New Jersey's Employment First initiative proclaimed by the Governor on April 19, 2012.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

DVRS is continuing to establish an MOU with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). The last formal agreement ended October 1, 2014. DVRS will reach out to DMHAS to establish an MOU that outlines the coordination of services in FFY 2017.

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;

The DVRS maintains a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) that establishes and supports a highly qualified staff dedicated to offering vocational rehabilitation services to eligible individuals with disabilities.

In keeping with the mission of the agency the CSPD focuses on the following areas:

- Pre-service training;
- Recruitment of qualified personnel;
- Staff development and training needs of current employees;
- Continuing education and lifelong learning; and
- Retention of qualified DVRS personnel

Guidelines have been provided by the Workforce Investment Act, Title IV; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and the New Jersey Civil Service Commission (CSC) hiring policies and terms of employment. Final WIOA regulations were released in July 2016.

The DVRS works in collaboration with the DSA's training unit to maintain files on the in-service training records and changes in the credentials of all agency employees. The agency's staff development and training coordinator also maintains records of training and offers the CRC credit approval for all of the training programs created and/or sponsored by the agency.

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) routinely publishes an employee roster, which is reviewed against budget information to determine the most up-to-date number of employees actively serving the agency. A recent analysis of the DVRS human resources needs and available budget has revealed that it can function with a total of 312 staff members which will ensure that there are 166 counselors and adequate supervisory, management and administrative support. The agency currently serves approximately 33,000 individuals with an average caseload level of slightly more than 235. Caseloads that become "vacant" due to a staff member leaving are being maintained by a supervising rehabilitation counselor who is providing services to ensure case success. Presently, DVRS has 16 supervising rehabilitation counselors that maintain a "vacant" caseload of 150 on average. Some offices have multiple vacant caseloads, which the

supervising rehabilitation counselor covers. The anticipated level set at 166 counselor positions would result in reduced caseload size.

Each DVRS counselor is evaluated annually and the achievement of the graduate credential is monitored. Most DVRS counselors have a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a closely related field. All staff members are made aware of trainings, online degree programs and continuing education courses that will enable them to reach the CSPD standard. The agency has been experiencing a 4 percent increase in the number of people that come for services on an annual basis. The number of position allocations is not expected to rise at the same pace of people applying for services.

- Senior Executive Staff: 85 percent over 55 years of age
- Management/Supervision: 45 percent over 55 years of age
- Counseling Staff: 27 percent over 55 years of age

Factoring the anticipated succession of the lower levels into higher positions leaves the DVRS with the task of replacing well over half the counseling staff within the next five years. The counselorentry-level position is a "freeze exempt" position in DVRS; this means that counselors can be hired as soon as a vacancy occurs. DVRS keeps a list of résumés for these positions and they are filled quickly whenever there is a vacancy.

Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
Director	1	1	1
Assistant Director	2	2	2
Chief	6	2	2
Manager	14	3	5
Program Planning & Development Specialist	19	0	5
Supervising Rehabilitation Counselor	22	6	8
Administrative Analyst 3	1	0	0
Administrative Analyst 4	2	0	0
Counselors	166	31	44
Administrative	91	12	24

FIGURE 44

ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

DVRS successfully added six additional program planning and development specialists (PPDS) to staff the Business Outreach Team (BOT). Additionally, DVRS is currently assessing the number of students with disabilities in need of pre-employment transition services and expects to increase its numbers of counselors by 20 in order to meet this new requirement in WIOA.

iii. projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

See above response in Section (i) 1. A. i.

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

i. a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

DVRS and CBVI negotiated with administrators at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) School of Health Related Professions to develop a means to assist in meeting the CSPD standards for the state. The results of the collaborative efforts were the development of a state standard in keeping with the national competency movement and federal mandates, and a masters-level program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling within the School for Health-Related Professions (SHRP). On July 1, 2013, as part of a restructuring program of state university in New Jersey, UMDNJ was merged into the Rutgers University higher education system. The program commenced in June of 1999 at two sites, which accommodates staff in Northern and Southern parts of the state (Scotch Plains, N.J. and Stratford, N.J.) This is the sole graduate program devoted to training rehabilitation counselors and in addition to being CORE approved it is also CACREP accredited. All of the Rutgers graduates are eligible for national certification upon graduation.

Guidelines have been provided by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the New Jersey Civil Service Commission on hiring policies and terms of employment. Projections were made based on the current number of employees in regard to their age, length of service, education and availability of training resources.

A staff person from the administrative teams of both DVRS and CBVI are members of the advisory board for the Rehabilitation Counseling program. That staff person stays in contact with key university staff throughout the year to continue the collaborative working relationship. That staff person also monitors staff professional development in conjunction with the agency's training unit.

Rutgers University - FFY 2014-2015

Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
Rutgers (Masters of Rehab Counseling)	95	6	23	14
Rutgers (Undergraduate degrees)	78	0	17	27
Rutgers (Post-Masters Cert - Rehab Counseling)	0	0	0	0

FIGURE 45

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

See above response in Section (B) i.

iii. the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

See above response in Section (B) i.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

DVRS continues to recruit highly qualified candidates with master's degrees in vocational rehabilitation counseling or closely related field for the counselor I position. The Division is currently faced with an increased need to recruit qualified staff due to staff attrition, retirements and a long-term hiring freeze. All options to meet the personnel needs of the agency are being explored. The division supports its staff through a number of continuing education opportunities, and provides in-house training on a regular basis. The New Jersey Rehabilitation Association, the Garden State Employment and Training Association, and the Association for Persons Supporting Employment First each sponsor continuing education credits with their respective yearly conferences, and DVRS supports a significant number of counselors for these conferences yearly.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) 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

Each DVRS counselor is evaluated annually and the achievement of the graduate credential is monitored. In New Jersey, DVRS counselors are still required to meet the highest CSPD standards. However, due to the need to replace a high level of management, supervisory, and VR counselor positions over the next 5 years, the agency may need to increase the pool of applicants, as permitted by the WIOA amendments to Title I of the Rehabilitation Act to meet the demand for agency personnel. In order to meet the needs of the agency, DVRS is exploring using a substitution clause to allow for a bachelor's degree with the requisite experience. Of course, the agency prefers hiring master's degree candidates and will continue to do so. The addition of a substitution clause would increase hiring flexibility if the agency could not find enough candidates in a geographic location.

Components of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development - National Certification:

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, mandates that states develop and implement strategies for the hiring or retraining of personnel to meet standards or qualifications based on the highest requirements in the state for the counseling profession. The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the general VR agency in New Jersey, negotiated with administrators at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) School of Health Related Professions to develop a means to assist in meeting the CSPD standards. The results of the collaborative efforts were the development of a state standard in keeping with the national competency movement and federal mandates, and a masters-level program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling. As part of the curriculum, all students complete 60 credits of course work and Practicum and Internship experience to practice and integrate counseling skills learned during course work. The program commenced in June of 1999 at two sites (Scotch Plains and Stratford), which accommodate staff in the Northern and Southern parts of the state. Courses are also offered as well in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for staff at the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The program has been accredited by CORE (Council on Rehabilitation Education) and CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) meeting national standards for quality education in rehabilitation and counseling education and all graduates from the program qualify for credentialing as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (the national certification). On July 1, 2013, UMDNJ merged into Rutgers University. The School for Health-Related Professions and the Rehabilitation Counseling program remains intact. All degrees/certifications are issued by Rutgers University. Rutgers is the only institution of higher learning in the state to offer graduate degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

The minimum qualification for a DVRS Counselor I position requires a Master's Degree in vocational rehabilitation or a closely related field as outlined by CSC. However, due to the need to replace a high level of management, supervisory, and VR counselor positions over the next five years, the agency may need to increase the pool of applicants in certain geographic locations throughout the state of New Jersey. One strategy to increase the pool of candidates is to utilize, as permitted under WIOA, candidates with a bachelor's degree and then sponsor them for the master's degree. Currently, LWD offers tuition reimbursement for employees who wish to obtain an advanced degree. DVRS would monitor the educational progress of each employee and require the completion of the Master's Degree before being eligible for promotion.

To ensure future VR staff meet the needs of an evolving labor force, trainings are sponsored through the DVRS Community Rehabilitation Unit, Human Resource Development Institute, Program unit, and external vendors. VR staff routinely participate in the trainings and are awarded Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credits when available.

In addition, DVRS has been trying to get a paid internship program in place for Master's level students interested in working at a DVRS office. To date, this has not happened but negotiations continue.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. 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

The DVRS continues to work closely with The CBVI and will continue joint training participation when feasible. Joint efforts will enable both agencies to provide the most effective and cost efficient training to staff through shared resources.

Enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of the DVRS employees

The Rehabilitation Act recognizes the need for an ongoing and progressive in-service training program to upgrade the skills, increase the knowledge and maximize the performance of personnel employed by the DVRS who provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities.

The DVRS takes pride in the high quality of staff development at all levels that is maintained in the in-service training program. Each year the program unit performs a training needs assessment that reflects a number of areas, such as:

- Priorities outlined in the current state plan;
- Staff development issues culled from individual development plans as a part of the performance evaluation system;
- Polling managers and supervisors; and
- Scanning the environment for issues related to current legislation, trends and advances in the practice of vocational rehabilitation

The program unit staff members reach out to a number of areas to meet the needs for training programs that will be pertinent to the staff, useful to the practice of vocational rehabilitation and offer opportunities to enhance lifelong learning. The following entities are employed in the execution of the in-service training program:

- The New Jersey Civil Service Commission Human Resources Development Institute (HRDI);
- The LWD Office of Training and Staff Development (OTSD);
- The Association of Persons in Supported Employment (APSE);
- The National Rehabilitation Association (NRA);
- The Council of State Administrators in Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR);
- Rutgers University;
- The Garden State Employment and Training Association (GSETA); and
- The NJ Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Ensure that qualified rehabilitation personnel serve the individuals with disabilities who participate in the Public Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Action Steps:

- Continue to collaborate with the Rutgers University in support of the certificate of advanced graduate studies (CAGS) programs to enhance the ability for individuals with Master's Degrees in affiliated areas to become certified;
- Continue the DVRS' involvement with a distance learning programs with schools throughout the country.
- Encourage involvement with Thomas Edison College under the LWD tuition refund program; and
- Maintain training offerings that grant continuing education units (CEUs)

The DVRS has upgraded the skills and education of the majority of the counseling staff. Of the current 140 positions that are filled, 97 percent of the counseling staff members have earned a Master's Degree. Four individuals who do not possess the desired educational credential are enrolled in programs through an RSA grant or LWD tuition refund. The remaining two employees have an improvement plan spelled out in their performance assessment review (PAR) as part of their individual development plan (IDP). Information regarding career development, continuing education and Master's Degree in VR programs is sent to management and staff throughout the year.

Enable the DVRS counselors to obtain and maintain the Certifed Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) and/or the New Jersey License for Rehabilitation Counselor (LRC)

Action Steps:

- Continue to offer credits for all DVRS sponsored programs;
- Offer opportunities to attend approved programs;
- Offer a study guide for eligible candidates to take the CRC exam;
- Establish a match between CRC supervisors and candidates for mentoring; and
- Offer up-to-date information on application procedures for LRC - Fifty percent of the agency's professional staff holds a CRC or state licensure while 90 percent are eligible.
- Expand outreach to individuals with disabilities who are from traditionally underserved minority backgrounds as identified in the Act by offering opportunities to employees of similar backgrounds;
- Expand promotional opportunities for paraprofessional and support staff;
- Emphasize career track in collaboration with the LWD career development counselor;
- Promote the tuition refund program in collaboration with Thomas Edison State College;
- Collaborate with appropriate agencies to increase awareness of cultural diversity;
- Recruit through an information program to clients attending college;
- Continue a relationship with the nation's network of historical Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in order to expand the agency's recruitment efforts;
- Provide information on career opportunities to community college liaisons;
- Expand outreach efforts to target diverse community/faith-based organizations; and
- Provide information on the field of rehabilitation counseling as a career at the state's Hispanic/Latino outreach center.

Retention of Qualified VR Personnel

An analysis of the DVRS personnel records reveals that there are a significant number of employees with over 20 years' experience. In addition, these staff members are nearing an age where they will be considering retirement within the next five years. Therefore, plans must be made to maintain a management structure as well as the staffing patterns to operate a full service DVRS agency. In all likelihood, there will not be an expansion of the positions dedicated to the program so projections will be based on the current levels.

Prepare staff to assume new roles as a part of the succession plan

Action Steps:

- Continue to offer training opportunities for advanced degrees at all levels;
- Offer a mentoring program to groom new management and counseling staff; and,
- Expand support of the certified public management program.

Operating within the CSC guidelines, the LWD continues to develop staff to expand their knowledge base to assume increased responsibility on the job. The DVRS has partnered

with the RSA and the TACE in an initiative to promote succession planning. In addition, DVRS is partnering with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) to further promote succession planning initiatives and partnerships.

Evaluate the progress of these training efforts to ensure improved services to individuals with disabilities

Action Steps:

- Staff will meet established standards for qualified vocational rehabilitation personnel;
- Future SRC consumer satisfaction surveys will reflect improved level of counselor competency;
- Internal DVRS practices, such as the performance assessment review (PAR), will address educational achievement in the developmental plans; and
- A recognition program will be continued for those achieving the Master's Degree in rehabilitation counseling

In addition to the need to employ qualified personnel, the agency recognizes the need for service providers with whom it does business to employ qualified vocational rehabilitation personnel. Through collaborative efforts, New Jersey hope to assure that appropriate graduate-level training programs will be available within the state of New Jersey to community rehabilitation program personnel, as well as to the DVRS staff. The grant received by the Rutgers from the USDOE will enable the Rutgers to offer stipends to students from community rehabilitation programs.

An analysis of the collected evaluations reveals that all agency-sponsored training sessions were well received, averaging a rating of average or better. This indicates that the program selection and content met state agency needs and participant interest.

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.

See above response in Section (4) (A).

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

The DVRS has been consistent with the Act in meeting the requirements of offering appropriate communication solutions to those individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing. All of the current rehabilitation counselors for the Deaf are certified through a test known as the Sign Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI). In the event that counselors wish to enhance or improve their skills in American Sign Language (ASL), the DVRS will utilize Title I funds to further classes in ASL. The agency also invites counselors and rehabilitation aides to participate in ASL training programs, which are typically offered at the community

college level. Deaf Language specialists are available in every local office to meet the needs of individuals who use ASL.

The DVRS usually draws the bi—lingual counselor from a pool of individuals of Latino heritage who also possess the necessary credentials in addition to speaking fluent Spanish. Once again, DVRS encourages opportunities for other staff members to take courses that will facilitate their communication in conversational Spanish to expand the agency's ability to serve this population of people with disabilities. DVRS recently hired many counselors with multi language ability such as Slavic languages including Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian to be employed in an office where clients need this communication.

The DVRS makes every effort to serve individuals from underserved minority populations; the DVRS assessed the demographics of the state and deployed staff where there is the greatest need. Currently there are 26 different languages spoken within the 18 local offices. DVRS also accommodates a person's language by an informal interpreter or the AT&T Language Line and their coordinated community—based or faith—based organization that can best serve them.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Coordination with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The DVRS maintains an ongoing relationship with the NJ Department of Education Offices of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in an effort to share information and ensure that the staff of the DVRS is aware of the IDEA.

The staff development activities include:

• Four training sessions per year for the DVRS lead transition counselors. All of the DVRS counselors are responsible for maintaining a relationship to the school districts within their local area; however, these lead counselors are responsible for acting as a resource to school personnel. The approximately 600 public school districts are diverse throughout the state, so these training sessions are essential to maintain a roster of promising practices for the agency.

• The DVRS has a seat on the State Special Education Advisory Council (SSEAC) and OSEP has one on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The information gathered at the meetings is shared when appropriate.

• In their ongoing relationship the DVRS relies on the independent living community to establish and maintain linkages with students in transition by helping them to seek strategies for self-advocacy and empowerment. The DVRS supports the Transition Times that is published by the SILC to promote IL as a part of the transition process.

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;

Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

In FFY 2014 the DVRS embarked on a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) in partnership with the SRC.

Data was collected from the following:

• LWD Labor Market and Demographic Research;

• American Community Survey -

- Work experience by disability status;
- Employment status by disability status;
- Median earnings by disability status;
- Poverty status by disability status;
- Receipt of food stamps/SNAP by disability status;
- Sex by disability status;
- Sex by age by cognitive difficulty;
- Sex by hearing difficulty;

• Cornell University Disability Status Report for New Jersey;

• DVRS staff survey;

• DVRS consumer satisfaction survey;

• NJ DOE Offices of Special Education Programs graduation data;

• Public forums held March 5, March 12, March 19, and March 26;

• Stakeholder meeting with families in Special Olympics March 8;

• Stakeholder meetings with ACCSES NJ members held January 2014;

• Stakeholder meetings with APSE members held November 2013;

• Stakeholder meeting with the New Jersey designated parent training information center (Statewide Parent Advocacy Network) held April 1;

• Stakeholder meetings/listening tours of the One-Stop Career Center staff members in May 2014; and

• Stakeholder meetings with the Deaf community held September 28, 2013 and October 12, 2013.

Highlights of the survey results indicated a need to improve services/access to:

• Individuals with the most significant disabilities, in particular individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), aligning the New Jersey Employment First Initiative;

• Individuals with hearing loss; and

• Individuals currently being served in sheltered workshops who, through informed choice, would like to access competitive integrated employment.

Based on the CSNA the DVRS identified the following: Employment services will be easily obtainable for individuals with the most significant disabilities, individuals who are minorities or who are in unserved or underserved populations, and individuals who are served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system, and community rehabilitation programs will support competitive, integrated employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

The DVRS identified key issues pertaining to meeting the intent of Employment First:

• How should DCF (Division of Children & Families, DOE (Dept. of Education) and other state entities be aligned as partners in serving this consumer base?

• State partners may have their own vision of Employment First which may or not be in alignment with DVRS.

• Data Collection is difficult due to federal code restrictions and DVRS's current case management system (AWARE).

• Need for Stakeholder analysis to identify and utilize internal and external partners.

• Identify and engage "the Voice of the Customer."

• Strategic objectives to meet the DVRS Employment First initiative include the following:

• More individuals with significant developmental disabilities (DD) and ASD will have greater access to become DVRS consumers.

• DVRS staff members, vendors, and state partners will have the expectation that employment is the first and preferred option for adult activity for those with DD.

• DD consumers including transition students and persons in workshops will have increased opportunities for a smooth transition into employment via a defined process established by DVRS and state partners.

• DD consumers will be provided with programs and services that offer job targeted skill development, education and training.

• DD individuals will have increased opportunities to become DVRS consumers, obtain job skills, and obtain competitive employment that matches their interests, skills & capabilities.

• Through a leverage of services with DDD, DVRS will serve an increased amount of individuals with DD, including individuals with ASD.

Likewise, the DVRS identified key issues pertaining to improving services to individuals who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing:

• Role of DVRS vs. vendors-Who should do what in assuring highly qualified employment-related services to D/HH consumers. Currently, there is no defined or mutually agreed upon process.

• How should DD/HH (Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing), Interpreter programs at Community Colleges be involved in strategic planning.

• Ensuring knowledge of Deaf culture with counselors.

• Ensuring knowledge of issues for Hard of Hearing with counselors.

• Continue to engage "the Voice of the Customer."

• Role of DVRS Deaf Language Specialists.

• Role of Regional Deaf Centers.

• Need for Communication Specialists.

• Ensuring Video phones work in every local office.

Strategic objectives to improve DVRS access to consumers with hearing loss include the following:

• Every local DVRS office will have a Video Phone system that works well.

• DVRS staff will have the training in Deaf Culture, needs of HH, and cochlear implants and be able to appropriately provide services.

• D/HH consumers will have VR services, including Client Assistance Program, explained in ASL when appropriate.

• All job coaches will be vetted in ASL prior to working with D/HH consumers.

• D/HH individuals will have increased opportunities to become DVRS consumers, obtain job skills, and obtain competitive employment that matches their interests, skills & capabilities.

• Qualified interpreters will accompany D/HH consumers at job interviews rather than job coaches.

The DVRS identified key issues regarding the need to improve community rehabilitation programs within New Jersey:

• Ensuring that DVRS consumers in supported employment have access to qualified employment specialists.

• Defining the role of New Jersey's set-aside programs that employ individuals with DD.

• Transforming the current system of sheltered programs to a system that supports movement into competitive employment for individuals with DD/ASD.

• Fear of family members to allow family members with DD/ASD to become competitively employed.

• Families need information from qualified SSI/SSDI benefits counselors.

• Strategic objectives to improve community rehabilitation programs within the state include the following:

• Increased oversight from DVRS program development specialists will identify individuals currently in extended employment who should have DVRS cases opened;

• Supported employment training resulting in a nationally recognized credential will be required for employment specialists working with DVRS consumers.

• Benefits counseling will be provided to DVRS consumers and families.

• Increased collaboration with local education agencies will increase expectation of families that result in transition students identifying competitive integrated employment as an expectation within the individualized education program (IEP).

Measurable Goals derived from the CSNA are identified in section *"(l) State Goals and Priorities"* later in this section.

A comprehensive assessment of youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services - the DVRS is required to provide pre-employment transition services to all students with disabilities who will benefit from such services. This provision is a new obligation in WIOA and as such, was not addressed in the CSNA in FFY 2014.

DVRS will host continue to host public forums in 2017 and 2018 specifically designed to engage families in the transition process, and will partner with the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network to make sure there is appropriate representation of families with diverse ethnic, racial, and geographic backgrounds.

The prevalence rate for all types of disabilities across all age groups was 12.3% nationally and 10.2% in New Jersey. Based on the prevalence rates for New Jersey of individuals with a wide range of disabilities, it is estimated that 895,912 New Jersey residents have some level of disability. Of that population aged 18-64, 22.4% have income that is at or below the Federal poverty rate. In addition for those individuals aged 16-64 with disabilities that are engaged in full-time, year round employment is only 19% nationally and slightly higher in New Jersey at 20.8%.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

DVRS counselors are fluent in 28 languages throughout the state, including Chinese, Hindu, Creole, Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, Spanish, Portuguese, and American Sign Language (ASL). There are counselors fluent in ASL and Spanish that serve every local office. DVRS has seen an increase of individuals who are minorities in part due to the ability of counselors to communicate in an individuals preferred language. DVRS subscribes to a language line in order to effectively communicate with consumers who speak languages not fluent by counselors in a local office.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Employment First (EF) identifies individuals with the most significant disabilities who historically have not been served appropriately by the public VR system. A typical outcome for this group was placement in segregated settings with little or no ability to obtain

employment services that would increase the likelihood of self-sufficiency or community integration. Goals for EF are identified specifically to address this.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

Sixteen of the 18 Vocational Rehabilitation offices are co-located at One-Stop Career Centers throughout the State of New Jersey. Counselors are aware of the services provided through other components of the statewide workforce development system. An integrated resource team approach has been utilized when staff from the general system need the expertise of a vocational rehabilitation counselor to determine if any individuals would benefit from the specialized employment services offered through the public VR program. DVRS will develop more information geared toward individuals whose disabilities are not apparent, such as learning disabilities, in an attempt to reduce the stigma that is sometimes associated with disclosure.

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 DVRS is required to provide pre-employment transition services to all students with disabilities who will benefit from such services. This provision is a new obligation in WIOA and as such, was not addressed in the CSNA in FFY 2014.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

Community rehabilitation programs are established within the state by following the guidelines set forth in the New Jersey Administrative Code 12:51; DVRS provides the oversight and technical assistance to vendors to make sure all requirements are met before approval, including assessment of the need for the region to be served. DVRS will be assessing the quality of services currently provided to determine whether increased requirements, including nationally recognized credentials for supported employment specialists, is warranted in order to increase satisfaction from DVRS consumers.

3. INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT .

There are over 600 public school districts in New Jersey, and each district is autonomous. Some districts reach out to DVRS offices on a regular basis, while others provide little to no transition services to students under IDEA. The need for transition career services and pre-employment transition services is great. DVRS will continue to work with the SEA in order to establish a coordinated service delivery system in the state.

DVRS recently posted a notice of funding opportunity to provide Pre-ETS in the state, and will continually outreach to LEAs and local businesses to partner with DVRS for the delivery of these services.

New Jersey DVRS has a significant presence in most of the high schools across the state assessing and counseling, attending IEP meetings and working with the schools and other community partners. This will provide a foundation for developing and offering a wide range of pre-employment transition services, including developing IPEs for students with disabilities, coordinating and developing internships and other summer or afterschool employment.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES;

Of the 5,551,498 individuals between the ages of 18-64 in New Jersey, 434,368 reported having a disability according the American Community Survey in 2014. It is estimated that the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will have approximately 32,264 cases in FY 2016 based on a two percent increase from total cases in FY 2015 of 31,632. The case total is calculated using open and closed cases.

Of these individuals, it is estimated that 22,306 will receive services provided under Part A of Title I of the Act and/or under Part B of Title VI of the Act. Estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order of selection for services are as follows:

Clients classified as individuals with a most significant disability who meet the following criteria:

• Have a significant physical or mental impairment or combination of impairments which seriously limit two or more functional capacities in terms of employment outcome; and

• Require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

• Program Year 2018

- Service Goal Title I: 10,640
- Outcome Goal Title I: 1,777
- Service Goal Title VI: 6,547
- Outcome Goal: Title VI: 1,063

Supported employment is reserved for those individuals with the most significant disabilities. Time-limited job coaching is available for those individuals in the other categories and priority areas. The DVRS utilizes Title I and Tile VI funding for supported employment services.

Clients classified as individuals with a significant disability who meet the following criteria:

• Have a significant physical or mental impairment or combination of impairments which seriously limit at least one functional capacity in terms of employment outcome; and

• Require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

• Program Year 2018

• Service Goal: 4,663

• Outcome Goal: 953

All other eligible clients who qualify for the DVRS meet the following criteria:

• Individuals with a disability who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity;

• Those who have a record of such impairment, or

• Those who are regarded as having such impairment.

• Program Year 2018

• Service Goal: 1,126

• Outcome Goal: 140

In 2017, the DVRS paid the following amounts to 31,632 clients (some clients received multiple services):

• Diagnostic evaluation $6,284,750

• Higher education $5,645,235

• Job readiness $505,480

• Maintenance $57,559

• Other training $1,803,692

• Personal assistance $22,368

• Transportation $287,549

• Vocational training $1,939,647

• All other $3,481,654

• Total Paid: $20,027,934

The DVRS typically budgets $20 million for case services and has averaged between $18 million and $22 million over the past several years. The DVRS intends to review current fee schedule policies, upgrade its current case management system, and develop new innovation and expansion grant opportunities to reduce the reserve amount. In addition, DVRS plans on expending funds for pre-employment transition services in the amount of $7,000,000.

Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to be Served	Average Cost of Services

Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to be Served	Average Cost of Services
MSD Title I Priority 1	Title I	$21,285,000	10,656	$1,997
MSD Title VI Priority 1	Title VI	$550,000	5,993	$92
SD Priority 2	Title I	$3,600,000	4,720	$762
All Other Eligible Clients Title I Priority 3	Title I	$1,200,000	3,479	$344
Totals	.	$26,635,000	24,848	$1,071

Figure 46

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

See above response in Section (k) (1).

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

See above response in Section (k) (1).

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION;

See above response in Section (k) (1).

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

DVRS is currently able to serve all individuals eligible to receive services; however, due to the decrease in funding for general case services we predict that an OOS will begin by September 1, 2020.

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.

See above response in Section (k) (1).

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.

DVRS Goals and Priorities

The 2015 DVRS State Plan goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the DVRS and the New Jersey SRC. These goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following:

• The FFY 2014 comprehensive statewide needs assessment;

• The public forums held in March 2014 and 2015;

• The performance of New Jersey DVRS standards and indicators; and

• Recommendations from the FY 2010 monitoring report on the vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs in the state of New Jersey.

DVRS is currently working on goals developed from its Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA).

GOAL 1: By September 30, 2017, the number of individuals with DD, including ASD applying for DVRS services will increase by 50%. Strategic objectives to meet this goal include the following:

- Provide education and communication - All identified stakeholders will know about the DVRS Employment First (EF) initiative by the end of year one. Surveys will be used to determine initial training needs for DVRS staff members and CRPs.
- Collaborate with interagency partners - Identify key state partners and research how other states are collaborating on EF initiatives. Design the process, roles and responsibilities for partners.
- Improve DVRS access for individuals with significant disabilities - Work with sheltered workshops to support individuals who wish to move into integrated employment. Develop a plan for obtaining valid statistics of how many individuals with DD are served by the DVRS. Create a plan to prioritize students with DD to be linked to DVRS two years prior to exiting the school.
- Develop innovative and expanded services that offer increased employment opportunities - Verify successful Innovation and Expansion grantees for possible expansion.
- Engage employers - Take advantage of the new 503 regulations. Engage LWD talent networks. Find options for work trials through internships. Replicate the *Schedule A* targeted hiring events throughout the state.

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

GOAL 2: By September 30, 2017, there will be an increase in the number of Deaf/HH consumers seeking DVRS services and communication access and services for Deaf/HH will be consistent, reliable, and result in employment. Strategic objectives to meet this goal include the following:

- Provide education and communication - Identify stakeholders from the Deaf/HH community. Encourage participation from the Deaf/HH with the SRC. Develop marketing materials in ASL.
- Collaborate with interagency and community partners - Identify key state partners needed to support the DVRS D/HH goals. Design the process, roles and responsibilities for partners. Determine the skills needed for ASL SE staff. Identify interpreter vs. SE needs for D/HH consumers.
- Improve access to DVRS for D/HH consumers - Install video phones in every office. Develop a plan for obtaining valid statistics of the number of D/HH served by DVRS. Create a plan to allow D/HH transition students to be referred to the regional Deaf Centers two years prior to exiting school. Use the model state plan for the Deaf consistently throughout New Jersey.
- Develop innovative and expanded services that offer increased employment opportunities - Expand services of the regional Deaf Centers. Assess DVRS projects to consider how they could serve D/HH consumers. Determine required training for counselors working with D/HH.
- Engage employers - Take advantage of the new 503 regulations. Engage the LWD talent networks.

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

GOAL 3: By September 30, 2015, the DVRS will provide training and technical assistance to counselors on SE and SE services, as follows:

- Provide training to staff related to the definition of SE and SE services to include appropriate identification of SE goals on the IPE, coding of SE services on the IPE and the case closure page in the case management system;
- Analyze the decline in the number of individuals who have SE goals on their IPEs and achieve SE to determine the reasons underlying the decline in these respective performance measures and develop strategies to address the reasons identified; and
- Review and analyze the case management settings utilized to identify SE goals and SE services on an IPE and the case closure page and develop a systematic process to ensure accurate coding and reporting.

** UPDATE: Goal 3 has been completed*

GOAL 4: By September 30, 2016, the DVRS will implement quality assurance (QA) processes and conduct the following:

- Training on existing and revised policies and procedures for all staff involved in their implementation;
- Review of service records by staff not functioning as VR counselor supervisors;
- Develop fiscal controls and evaluation methods to ensure that providers are not billing DVRS through multiple contracts;
- Review and refine instrumentation for conducting service record reviews;

- Conduct surveys of transition-age youths who exit the VR program after eligibility is determined, but before their IPEs are developed, to determine the reasons why these individuals are withdrawing from the program; and
- Develop mechanisms to collect and aggregate the results of the preview process and provide results to the training function to inform the design and evaluation of training.

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

** UPDATE: Goal 5 has been completed*

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

DVRS has established a Business Outreach Team to strengthen the relationships with employers as a dual customer of the VR program. The members of the unit will work with businesses throughout the state to assist in addressing their need for qualified candidates, provide the lead for DVRS with targeted hiring events, help pre-screen candidates as warranted, liaison with other business services representatives throughout the workforce system, provide technical assistance regarding the ADA, and provide education on disability-related topics.

DVRS had identified Pre-Employment Transition Services as a new priority under the WIOA. The Division has partnered with the NJ DOE, Office of Special Education Programs to develop strategies that will ensure compliance with this new regulation. In order to reach all students with disabilities DVRS will fund initiatives that provide pre-employment transition services throughout the State.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.

See above response in Section (l) 1.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

See above response in Section (l) 1.

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

See above response in Section (l) 1.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

See above response in Section (l) 1.

C. OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VR PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

See above response in Section (l) 1.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES.

Justification for order of selection

The DVRS entered into an order of selection in 2001 but quickly recovered and was able to serve all categories within several months. Since that time the agency opted to remain in the order of selection in the event that budget constraints limited the ability to hire new staff. DVRS currently has a staffing target of 140 counselors. Due to recent changes in the DDD, every individual served by them is now required to have an employment goal in their support plan. Individuals who are served by DDD and are in need of employment services must come to the DVRS for services to determine eligibility prior to accessing employment services through DDD. The DDD currently serves approximately 25,000 individuals and estimates an additional 600-700 youth coming in yearly, and the local offices are starting to receive the influx of consumers with significant developmental disabilities.

As a result, the DVRS has determined that it is necessary to continue operating under an order of selection for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. With careful fiscal and case management, the agency has been able to provide services to every client found eligible for services in program year 2016. DVRS is concerned that an OOS will be necessary due to 15% allotment for pre-employment transition services. There is now less funding appropriate to consumers who are not students with disabilities.

Description of Priority categories

The DVRS is currently serving all categories in FFY 2015 but projects that an OS will be necessary in FFY 2016. Continuation of the OS is considered to be crucial to this human resource and fiscal management system, but even with diligent application of prudent and reasonable cost containment and intensive counselor recruitment measures, the DVRS may not be able to serve every new client meeting basic eligibility criteria in FFY 2016. The DVRS may again have to limit serving new consumers according to the OS for services, but proportionately serve more in priority one. The DVRS continues to monitor the need for an Order of Selection in FY 2020.

The DVRS does not rely solely on a diagnosis as a determination of significant disability, but considers every disability or combination of disabilities evaluated during the assessment, to determine eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs. If the disability, or combination of

disabilities, presents impairments that seriously limit at least one functional capacity (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, inter-personal skills, work tolerance, or work skills), in terms of an employment outcome, and if vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple services over an extended period of time; the person will be considered to be significantly disabled.

Priority of categories to receive VR services under the order

Order of Selection Categories

Priority 1: Clients classified as individuals with a most significant disability who meet the following criteria:

• Have a significant physical or mental impairment or combination of impairments which seriously limit two or more functional capacities in terms of employment outcome; and

• Require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

Program Year 2018

• Service Goal: 17,187 (Combined Titles I & VI)

• Outcome Goal: 2,840

• Timeframe: October 1, 2016 to November 30, 2018

• Average case life 26 months

Priority 2: Clients classified as individuals with a significant disability who meet the following criteria:

• Have a significant physical or mental impairment or combination of impairments which seriously limit at least one functional capacity in terms of employment outcome; and

• Require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

Program Year 2018

• Service Goal: 4,663

• Outcome Goal: 953

• Timeframe: October 1, 2016 to March 31, 2018

• Average case life 18 months

Priority 3: All other eligible individuals, who do not meet the criteria for Priority Category 1 or Priority Category 2.

• Has at least one limitation in terms of employment in any functional capacity area; and,

• Is not expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time.

Program Year 2018

• Service Goal: 1,126

• Outcome Goal: 140

• Timeframe: October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2018

• Average case life 12 months

The Order of Selection shall not preclude:

• Diagnostic services necessary to establish a client's eligibility;

• Post-employment services; and

• Information and referral services.

The DVRS will first serve in the order of selection Priority 1 followed by Priority 2 then Priority 3.

Service and outcome goals and the time within which the goals will be achieved

Program Year 2018 for Priority 1

• Service Goal: 17,187 (Combined Titles I & VI)

• Outcome Goal: 2,840

• Average case life 26 months

Program Year 2018 for Priority 2

• Service Goal: 4,663

• Outcome Goal: 953

• Average case life 18 months

Program Year 2018 for priority 3

• Service Goal: 1,126

• Outcome Goal: 140

• Average case life 12 months

Priority Category	Number of individuals to be served	Estimated individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services	Estimated individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services	Time within which goals are to be achieved	Cost of services
1	17,187	2,840	6,349	26 months	$19,584,000
2	4,663	953	1,667	18 Months	$3,672,000

Priority Category	Number of individuals to be served	Estimated individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services	Estimated individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services	Time within which goals are to be achieved	Cost of services
3	1,126	140	372	12 Months	$1,224,000

Figure 47

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER.

See above response in Section (m) 1. A.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS.

See above response in Section (m) 1. A.

D. THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER.

See above response in Section (m) 1. A.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

See above response in Section (m) 1. A.

2. IF THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS, REGARDLESS OF ANY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF SELECTION, WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT.

DVRS will use its authority under WIOA to serve eligible individuals, regardless of an OOS, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS.

1. SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

Funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act will be used for the provision of services that lead to supported employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

The goal of the DVRS is to create an effective, coordinated system of SE work opportunities throughout New Jersey to meet the needs of individuals with significant disabilities. SE funds are tracked separately to ensure reporting for individuals with the most significant disabilities that are served under the SE program. New Jersey became the 14th state to embrace the concept of Employment First (EF). This initiative identifies that every person,

including persons with the most significant disabilities have the right, through informed choice, to have equal access to employment services.

Of individuals with a SE outcome, the DVRS will increase the number of outcomes each year. The agency utilizes supported employment funds through a fee schedule based authorization process. That fee schedule ensures that the DVRS funds are spent on specific designated services.

Targeted disability groups include the following:

- Individuals with significant intellectual disabilities;
- Individuals with ASD;
- Individuals with serious psychiatric illness; and
- Individuals with traumatic brain injury.

2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:

A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

WIOA requires that 50% of SE allotment be set aside for youth with the most significant disabilities. These funds have been identified and are being tracked. Training will be conducted for all DVRS counselors that will emphasize that the provision of extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities, under appropriate circumstances, can be provided up to four years. It is critical that this training identifies the non—delegable nature of this new provision in WIOA. DVRS will develop policy that will identify this new provision in WIOA and track youth who require extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years.

B. HOW THE STATE WILL LEVERAGE OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDS TO INCREASE RESOURCES FOR EXTENDED SERVICES AND EXPANDED SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

DVRS and CBVI recently entered into a new MOU with DDD. The MOU identifies that resources to expand extended services and supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities will be allocated for youth being served by DDD through individualized budget allocations specific for employment support in competitive, integrated settings. This agreement further supports New Jersey's emphasis on Employment First. DVRS has also secured state funds to provide long-term follow-along (LTFA) to ensure job retention during any changes related to disability or environment. One reality to consider is that the number of people in LTFA increases every year as individuals secure employment in competitive settings. The DVRS state funds have not been able to keep up with the need. The DVRS updated its MOU with DDD to reflect DDD's commitment to provide the LTFA once a consumer has been rehabilitated through the DVRS. The division also plans to create an MOU with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to be able to transfer LTFA for individuals with serious psychiatric illness to them.

O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

• Establish appropriate management teams in all local offices; this will provide oversight to the day-to-day services provided to the DVRS customers;

• Determine staffing positions that reflect collaboration with businesses in New Jersey, in conjunction with the LWD Talent Networks.

• Ensure that all counselors have the opportunity for continuing education as appropriate;

• Send information about the DVRS services to the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, New Jersey's parent training information center to be included in all transition workshops throughout New Jersey;

• Partner with other state agencies (i.e. the DDD, the CBVI) to make sure the DVRS services information is distributed as warranted;

• Identify and provide targeted hiring events throughout the state; and

• Analyze client data via dashboard approach for assessment purposes on a monthly basis.

In order to increase the number of DVRS consumers with DD/ASD, the DVRS will apply the following strategies:

• DVRS will identify stakeholders and develop an education and communication plan that promotes Employment First (EF);

• DVRS will research how other states' agency partners are collaborating on EF strategies;

• DVRS will develop a plan for obtaining valid statistics of how many individuals with DD/ASD are served by DVRS;

• DVRS will create a plan to allow transition students with DD/ASD to have open cases two years prior to exiting school; and

• DVRS will determine possible sites for a Project SEARCH pilot.

2. HOW A BROAD RANGE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES WILL BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT EACH STAGE OF THE REHABILITATION PROCESS AND ON A STATEWIDE BASIS.

DVRS does not have any plans to announce a Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) for the Assistive Technology program in FY 2018. Disability Rights NJ continues as the entity that manages these funds. Another NGO is projected for July 2016 in order to maintain transparency for these funds. A broad range of assistive technology services and assistive

technology devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process using the following:

• Information and demonstration;

• Community outreach;

• Equipment recycling; and

• Technical consultation.

Assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis through a renewed and expanded contract with Disability Rights NJ using the following methods:

• Allowing the DVRS clients to try out equipment before purchase to determine best match for their specific needs;

• Continuing a pilot program with local offices to focus on organization and project management strategies among professional staff;

• Training staff in the latest equipment and technology;

• Partnering with all One-Stop Career Centers to offer technical assistance on current equipment and future purchases to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities;

• Equipping each local DVRS office with a counselor tool kit for assistive listening devices to encourage people who are deaf, hard of hearing, late deafened, and cochlear implanted to utilize necessary aides; and

• Ensuring that the three regional centers for the Deaf house state-of-the-art technology demonstration areas.

3. THE OUTREACH PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO IDENTIFY AND SERVE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM.

Outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program are as follows:

• Offering universal access for all agency services and programs;

• Maintaining a level of cultural competence among staff;

• Offering all publications in Spanish;

• Placing bi-lingual counseling staff at local offices demonstrating the most need;

• Providing Deaf language specialists that cover all local offices;

• Providing counselors who work with HH customers with additional training specific to this population;

• Partnering with community-based organizations, including faith-based entities, to facilitate communication with individuals who speak other languages;

• Developing information about DVRS in ASL; and

• Partnering with the NJ DOE to include information about the DVRS in its Parents Rights in Special Education (PRISE) document that is published in 12 languages.

4. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES).

DVRS assigned a lead transition counselor to each office. Responsibilities include:

- Coordinate all the transition activities throughout the catchment area.
- Support transition fairs
- Provide training on a local county-wide basis

Additionally, each counselor is assigned to specific public high schools. They provide technical assistance to the schools in the following ways:

- Attend individualized education program (IEP) meetings
- Provide TA to the schools as warranted
- Meet with individual schools
- Confer with parents
- Referral to benefits counseling when appropriate

DVRS also supports the IL centers to provide transition services to students on a fee-for-service basis throughout the state.

DVRS has identified several strategies to be used in the delivery of pre-employment transition services:

- Program planning and development specialist to coordinate pre-employment transition strategies statewide;
- Specific counselors to provide pre-employment transition services in the local offices;
- Data from the NJ OSEP to help determine the number of counselors needed in each office;
- Funding opportunities with community partners for the provision of pre-employment transition services;
- Business unit outreach to help establish work-based learning opportunities for students with disabilities;
- Partnership with NJ Talent Networks to identify industry-sector local labor market information (LMI) for each region to help counselors provide LMI information for students with disabilities; and

- Working in partnership with local areas to identify career pathway opportunities for students with disabilities.

On a state level, DVRS is a member of the State Special Education Advisory Council convened by the NJ Department of Education, with the goal of promoting additional collaboration between programs under IDEA and WIOA to promote successful transition to adult outcomes for students with disabilities.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

• DVRS will work with sheltered workshops to assist individuals to obtain competitive employment;

• DVRS will identify staff members in all local offices who will coordinate the provision of pre-employment transition services in partnership with LEAs.

• DVRS will develop partnerships with schools to provide technical assistance to students with DD/ASD that will identify community-based integrated work opportunities prior to exiting school; and

• DVRS will encourage and provide TA to CRPs who wish to become an employment network.

DVRS is currently assessing the community rehabilitation programs within the state to determine strategies that will result in the following outcomes:

• Nationally recognized credentials for supported employment specialists;

• Ability of CRPs to deliver customized employment strategies;

• Ability of CRPs to provide community-based appropriate assessments to individuals with disabilities; and

• Capacity of CRPs to use a discovery process for individuals with the most significant disabilities when appropriate. New Jersey currently supports center-based segregated programs using non-federal dollars; DVRS is actively involved with these programs to provide technical assistance to vendors who are engaged in business transformation for their program.

New Jersey currently supports center-based segregated programs using non-federal dollars; DVRS is actively involved with these programs to provide technical assistance to vendors who are engaged in business transformation for their program.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

WIOA requires states to establish performance accountability measures that apply across the core programs to assess the effectiveness of states and local areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by those programs. DVRS is involved in workgroups at LWD that will establish metrics to comply with the accountability measures under section

116 of WIOA. DVRS is committed to improving its performance as per these new requirements.

Additionally, DVRS is has established goals for improvement based on the 2010 RSA monitoring visit. These include the following:

• Establishing a Business Outreach Team (BOT) designed to meet the needs of businesses in New Jersey;

*Update - The Business Outreach Team has been established as of FY 2018.

- Implementing Project SEARCH;
- Providing opportunity for targeted hiring events at a regular basis;
- Coordinating opportunities with business services representatives;

• Creating a pre-employment transition unit in each local office aimed at meeting the needs of transition students with disabilities throughout the state;

- Establishing relationships with all LEAs;
- Managing a partnership with the CILs to deliver Pre-ETS;
- Tracking the delivery of Pre-ETS in local offices.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

The DVRS is housed in New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD). In August 2010 LWD reorganized its structure to include the DVRS within the workforce development system. This provides a solid foundation to work with the state's workforce investment system. The DVRS is a core participant in the One—Stop Career Center system and maintains an active presence in the eighteen local WDBs as well as the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), New Jersey's State WDB. The SETC has established relationships with both DVRS and CBVI State Rehabilitation Councils, as described in prior sections. Local WDBs sponsor local disability issues committees and the DVRS local managers have a designated seat on these local disability committees. Additional strategies include the following:

- Participation in all LWD efforts to coordinate services to all customers;
- Participation with LWD Labor Planning and Analysis committees that identify 7 key industry sectors. They include:

o Transportation, Logistics and Distribution;

o Life Sciences (Pharmaceuticals, Biotechnology, Medical Devices);

o Technology/Entrepreneurship;

o Financial Services;

o Advanced Manufacturing;

o Health Care; and

o Hospitality

The first four industries have been identified as priority industries for economic development efforts in New Jersey. These seven industries account for more than half of all private sector jobs in New Jersey and nearly two—thirds of all private sector wages paid in the state. The DVRS participation in these efforts will ensure LWD support for an inclusive, diverse workforce, including individuals with significant disabilities who qualify for Title VI funds.

The DVRS is housed in LWD as part of workforce development. This provides a solid foundation to work with the state's workforce investment system. The DVRS is a core participant in the One—Stop Career Center system and maintains an active presence in the eighteen local WDBs as well as the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), New Jersey's State WDB. The DVRS local offices are now located within the OSCCs in 16 catchment areas throughout the state.

The LWD has established four priorities for the next three years:

1. Reemployment — What steps can LWD take to decrease the amount of time that people receive UI?

2. Opportunity — How can LWD assist more people to move from government benefits (SSI, SSDI, GA, and TANF) to work?

3. Alignment — How can LWD increase the number of people who have an industry recognized, post—secondary credential?

4. Accountability — What data and information about program performance would help us to improve services?

The DVRS, as part of workforce development, provided input to these priorities to ensure that other components of the statewide workforce investment system can appropriately assist individuals with disabilities who access general services.

The DVRS continues to partner with the Talent Networks established by LWD that provide linkages to the seven key industries sectors that account for more than half of all private sector jobs in New Jersey and nearly two—thirds of all private sector wages paid in the state. The DVRS participation in these efforts ensures LWD support for an inclusive, diverse workforce, including individuals with significant disabilities who qualify for Title VI funds.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

DVRS is committed to establishing Employment First initiatives throughout the state. Strategies included establishing Project SEARCH and developing targeted hiring events for qualified candidates with disabilities; both these efforts have been accomplished as of FY 2018. The business outreach unit will lead these efforts. Additionally, DVRS identified goals to improve services to Deaf/hard of hearing consumers. Strategies to reach these goals include establishing regional Deaf language specialist positions throughout the state,

improving the direct access for Deaf consumers via video phones in the offices, updating the DVRS hearing aid policy that includes best practices regarding individuals with cochlear implants, and working with the three Deaf centers to increase outreach to this population. DVRS also plans to contract with the Boggs Center, New Jersey's Center of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities, to provide technical assistance for the following:

- TA to designated institutes of higher education in order to establish programs for youth with ID/DD that will provide industry-recognized credentials and a Career Pathways approach for their skill development; and
- TA to designated sheltered workshop staff for training in Customized Employment and Person-Centered Planning.

Strategies to reach all transition students with disabilities are significant as well. They include establishing a Pre-ETS unit to coordinate activities with LEAs and CILs as well as developing an MOU with the SEA to help DVRS achieve the requirement of providing Pre-ETS to all students with disabilities in transition. DVRS also posted a notice of funding for Pre-ETS activities to work with vendors to reach this goal.

Innovation and expansion (I & E) activities are developed throughout the year to promote model demonstrations and best practices for the VR program. Current I & E programs include JEVS-hireAbility for employment services to DVRS consumers with the most significant disabilities. DVRS plans to post an NGO for I & E in 2016.

Innovation and expansion funds are also used to provide AT and employment services to DVRS consumers who are Deaf/HH. These centers employ staff members fluent in ASL to ensure effective communication with Deaf consumers who use sign language as their native language.

Strategies to overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the state Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the state Supported Employment Services Program include the following:

- Updating the extended employment guidelines;
- Standardizing vendor reporting forms;
- Monitoring required vendor accreditation and staff development;
- Meeting with the APSE board;
- Continuing the liaison meetings with ACCSES NJ;
- Outreaching to the DDD to provide employment services to individuals affected by deinstitutionalization;
- Encouraging CRPs to become employment networks; and
- Participating as a lead member to implement the Employment First initiative in the state.

The DVRS plans to work with the CRPs to develop integrated employment strategies for individuals with disabilities who currently attend sheltered workshop programs who, through informed choice, choose to access competitive employment. DVRS implemented reporting requirements in 2016 that identify extended workers who currently make above minimum wage in order to provide counseling, including benefits counseling, and encouragement for them to pursue competitive, integrated employment.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

See above response in Section (8) A.

C. OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM.

See above response in Section (8) A.

P. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

Describe:

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.

The New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) goals and priorities of FY 2015 were a continuation of goals identified in FFY 2012. Progress toward their achievement is as follows:

Goal 1: Accuracy of Data. Goal 1: By October 31, 2014, data reported by the DVRS will be valid. The DVRS will develop a baseline to determine the validity of information given.

DVRS has used an AWARE data case management system for a full year; counselors still need more training in order to make sure all required parts of the system are filled in appropriately. Additional training has been identified and DVRS plans to have three regional training to cover it.

Goal 2: Performance Indicator 1.1. The number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the 2014—2015 federal year will increase compared to the number of individuals who exit the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during 2010—2011 performance period.

DVRS met goal 2 for FFY 2013 and FFY 2014. In FFY 2015 DVRS did not achieve this goal. 15% of the federal funds were moved into PETS, and students will not have employment outcomes for many years. This shift in emphasis led to the decline in employment outcomes.

Goal 3: Performance Indicator 1.5. The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the program in competitive, self or blind enterprise program (BEP) employment during the 2014—2015 federal year will increase compared to the average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the program in competitive, self—, or BEP employment during the 2013—2014 performance period.

The DVRS did not meet this goal for FFY 2013, 2014, or 2015. In New Jersey the average wage is one of the highest in the nation. Many highly paid and wealthy residents of NJ earn

their wages out of state (in NYC and Philadelphia) so the wage base in NJ, is actually lower than statistics would indicate.

The DVRS embraced the President's emphasis on federal hiring of persons with disabilities. For the sixth year, a specific "Schedule A" hiring event took place in southern New Jersey. The DVRS expanded this activity to northern New Jersey in the summer of 2015. The DVRS has also engaged in industry sector strategies identified by LWD that involve working with targeted private industries that hire the most workers in New Jersey. To date the DVRS has worked with the financial services industry and the transportation, logistics and distribution industry. Many of these industries have federal contracts and are subject to the Section 503 regulations promulgated in March 2014. The DVRS will continue to identify strategies that will improve indicator 1.5.

Goal 4: By October 1, 2014, the DVRS will have resolved all the compliance findings and corrective actions stemming from the Fiscal Year 2010 monitoring report on the Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent Living Programs in the State of New Jersey so that Federal funding is not withheld.

The DVRS has resolved all findings.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

See above response in Section (P) 1. A.

2. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SUPPLEMENT FOR THE MOST RECENT PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.

The DVRS goal for SE was to serve a greater number of individuals. Targeted disability groups in FFY 2013 state plan included the following:

• Individuals with serious psychiatric illness;

• Individuals with developmental disabilities;

• Individuals who are Deaf or hard—of—hearing;

• Individuals on the autism spectrum; and

• Individuals with traumatic brain injury.

To achieve this goal, the DVRS did the following:

• Worked with the DSA fiscal and the Division of Information Technology (DIT) to ensure separate tracking was established to differentiate individuals served with Title VI funds;

• Offered SE training opportunities and strategies for staff members of providers;

• Provided technical assistance to the SE providers in regard to work flow, referrals and staffing; and

• Continued expanding the list of qualified providers, as appropriate.

The DVRS was successful in achieving all goals set forth for SE.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

See above response in Section (2) A.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

Federal Program Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators

WIOA removed the specific standards and performance indicators for Title IV. Performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA will be the evaluation tool used by DVRS once they are implemented in LWD.

The six primary indicators for performance are:

1. The percentage of participants, who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

2. The percentage of participants, who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;

3. Median earnings of participants, who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

4. The percentage of participants who obtained a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program. A participant who has obtained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is only included in this measure if the participant is also employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized post-secondary credential within 1 year from program exit;

5. The percentage of participants who during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.

6. Effectiveness in serving employers, based on indicators developed as required by sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(iv) of WIOA.

Additional indicators for Title IV include six primary indicators for the youth/student program:

1. Percentage of participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program;

2. Percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;

3. Median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

4. The percentage of participants who obtained a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation or up to 1 year after exit. A participant who has obtained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is only included in this measure if the participant is also employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized post-secondary credential within 1 year from program exit;

5. The percentage of participants who during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress towards such a credential or employment;

6. Effectiveness in serving employers, based on indicators developed as required by sec. 116(b)(2)(iv) of WIOA.

Using performance data under WIA the DVRS passed four of the six standards and indicators for FFY 2015.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED.

I&E funds were provided via an NGO to the following CRP:

1. JEVS Hirability - Business outreach and employment support to DVRS consumers with significant disabilities.

I&E funds were also used to provide services in three regional Deaf centers. These centers provide employment services to individuals who use ASL as their native language. The centers also house assistive technology for individuals with any degree of hearing loss.

Funding continues to be used for the SRC and the SILC activities for FY 2016.

Q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

Include the following:

1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

Supported employment means competitive work in integrated work Supported employment means competitive work in integrated work settings in which individuals are working and earning at least minimum wage. Individuals with the most significant disabilities can benefit from these services when:

• Competitive employment has not traditionally occurred;

• Competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and

• As a result of the nature and severity of their disability need intensive supported employment services in order to perform such work.

New Jersey became the 14th state to embrace the concept of Employment First (EF) in April 2012. EF is a framework that is centered on the premise that all citizens are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life. This initiative identified that competitive employment in an integrated setting is the preferred first choice for every individual seeking employment in New Jersey. This effort shifts assumptions about whether individuals with certain categories of disabilities can to work to one of determining the supports and services necessary so that these individuals will be successful in competitive employment. The DVRS adheres to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. An individual with a disability must want and qualify for the services.

Counselors in all the offices received training on trial work experiences (TWE) in the spring of 2014. CRPs were also given access to the same training. TWE will be utilized when the DVRS counselor needs clear and convincing evidence regarding whether an individual with a disability will benefit from VR services.

The DVRS has consistently encouraged the development of programs that meet the needs of a wide variety of individuals with the most significant disabilities based on either geographic and/or disability driven needs. Traditional community rehabilitation programs and programs for SE without traditional facility-based operations are available throughout the state.

All of the vendors are required to follow the same criteria in their service delivery:

- Referral;
- Assessment;
- Job development;
- Job Placement;
- Intensive coaching; and
- Follow-along.

Supported employment continues to be a valuable service and has opened doors to individuals with disabilities who are now expected to work in a competitive setting. The DVRS is currently assessing the need for more intense post-employment services for individuals with the most complex disabilities; training will commence in the fall to instruct counselors on the proper way to identify DVRS consumers in need of this service.

For transition students with disabilities, in particular students with the most significant disabilities, counselors will coordinate the IPE in order to ensure that students can move from Pre-ETS services to extended services when appropriate. Care will be taken to make sure students do not lose funding upon the end of IDEA entitlement.

LTFA is provided to consumers through the use of state funds to provide less intense ongoing support. It is estimated that the DVRS, through its provision of LTFA, is helping to maintain 3,388 individuals with disabilities on the job. This does not only have a significant social impact on their lives, but it demonstrates that people with disabilities can be contributors to their community. The DVRS provides extensive on-the-job services or job coaching for individuals for up to 18 months but evaluates each case and the person's need on an individual basis. In the pre-IPE meeting that includes the counselor, the CRP vendor

and the client, a determination is made whether extended services will be required. As the case progresses the counselor makes sure that the CRP vendor will be available to provide long-term follow-along services.

Under the DVRS EF strategy, long-term SE services will be provided by the DDD and the DMHAS for consumers who qualify for these services after a DVRS consumer is successfully placed in employment. This braiding of funding provides supports to a higher number of consumers. The DVRS continues to partner with the DDD and the DMHAS in order to do this.

DDD - DVRS and CBVI successfully negotiated a new MOU with the DDD in FFY 2015. The DDD recently changed its policy and now requires all individuals who receive DDD services to apply for services with the DVRS as a condition to receiving DDD funding. While the DVRS is very willing to provide services to individuals who qualify and want services, the division will adhere to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in WIOA.

DMHAS - for many years the DVRS and the DMHAS combined resources to fund 22 county-based SE programs specific for individuals with pervasive mental illness. This partnership will conclude September 30, 2014. The SE vendors have been notified and have been given the opportunity to apply to the DVRS to become a vendor with the division. Local office counselors will work with consumers with pervasive mental illness to identify SE providers that meet their needs and will provide the SE on a fee-for-service basis.

The DVRS recognizes that the census of those needing LTFA will grow incrementally as those consumers achieve employment. With that reality in mind and the shortage of state funds, the DVRS has organized several efforts to remedy the situation. These include:

• Identifying DDD and DMHAS consumers in the DVRS case management system to ensure that these consumers are transferred to the appropriate funding stream

• Ensuring that the state-funded program will be monitored to provide the most effective services to this cohort; and

• An examination of cases that may have evolved toward independence and are no longer in need of the service

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

See above response in (q) 1.

CERTIFICATIONS

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate **NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development**

Name of designated State agency **NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Robert Asaro-Angelo**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Commissioner**

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 **NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Robert Asaro-Angelo**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Commissioner**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to MAT_OCTAE@ed.gov

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING — SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

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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 **NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Robert Asaro-Angelo**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Commissioner**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:**The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

1. PUBLIC COMMENT ON POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

2. SUBMISSION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT:

The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN:

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:

A. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EITHER A STATE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OR STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(21) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable **(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council**

C. CONSULTATIONS REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(16)(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

D. THE FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION BY THE STATE, OR IF THE STATE SO ELECTS, BY THE STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES, TO PROVIDE THE AMOUNT OF THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF THE COST OF CARRYING OUT THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(3).

E. THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds **No**

F. THE SHARED FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION OF JOINT PROGRAMS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs: **No**

G. STATEWIDENESS AND WAIVERS OF STATEWIDENESS REQUIREMENTS, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(4) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. **Yes**

H. THE DESCRIPTIONS FOR COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(11) AND (24)(B); AND 606(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

I. ALL REQUIRED METHODS OF ADMINISTRATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(6) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

J. THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(7) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

K. THE COMPILATION AND SUBMISSION TO THE COMMISSIONER OF STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS, ESTIMATES, STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES, STRATEGIES, AND PROGRESS REPORTS, AS APPROPRIATE, AND AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(15), 105(C)(2), AND 606(B)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

L. THE RESERVATION AND USE OF A PORTION OF THE FUNDS ALLOTTED TO THE STATE UNDER SECTION 110 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, PARTICULARLY INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

M. THE SUBMISSION OF REPORTS AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(10) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES:

The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

A. COMPLY WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 101(A)(5)(D) AND (20) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. IMPOSE NO DURATION OF RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT AS PART OF DETERMINING AN INDIVIDUAL'S ELIGIBILITY FOR VR SERVICES OR THAT EXCLUDES FROM SERVICES UNDER THE PLAN ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO IS PRESENT IN THE STATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(12) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

C. PROVIDE THE FULL RANGE OF SERVICES LISTED IN SECTION 103(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AS APPROPRIATE, TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT?

Agency will provide the full range of services described above **Yes**

D. DETERMINE WHETHER COMPARABLE SERVICES AND BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE INDIVIDUAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

E. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

F. COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE PROVISIONS OF INFORMED CHOICE FOR ALL APPLICANTS AND ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(D) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

G. PROVIDE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES TO AMERICAN INDIANS WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING IN THE STATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(13) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

H. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF SEMIANNUAL OR ANNUAL REVIEWS, AS APPROPRIATE, FOR INDIVIDUALS EMPLOYED EITHER IN AN EXTENDED EMPLOYMENT SETTING IN A COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAM OR ANY OTHER EMPLOYMENT UNDER SECTION 14(C) OF THE FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT OF 1938, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(14)OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

I. MEET THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTIONS 101(A)(17) AND 103(B)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT IF THE STATE ELECTS TO CONSTRUCT, UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, FACILITIES FOR COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

J. WITH RESPECT TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THE STATE,

XΔΞΞΞç. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT,

. STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ASSESSMENTS; AND

A. 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

XΔΞΞΞçI. 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:

XΔΞΞΞçII. 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

XΔΞΞΞçIII. AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT , WHICH IS DEVELOPED AND UPDATED WITH TITLE I FUNDS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 102(B)(3)(F) AND 606(B)(6)(C) AND (E) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE ASSURANCES FROM THE STATE

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (BLIND)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

_____

* Sec. 102(b)(D)(iii) of WIOA

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS;

NEW JERSEY USES AN OPTION TO DELIVER VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES THROUGH TWO DISTINCT PROGRAMS. THE MAJORITY OF SERVICES ARE DELIVERED THROUGH VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION STAFF AT THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, FOR ANY INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES. A PORTION OF FUNDS IS SEGMENTED AND DELIVERED TO THE SEPARATE COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED WITHIN THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES WITH A FOCUS ON SERVING INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BLIND, VISION-IMPAIRED OR DEAF-BLIND. IN KEEPING WITH USDOL/USDOE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE STATE PLAN, THE FOLLOWING SECTION WILL DESCRIBE PROGRAMS OFFERED FOR BLIND, VISION-IMPAIRED, AND DEAF-BLIND PEOPLE.

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) and its SRC continue to maintain a strong relationship and partnership on behalf of individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and vision impaired.

The functions of the SRC are to:

- Review, analyze, and advise CBVI regarding performance of its responsibilities of the agency as per the Rehabilitation Act amendments of 2014;
- Assist CBVI with the development of State goals and priorities, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the Vocational Rehabilitation program;
- Advise and assist CBVI with the preparation of the State Plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations required under the Rehabilitation Act amendments of 2014;
- Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with, Vocational Rehabilitation services;

- Prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) on the status of Vocational Rehabilitation programs operated within the State, and to make the report available to the public;
- Coordinate with other councils within the State, including the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC);
- Establish successful working relationships between CBVI, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and Centers for Independent Living within the State; and
- Perform other functions consistent with the purpose of this title, as the SRC determines to be appropriate.

SRC Recommendations for CBVI

- The combined state plan must be relevant for all Workforce partners. The state plan needs to detail points of congruence and differences, with the goal of achieving the outcome of competitive, integrated employment.
- The Disability subcommittee of the WIOA Blueprint Team developed an accessibility checklist and training protocols for the One-Stop Career Centers. The SRCs should be given the opportunity to review those documents and make recommendations for improvement. In the absence of this opportunity, the accessibility checklist should be relied upon strongly in helping these facilities provide an accessible service environment.
- Training related to better serving individuals with disabilities in the workforce system should also include subject matter experts that are part of a Technical Assistance Unit who can provide coaching to front line staff on disability specific issues, including blindness and vision impairment. Training must be linked with ongoing coaching.
- As do all workforce programs, CBVI and DVRS shall target jobs that are above minimum wage. While continuing to operate programs that provide a supported work environment for those who require such assistance, in keeping with the requirements of Section 511 of WIOA, New Jersey's goal is for people to transition to integrated settings where people earn at or above a minimum wage.
- Emphasize the blindness specific issues, such as computer and print access issues at One-Stop Career Centers. Develop capacity to understand specific needs of various communities that will be using the One-Stop Career Centers or other aspects of the Workforce Development system.
- Points of alignment with the broader workforce development system through inter-agency cooperative agreements to define relationships. This should also include the involvement of local school districts that should be involved in the transition to adult outcomes, including post-secondary education and employment.
- Evaluation for training providers via the consumer report card, the SRC would like to review the document and align the training evaluation at the VR agency.
- The SRC would like to emphasize that the Commission is uniquely situated to provide high-quality VR services to blind and vision-impaired consumers, and the Commission has data that verifies that VR agencies that focus on blind and vision-impaired customers enjoy quantifiable measures that prove that these consumers

achieve significantly better outcomes in terms of job placement, wages, length of employment, training competencies, and the like.

SRC Input and Recommendations Regarding State Plan Goals and Priorities

- Administrative staff presented to the SRC membership the proposed goals and priorities, state strategies, and Town Hall comments for the FFY 2015 State Plans for review and comment. The SRC supported the agencies initiatives and priorities.
- One of the continuing initiatives is for the SRC and CBVI to expand outreach efforts to further educate agencies and the general public about blindness and vision impairment. The SRC membership also recommended that the agency perform additional public awareness forums to educate New Jerseyans about Commission services.
- Based on comments from the public forums, the SRC will form an ad-hoc committee to assist the Commission with the State Plan connected to assistive technology training.
- The SRC also praised CBVI for maintaining communication with consumers, understanding their needs, developing initiatives to address their needs and open up employment opportunities.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

- CBVI accepts the recommendation and makes its top priority to seek competitive, integrated employment outcomes for all consumers its serves. The agency will continue to work collaboratively with all core partners in the Workforce Development system and other partners to achieve this goal.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will facilitate for the SRC membership to review and provide feedback on improving the accessibility checklist and training protocols for One-Stop Career Centers
- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will assist in developing the capacity of a Technical Assistance Unit within the Workforce Development system to train and coach front line staff on disability specific issues, including blindness and vision impairment.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation to target jobs for consumers with disabilities that are above minimum wage and to assist consumers in supported work environments to transition to integrated settings with competitive wages.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will assist One-Stop Career Centers with issues related to improving computer and print access for individuals with vision impairments and to develop the capacity of staff in the One-Stop Career Centers to understand the specific needs of the blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind communities.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will seek to develop new inter-agency cooperative agreements to support transition for youth to adult outcomes, including an emphasis on post-secondary education and employment.
- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will work with the SRC membership to develop protocols for evaluating CBVI training vendors that are in alignment with

State Law and the provisions of the Combined State Plan. Update: in Federal Fiscal Year 2017, with the assistance of the SRC, a consumer satisfaction survey was completed via a contract with the Eagleton Institute, to evaluate CBVI's assistive technology training vendor.

- CBVI accepts this recommendation and will continue to provide high-quality VR services to blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers to promote positive employment outcomes for the consumers its serves.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

CBVI approves of all recommendations of the SRC.

B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

1. A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;

CBVI is not requesting a waiver of statewideness for services for individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

See above response in Section (b) 1.

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.

See above response in Section (b) 1.

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI)

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI or Commission) is the primary agency responsible for delivering high-quality services to consumers who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind. Consistent with the requirements of WIOA, CBVI is committed

through its array of programming to helping its consumers to secure integrated, competitive employment. In pursuit of this general objective, CBVI administers both a comprehensive, residential training program and itinerant programs that focus on blindness-specific pre-employment training, including development of communications skills, orientation and mobility, nonvisual independent living techniques, and adjustment to blindness training.

CBVI subscribes to the Employment First principles adopted by the Governor in April 2012, and believes that these principles should be accomplished in the context of long-term career development. CBVI is committed to working with all WIOA partners, including One-Stop Career Centers, to provide technical assistance that will help guarantee that general employment focused services are provided in accessible forms to consumers who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind.

CBVI has developed a Strategic Plan that will govern the agency's forward momentum during the next three to five years. This Strategic Plan focuses on six distinct areas for improvement or change and many of the operational objectives have been completed since the publishing of the 2016 NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA. The five relevant focus areas of the Strategic Plan as they relate to the Combined State Plan include:

1. Development of an agency-wide service delivery redesign;

2. Adoption of significant blindness education program reforms that will lead ultimately to helping consumers achieve integrated, competitive employment;

3. Promotion of new and innovative VR and Employment programs that will strengthen core VR functions;

4. Cultivation of improved internal and external communications among agency staff and among the broader blindness, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind communities; and,

5. Facilitation of improved external partnerships and resources to assist the agency in achieving its goals and objectives.

The size of the population served by the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired as well as the complexity of services required by consumers who are blind, deaf-blind, or vision impaired necessitates that the agency develops cooperative relationships with organizations and service providers that facilitate and enhance the ability to deliver targeted, high quality services. The Commission does not carry out programs by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture. In addition, the Commission does not utilize any State Use programs. The Commission has cooperative agreements and/or strong working relationships with the following agencies and organizations which are not required partners of the Statewide Workforce Investment System:

- Cooperative agreements/partnerships with other divisions within the Designated State Agency (DSA):

o Division of Aging Services: services to support senior citizens in the community.

o Division of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing: equipment distribution program for individuals who are deaf and hard-of-hearing; sign language interpreter referral program; field services to connect with community services.

o Division of Developmental Disabilities: Supported Employment services coordination including Extended Services and a full range of support services to assist individuals with developmental disabilities integrate into their communities, including assistance with supported, community-based housing.

o Division of Disability Services: Personal assistance/care services to individuals who are disabled, and information and referral services on a wide range of services. In FFY 2012, the Commission partnered with this agency to provide fiscal intermediary services through a contract with a community provider for consumers of the Support Service Provider-New Jersey program.

o Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services - Full range of mental health and addiction recovery services offered in the community and training on these services to staff at the agency.

- Cooperative agreements/partnerships with other departments within the State of New Jersey:

o Department of Education, Offices of Special Education: Technical assistance with implementation of education and transition services under IDEA, and contact system to provide itinerant education services to children who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind via the Local Educational Agencies in New Jersey. CBVI provides comprehensive educational services to children that are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind.

o Department of Children and Families: protection services for vulnerable children and families.

o Department of Health: coordination of early intervention services and the Diabetic Eye Disease Detection Program.

o New Jersey Transit-Accessible Transportation Services: training on accessible transportation resources.

o Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services: General agency serving individual with disabilities except those who are blind, visually impaired or deaf-blind)

o Talking Book and Braille Center: Computer/Closed Circuit Television loaner and distribution program

- Additional cooperative agreement:

o The College of New Jersey: partnerships to offer the Work Skills Prep program, a two week residential summer assessment and training program for youth 16 - 21 with multiple disabilities; the College Prep Experience program which is a one to three week residential summer program in cooperation with the Pre-College Program at The College of New Jersey to prepare high school students with vision loss for college; the Support Service Providers programs, developed a network of trained service providers to provide communication and

travel supports to adults who are deaf-blind, and the NJ Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program to distribute telecommunication and internet access equipment to individuals who are deaf-blind and meet FCC eligibility requirements.

CBVI will focus significantly on developing Pre-Employment Transition Services for students with disabilities. Because CBVI provides, in addition to standard VR services, a program of Blindness Education for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind residents of New Jersey, the Commission is well equipped to deliver high-quality transition programs. The existing transition programs that will be further developed and refined during the next Combined State Plan cycle include the following:

- Student Hands-on Alternatives Re-Enforcement Project (SHARP), a four-week summer program for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind learners in grades 1-8, focusing on delivering of blindness-specific skills of independence that cannot or do not get provided during the conventional academic year;
- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) 1.0, a year-round program targeted to high school-aged blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers that focuses on development of work readiness and blindness-specific skills of independence, mentorship and instruction in self-advocacy from blind and vision-impaired role models, and a work-based learning opportunity in a competitive, integrated setting;
- Life 101, a two-week summer program for Freshman and Sophomores in high school to focus on acquisition of Pre-Employment Transition Services, including core blindness-specific skills of independence, job exploration counseling, including counseling on post-secondary education opportunities and work readiness training, provided in a residential environment at the Commission's Joseph Kohn Training Center;
- The College Prep Experience Program, dedicated to providing students likely to seek post-secondary education with the necessary skills to function successfully as blind or vision-impaired students, including post-secondary enrollment counseling, job exploration counseling, self-advocacy skills instruction, and work readiness skills;
- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) 2.0, an extension of EDGE 1.0, that serves to assist undergraduate college students in successfully making the transition from a secondary to post-secondary academic setting, and facilitates the development of work readiness and self-advocacy skills, ongoing post-secondary enrollment counseling, job exploration counseling, and work-based learning through internships and other work experiences;
- Work Skills Prep, a two-week summer program for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind students, possessing additional complex disabilities, that delivers workplace readiness and self-advocacy skills instruction through hands-on activities and work-based learning opportunities.

CBVI will continue to provide professional staff with developmental instruction that will enhance the delivery of VR services. Specifically, CBVI has and will continue to provide its staff with instruction in Customized Employment practices, the use of labor market information in career planning, leadership development programs, and other VR-specific opportunities and courses, as they are made available.

CBVI is the designated State Licensing Agency to administer the Federal Randolph-Sheppard program, an entrepreneurial program for qualified, legally blind candidates, who are interested in operating and managing businesses on Federal, State, and municipal properties.

CBVI has developed a Business Relations Unit to strengthen the relationships with employers as a secondary customer of the VR program. The members of the unit will work with employers throughout the state to assist in addressing their need for qualified candidates to fill critical vacancies in their workforce and provide education on disability-related topics.

CBVI administers an Independent Living and Independent Living—Older Blind program for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers, age fifty-five and over, who are not interested in, or able to, engage in work, where instruction in blindness skills are delivered via its itinerant teaching staff. Additional specialized programs include: a week-long Senior Hands-On Retreat Experience (SHORE) is offered three to four times per year in different areas of the state for adults age 55 and older who are interested in a more intensive instructional program; lessons in assistive technology are provided both individually and in a classroom environment in cooperating public libraries throughout the state of New Jersey, called the Library Equal Access Program (LEAP);and a new, state-wide peer support group network dedicated to assisting this constituency with adjustment to blindness, styled the Assistive Support Program for Individual Renewal, and Education (ASPIRE) has recently been established.

Federal VR Grant Split

In order to provide the most appropriate, effective and cost/beneficial services to individuals with disabilities in New Jersey, the Executive Director of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Department of Human Services, and the Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Department of Labor, pledge the cooperation of their staffs to the development of working relationships which will ensure open channels of communication and thus will serve the best interests of the individual client, and individuals or groups of persons in need of vocational rehabilitation and/or Independent Living Services.

This cooperation between agencies led to a MOU that outlines the documented agreement, indicating an 80/20 split of the Federal VR grant between the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) and the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The breakdown of the ratio was determined with the idea in mind that delivering high-quality vocational rehabilitation services to blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers is more expensive on average than delivering similar services to persons with other disabilities. Further rationale for the ratio is as follows:

- CBVI administers a year-round, residential program to provide blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers with training in pre-employment blindness skills, e.g. Orientation and Mobility; Braille or other low-vision communication strategies; assistive technology instruction; skills of independent living (techniques for independently managing in the home, including cooking, dressing, cleaning, money management, etc.); and classes on Adjusting to Blindness or Vision Loss.

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

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) - DVRS and CBVI entered into a formal MOU with DDD in FFY 2015. The MOU outlines the process for DDD consumers who are interested in competitive integrated employment to access VR services. DDD serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, who meet the functional criteria of having a developmental disability, are eligible for and maintain Medicaid eligibility, and are at least 18 years of age at the time of application and 21 years of age to receive services. Conditions generally considered developmental disabilities include intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, spina bifida, and autism. Part of DDD's implementation of the Employment First Initiative includes an annual discussion with individuals served, family members, and Support Coordinators providing care management services to identify each individual's current employment status and identify how to assist the individual in reaching his/her employment outcomes. In addition, an employment-related outcome is required within the Individualized Service Plan (ISP) of every individual served through DDD. When an individual is not pursuing employment, a statement explaining why the individual is not pursuing employment at that time is included in the ISP. When an individual is in need of employment services to assist him/her in obtaining and/or maintaining employment, he/she must seek those services through DVRS or CBVI initially. DDD provides other needed services while the eligibility determination is being made with DVRS or CBVI, or in addition to the employment services provided through DVRS. Once an eligibility determination is made with DVRS or CBVI, DDD is able to provide employment services not available through DVRS, as well as the other services that are available through DDD. Because the DDD has transferred all of their children services to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF), the DVRS will be reaching out to the DCF to develop an MOU for the purpose of supporting students in transition who will need DVRS services in order to access employment.

The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education

In order to define the most appropriate resource to cover expenses such as interpreter services, personal care attendants and other accessibility areas while an individual with a disability participates in a school program, the division has agreements with all four-year

state colleges and all county colleges in New Jersey. These MOUs have been in place for many years and will be updated in program year 2016.

The Division of Wage and Hour Compliance

In conjunction with community-based rehabilitation programs, the DVRS maintains an MOU with the CBVI, the DDD, and the Division of Wage and Hour, which outlines the criteria for an employment relationship under New Jersey Wage and Hour Law in such a way that vocational rehabilitation activities may take place in community settings without undue restriction. Consequently, situational assessments and similar "on-the-job" work experience may take place without violating employment law.

Agrability

The southern part of New Jersey works with Agrability to ensure that farmers who have become disabled have the opportunity for rehabilitation services. There is currently no formal agreement with the US Department of Agriculture.

Coordination with Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and Centers for Independent Living

In New Jersey, the DVRS has a positive relationship with the SILC and has supported its growth throughout the years. The DVRS uses Title I innovation and expansion funds to support the operation of the SILC and includes them in all agency activities. A SILC member has a seat on the SRC and the DVRS supports the SILC through its active participation at their meetings and in the preparation of the state plan for independent living (SPIL) and the RSA Section 704 Report.

The state currently has eight federally-funded centers for independent living (CILs). The DVRS expanded the network through the RSA Part B grant and a line item in the state budget to add five CILs to the group. The DVRS has dedicated a program specialist to offer the CILs consultation and technical assistance. The DVRS feels that these centers offer a dynamic that is necessary for individuals with disabilities before, during, and after their employment experience.

The reauthorization of WIOA transferred the Independent Living program to the Administration for Community Living (ACL) from the U.S. Department of Education. The Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILC), along with the IL directors in each state were given the authority to choose the designated state entity (DSE) to administer the state program. The New Jersey SILC required interested agencies to apply. DVRS was chosen to remain the DSE and will continue to administer the IL programs in New Jersey.

The DVRS continues to value the partnership that exists between the DVRS and is working with them to establish a viable pre-employment transition services strategy that will help DVRS provide this service to all students with disabilities.

MOUs that will be revised/developed include the following:

- Offices of Special Education Programs (OSEP) - DVRS and CBVI will develop an MOU with OSEP to coordinate efforts for students with disabilities to ensure that all students in transition have the opportunity to receive pre-employment transition services.

- Department of Children and Families (DCF) - DVRS and CBVI will reach out to DCF to develop an MOU relating to students with disabilities that are under their system of care. This includes students with intellectual and developmental disabilities under the age of 21 as well as students with disabilities with significant and pervasive psychiatric and behavioral health needs who are being served by DCF.
- Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS), DHS - DVRS and CBVI will establish an MOU with DMAHS, the lead agency administering Medicaid Waivers during FFY 2018.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

CBVI administers a comprehensive Assistive Technology program to help blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers secure employment and to simply live independently in a twenty-first century world. These services are provided to consumers of all ages, from educational students through a program specifically targeting the Older Blind population, defined in Federal law as fifty-five and older. These services may be provided on an individual basis or in classroom-type settings.

CBVI also collaborates with staff at the Richard West Assistive Technology Advocacy Center (ATAC) of Disability Rights New Jersey (DRNJ). The ATAC is New Jersey's federally funded assistive technology project. The ATAC assists individuals with disabilities in overcoming barriers in the system and making assistive technology more accessible. The ATAC also maintains a robust advisory council with a broad representation from the disability community and providers of Assistive Technology devices and services. The ATAC Advisory Council provides recommendations and guidance to the ATAC team. Its membership includes state agency officials, representatives from community organizations such as centers for independent living, and advocates with disabilities and family members of people with disabilities. Council members have assisted ATAC in networking, advising on our small grants initiative, and in helping facilitate training and speaking opportunities. A member of the Commission's executive leadership team overseeing Assistive Technology services as a member of the advisory council.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

Agrability

The southern part of New Jersey works with Agrability to ensure that farmers who have become disabled have the opportunity for rehabilitation services. There is currently no formal agreement with the US Department of Agriculture.

4. NONEDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

CBVI recently signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with DVRS, the general VR agency, and DDD, a sister agency within the New Jersey Department of Human Services and an agency that provides a full array of services for youth exiting secondary education including employment supports for individuals with a wide array of developmental disabilities. DDD has implemented a new service delivery system that allows for more self-

direction in developing community based supports. Individuals with developmental disabilities may apply for an eligibility determination at age 18, and are eligible for services at age 21 when they exit secondary education.

CBVI also has a Memorandum of Understanding with The College of New Jersey and the Division of Disabilities Services to provide Support Service Providers (SSP) to individuals who are deaf-blind, are at least 18 years old, and have exited secondary education. SSP provide specialized support to facilitate greater community integration via the facilitation of communication access with the public via the preferred method of communication of the individual who is deaf-blind, e.g., American Sign Language.

In FFY 2018, CBVI will develop a collaborative relationship with the New Jersey Department of Children and Family, the primary agency in state government providing a wide array of services to children and youth, for the purpose of developing a means to refer out-of-school youth to their programs to provide additional supports..

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

See above response in Section (c) 1.

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.

In addition to DVRS, coordination with education officials also exists with CBVI. CBVI, since its inception, has assisted school districts in providing education programs that address the unique needs of children with vision impairments, blindness, and deaf-blindness. In 1993 this partnership was formalized with local school districts through provider service agreements. The agreements identify the specific level of services that the Commission will provide for each child in the school district. These services are tiered according to individual student needs and are provided by Commission staff within the Education Service Unit. When students reach the age of fourteen, the Commission's Teachers for the Blind and Visually Impaired refer all these students to one of the eight transition counselors who work in the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit, i.e., six transition counselors assigned to the agency's service centers and two Deaf-Blind Specialists. In addition, Commission staff participate in transition fairs developed by Local Educational Agencies (LEA) and Life After 21 seminars hosted by the Division of Developmental Disabilities as an outreach effort to reach families who may be unfamiliar with CBVI services.

The transition counselors can directly provide or arrange for the provision of the full range of Pre-Employment Transition Services for potentially eligible high school students. Information and referral services are provided to the students, their parents/guardians, and their school district to assist in the transition process from secondary education to adult outcomes. In addition, assessment activities occur to assist in the process to determining

eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services for students who choose to apply for VR services. When the student is determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, the transition counselor will begin a process of comprehensive assessment to determine services needs that will inform the development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) around the specific needs of the student as well as specialized techniques and training in career awareness, college admission procedures, jobseeking activities, etc.

The Commission maintains, in conjunction with the DVRS, an Interagency Agreement for Transition from School to Adult Life with the appropriate SEA (Offices of Special Education Programs - OSEP). This agreement complies with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.22(b). Under the agreement, the agency provides technical consultations to transition-aged youth and/or their parents/guardians and other members of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team in the form of telephone consultations, face-to-face meetings, and/or attendance at IEP meetings. The IEP shall designate the individuals and agencies responsible for the provision of transition services to be implemented while the student is in school.

Throughout the transition process, contact with the Local Educational Agency (LEA) and the Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired at the agency remains constant. The need for specialized training, specific programs and assistive technology are addressed as part of the IEP and are also developed more fully in the Transition IPE. Technical consultation begun in the earlier grades with the Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired is continued through the transition process, and the transition counselor actively seeks participation in the development of IEPs. The transition counselors may also begin evaluative activities at age fourteen that ultimately lead to development of the IPE and continue to play an organizational role with technical consultations and through their active participation in school-to-work activities, task force memberships, career fairs, etc. At various points during the transition process students are evaluated and presented with opportunities to participate in specific programs funded by the Commission, such as:

- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) 1.0, a year-round program targeted to high school-aged blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers that focuses on development of work readiness and blindness-specific skills of independence, mentorship and instruction in self-advocacy from blind and vision-impaired role models, and a work-based learning opportunity in an integrated setting;
- Life 101, a two-week summer program for Freshman and Sophomores in high school to focus on acquisition of Pre-Employment Transition Services, including core blindness-specific skills of independence, job exploration counseling, including counseling on post-secondary education opportunities and work readiness training, provided in a residential environment at the Commission's Joseph Kohn Training Center;
- The College Prep Experience Program, dedicated to providing students likely to seek post-secondary education with the necessary skills to function successfully as blind or vision-impaired students, including post-secondary enrollment counseling, job exploration counseling, self-advocacy skills instruction, and work readiness skills;
- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) 2.0, an extension of EDGE 1.0, that serves to assist undergraduate college students in successfully

making the transition from a secondary to post-secondary academic setting, and facilitates the development of work readiness and self-advocacy skills, ongoing post-secondary enrollment counseling, job exploration counseling, and work-based learning through internships and other work experiences;

- Work Skills Prep, a two-week summer program for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind students, possessing additional complex disabilities, that delivers workplace readiness and self-advocacy skills instruction through hands-on activities and work-based learning opportunities.

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;

See above response in Section (d) 1.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

See above response in Section (d) 1.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

See above response in Section (d) 1.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

See above response in Section (d) 1.

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.

As for cooperative agreements between private nonprofit organizations and CBVI, the New Jersey CBVI is structured in a manner that facilitates the provision of a full range of services to all age groups, from early childhood to senior populations. The Commission's organizational structure contains distinct units that provide the aforementioned services. Consequently, the Commission has not found it to be necessary to outsource many of its vocational rehabilitation services to private, non-profit providers, as most services are provided within the organizational structure of the Commission. The Commission has several contractual and/or cooperative agreements with vocational rehabilitation service providers and with providers of services that contribute, in some form, to the vocational rehabilitation process. In addition to the providers listed below, the Commission maintains close relationships with many of the Centers for Independent Living.

The agency maintains performance based contracts with the following private, non-profit providers. These contracts are reviewed annually and performance standards are tracked by administrative staff at the agency:

• Community Health Law Project (Advocacy/Legal)

• Pathways to Independence, Crafters Guild (Recreation/Micro-Enterprises)

• Advancing Opportunities (Assistive Technology Evaluation and Training)

• Family Resource Network (Transition program for students with disabilities)

• Center for Vocational Rehabilitation (Community-based work experiences as part of training at the Joseph Kohn Training Center)

• Cumberland County Office on Aging and Disabled (Social/Recreation, Peer Support)

• Family Services of Morris County (Volunteer matching)

• Puerto Rican Association for Human Development (Eye Health Service and Treatment)

The agency also works collaboratively with the following organizations:

• National Federation of the Blind and state affiliates

• American Council of the Blind and state affiliates

• American Association of the Deaf-Blind

• Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (Parent Information and Training Center in New Jersey)

• Vision Loss Alliance of New Jersey

• Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR)

• National Employment Team (NET) - a sub-division within CSAVR

• National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB)

• Deaf-Blind League of New Jersey

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

(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.

Supported employment services, including extended services, are ubiquitous in New Jersey. The DVRS, the general agency, has cooperative agreements in the form of vendor/provider relationships with over 95 individual supported employment service providers. These providers are entirely community-based, or associated with community rehabilitation facilities such as workshops or cognitive rehabilitation programs. All programs receive funding based upon the fee-for-service, billable job coaching hour model.

CBVI is committed to the needs of individuals who may require supported employment services. The Commission contracts for all core supported employment services through a fee-for-service arrangement and maintains a list of approved supported employment providers throughout the state. The Commission currently utilizes the same fee structure and approval process as that which is in place for the DVRS.

Additionally, under a MOU with The College of New Jersey's Center for Complex and Sensory Disabilities, a pilot program called Youth Employment Solutions (YES) was initiated to facilitate competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with the most significant disabilities who have exited the secondary school system. This program utilizes the Customized Employment model to engage the youth in the Discovery Process, and, in partnership with a supported employment service provider and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, develops a Customized Employment placement. Once an employment placement has been achieved, the identified supported employment service provider takes over with providing on-the-job supports.

A MOU was developed in coordination with the DDD and the DVRS which outlines the protocols and procedures for the collaborative provision of supported employment services to Commission consumers. The MOU defines and delineates the procedures to be followed by the respective agencies in order to ensure maximum effectiveness and delivery of services. The MOU also outlines the roles and responsibilities of each agency as they apply to providing efficient and effective supported employment services.

Extended services are available to individuals who have been determined eligible for services by the DDD. The Commission also provides time-limited job coaching services to consumers needing those services using Title I funds.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

(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

CBVI has developed a Business Relations Unit to strengthen the relationships with employers as a secondary customer of the VR program and to coordinate efforts with the larger employment engagement developed for the Workforce Development system in New Jersey. The members of the unit will work with employers throughout the state to assist in addressing their need for qualified candidates to fill critical vacancies in their workforce and provide education on disability-related topics. Services provided by the Business Relations Unit can include, but are not limited to, consultation and evaluation around assistive technology and accessibility issues; disability awareness training; recruitment for internships and employment vacancies; and targeted hiring events. CBVI's Business Relations Unit will also seek opportunities for customers to engage in career exploration activities with business partners, such as informational interviews, job shadowing, and work experiences.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

CBVI has dedicated staff to provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, and is developing targeted strategies for engagement with employers on behalf of these consumers. CBVI's Business Relations Unit evaluates business partners' interest in participation in career exploration activities, such as informational interviews, job shadowing, work-based learning opportunities, and networking events. The Business Relations Unit Staff will work collaboratively with CBVI staff serving youth and students with disabilities, as well as CBVI partner programs for students and youth with disabilities, to identify and develop opportunities for employment engagement, and competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with disabilities following the completion of their educational programs.

H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

CBVI will establish an MOU in FFY 2018 with the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS) within the New Jersey Department of Human Services, the lead agency administering Medicaid Waivers. DMAHS serves more than 1,000,000 people with a staff of over 500 people who work both in Trenton and in Medical Assistance Customer Centers (MACCs) throughout the state.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

A revised 5 year MOU was executed on July 1, 2015 by DVRS, CBVI, and the Division of Developmental Disabilities within the New Jersey Department of Human Services with the objective to define the roles and responsibilities of State agencies primarily involved in assisting individuals with disabilities in finding and maintaining competitive integrated employment and will assist the State agencies to operate in an efficient and successful manner to improve employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities by operating consistently across agencies ensuring quality service provision. The agreement is in alignment with the New Jersey's Employment First initiative proclaimed by the Governor on April 19, 2012.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

CBVI utilizes a wide array of vendors who provide Supported Employment services, including vendors that specialize in working with individuals with psychiatric disabilities.

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;

A member of the administrative staff overseeing the Vocational Rehabilitation Program at CBVI is responsible for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on the qualified personnel needs for the agency. The information is gathered in collaboration with the Human Resources, Fiscal, and Training units at the agency.

The following staff members are those that are 1.0 FTE, in the capacity of administration or provision of vocational rehabilitation services. The agency divides the state into two service regions, Northern and Southern and maintains four Service Centers which include locations in Newark, Freehold, Cherry Hill, and Atlantic City serving all twenty-one counties in the state. The agency uses an itinerant model of service provision to meet the needs of the consumers it serves. A separate Deaf-Blind Services Unit also provides services from staff located in the Service Centers to consumers with dual sensory impairments. The Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC) is a residential training center also serving consumers statewide who wish to participate in an intensive course of training during a twenty-week period. Referrals to JKTC are made by counselors from the Service Centers and/or the Deaf-Blind Services unit. The agency serves approximately 3,000 consumers seeking employment who are blind, vision impaired, or deaf-blind on an annual basis. The agency provides services throughout the lifespan, from birth to senior services, allowing for a seamless transition between service units. The agency serves approximately 9,000 New Jerseyans who are blind, vision impaired, or deaf-blind on an annual basis. In addition, the agency provides eye screening services to targeted populations that are traditionally underserved and provides that service to approximately 35,000 New Jerseyans annually.

Administrative Staff (Agency-wide)		
Job Title	**Individuals Served**	**Number Of Positions**
Chief of Program Administration	3,000	1
Supervising Community Program Specialists:		
(Director of Joseph Kohn Training Center)	100	1
(Manager of Business Enterprises New Jersey)	60	1

Administrative Staff (Agency-wide)		
Assistant Supervisor of Educational Services (JKTC)	100	1
Principle Community Program Specialist (JKTC)	100	1
TOTAL: 5	---	---

FIGURE 48

Supervising Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor		
Job Title	**Individuals Served**	**Number Of Positions**
Northern Service Region	1,600	2
Southern Service Region	1,400	2
TOTAL: 4	---	---

FIGURE 49

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors I & II		
Job Title	**Individuals Served**	**Number Of Positions**
Executive Unit	3,000	2
Northern Service Region	1,600	14
Southern Service Region	1,400	13
JKTC	100	1
Deaf-Blind Services	150	2
TOTAL: 31	---	---

FIGURE 50

NJ-CBVI provides vocational rehabilitation services to approximately 3,000 individuals annually, via four service centers, Deaf-Blind Services, and the Joseph Kohn Training Center.

Approximately 90% of the individuals that NJ-CBVI serves are individuals with a significant disability.

NJ-CBVI developed a Business Relations Unit in 2017. CBVI does not expect to need any additional personnel for each of the categories below beyond filling the projected vacancies listed.

Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
Supervising Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	4	1	1
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	31	2	4

FIGURE 51

ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

See above response in Section (i) 1. A. i.

iii. projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

See above response in Section (i) 1. A. i.

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

i. a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

DVRS and CBVI negotiated with administrators at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) School of Health Related Professions to develop a means to assist in meeting the CSPD standards for the state. The results of the collaborative efforts were the development of a state standard in keeping with the national competency movement and federal mandates, and a masters-level program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling within the School for Health-Related Professions (SHRP). On July 1, 2013, as part of a restructuring program of state university in New Jersey, UMDNJ was merged into the Rutgers University higher education system. The program commenced in June of 1999 at two sites, which accommodates staff in Northern and Southern parts of the state (Scotch Plains, N.J. and Stratford, N.J.) This is the sole graduate program devoted to training rehabilitation counselors and in addition to being CORE approved it is also CACREP

accredited. All of the Rutgers graduates are eligible for national certification upon graduation.

Guidelines have been provided by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the New Jersey Civil Service Commission on hiring policies and terms of employment. Projections were made based on the current number of employees in regard to their age, length of service, education and availability of training resources.

A staff person from the administrative teams of both DVRS and CBVI are members of the advisory board for the Rehabilitation Counseling program. That staff person stays in contact with key university staff throughout the year to continue the collaborative working relationship. That staff person also monitors staff professional development in conjunction with the agency's training unit.

Rutgers University - FFY 2014-2015

Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
Rutgers (Masters of Rehab Counseling)	95	6	23	14
Rutgers (Undergraduate degrees)	78	0	17	27
Rutgers (Post-Masters Cert - Rehab Counseling)	0	0	0	0

FIGURE 52

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

See above response in Section (B) i.

iii. the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

See above response in Section (B) i.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional

associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

CBVI continues its coordination with post-secondary programs that offer graduate degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling as a source of qualified personnel. The program of study offered at Rutgers University is the only CORE accredited program in Rehabilitation Counseling in New Jersey and its staff actively recruits students from Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York. Rutgers recruitment efforts benefit the agency by increasing the pool of qualified candidates who meet the CSPD standard. The agency will continue its cooperative efforts with Rutgers University, to use as a viable source for addressing future staffing needs. An agency administrative staff person is an active member of the Advisory Council. The agency has expanded its recruitment efforts by forwarding all open-competitive job postings for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor positions to the seven (7) CORE accredited universities in Pennsylvania and New York with the goal of increasing the pool of qualified candidates for future job vacancies.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 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

CBVI continues to be committed to a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) to ensure that highly qualified individuals provide services to agency consumers. The CSPD standard for the agency is based upon the degree requirements of the national certification, CRC (Certified Rehabilitation Counselor). The standard requires a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to have graduated from an accredited college or university with a Master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling; or have a current and valid CRC regardless of degree; or possess the education and experience as outlined in categories A through R promulgated by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC).

Components of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development - National Certification:

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, mandates that states develop and implement strategies for the hiring or retraining of personnel to meet standards or qualifications based on the highest requirements in the state for the counseling profession. The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the general VR agency in New Jersey, negotiated with administrators at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) School of Health Related Professions to develop a means to assist in meeting the CSPD standards. The results of the collaborative efforts were the development of a state standard in keeping with the national competency movement and federal mandates, and a masters-level program in Vocational Rehabilitation

Counseling. As part of the curriculum, all students complete 60 credits of course work and Practicum and Internship experience to practice and integrate counseling skills learned during course work. The program commenced in June of 1999 at two sites (Scotch Plains and Stratford), which accommodate staff in the Northern and Southern parts of the state. Courses are also offered as well in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for staff at the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The program has been accredited by CORE (Council on Rehabilitation Education) and CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) meeting national standards for quality education in rehabilitation and counseling education and all graduates from the program qualify for credentialing as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (the national certification). On July 1, 2013, UMDNJ merged into Rutgers University. The School for Health-Related Professions and the Rehabilitation Counseling program remains intact. All degrees/certifications are issued by Rutgers University. Rutgers is the only institution of higher learning in the state to offer graduate degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling.

In FFY 2015, the agency completed a five year initiative funded by an In-service Training grant from the US Department of Education. The initiative was designed to increase the number of staff who are eligible for national certification, i.e., CRC credentials. CBVI offered an incentive for Vocational Rehabilitation personnel to obtain their Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a CRC credential by funding all phases of the educational or credentialing process. Counselors were responsible for completing the application, and the agency paid all associated fees. During project period of FFY 2011-2015, twelve staff at the agency obtained their Master's degree from Rutgers University and fourteen staff applied for CRCC testing and eligibility determination. Ninety-five percent of all staff within Vocational Rehabilitation services at CBVI meet or in plan to meet the CSPD standard.

Master's Program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling:

CBVI will continue to financially support staff participating in the Master's Program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling at Rutgers University as a primary CSPD activity, as the agency is firmly committed to the priority of ensuring qualified staff are serving consumers with disabilities.

There are presently thirty-eight (38) full time vocational rehabilitation counseling staff members at the agency. Currently, thirty-one (31) staff members meet the CSPD Standard, an 81 percent rate of compliance. Five (5) additional staff members are currently in plan to achieve compliance. Staff that meets the CSPD or is actively participating in a plan of professional development is 95 percent of total staff in the title series mentioned above. There are currently two (2) staff members that are currently not under plan to achieve compliance with CSPD standards. Those staff members will not be permitted to perform non-delegable work functions until they develop with administration a defined plan to obtain the necessary education and/or certification to be in compliance with CSPD standards for the agency. The Commission will continue to annually review staff credentials to access the level of progress in procuring the education to meet the standards of the national certification, i.e., CRC.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY

UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

See response above in Section 3A

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

Tuition Reimbursement

The Office of Workforce Development and Training (OWDT) Department of Human Services (DHS) oversees and supervises the administration of the current Tuition Reimbursement Program (TRP). The program will assist employees in broadening their knowledge, skills, and contributions to the Department through continued learning and professional growth. This program reimburses State employees for eligible tuition expenses, up to an annual maximum of $2,000 per fiscal year. In order for staff to be considered, they must complete an application which also serves as an agreement to all of the requirements outlined in the Tuition Reimbursement Guidelines. A supervisor's signature is required and the course must be related to their current/planned job responsibilities.

Civil Service Commission (CSC)

The CSC Office of Training is currently responsible for the design, development and delivery of all State mandated and generic training programs. These programs are aimed to specifically address the general training and personal development needs of State employees. The training courses focus on management, supervision and other professional development areas. CSC uses an online system called Learning Management System (LMS) to faster administer State mandated and some elective trainings as an alternative to a classroom setting. Civil Service Commission also offers instructor-led trainings at one of the available county colleges. Employees are encouraged to attend courses pertinent to their job duties and responsibilities.

Agency Sponsored - In-Service Training

In-Service training provides staff the opportunity to upgrade professional knowledge and skills, and to keep current in changes in the field of vocational rehabilitation and the workforce environment. The Commission has developed in-house subject matter experts. These staff provide training and consultation to other agency staff in areas of their expertise, such as assistive technology, independent living skills, education issues, deaf-blindness, and medical aspects of blindness.

The Commission encourages staff to attend training, seminars, and workshops appropriate to their job duties and responsibilities. In addition, if limited staff is approved to attend a conference, the agency utilizes a train-the-trainer model so that staff in attendance can share information with their colleagues.

B. 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.

See above response in Section (4) (A).

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

The CBVI employs vocational rehabilitation staff members who are bilingual; utilizing several civil service titles with variants that require staff to have bilingual abilities in Spanish and English or American Sign Language and English (Deaf-Language Specialist and Deaf-Blind Specialist). Spanish has been identified as the most frequently used language in New Jersey, second only to English. Many of the agency's staff also have bilingual abilities including staff in the Prevention Unit, Technological Support Services, and Independent Living Skills Unit. The State of New Jersey has a large influx of immigrants from all over the world and it is estimated that over 50 languages and dialects are spoken in the state. The agency utilizes interpreter services from various community based agencies on a fee-for-service basis to help increase language access. Each regional office maintains a list of agencies that provide translation services for a wide range of languages. If translation services are unavailable, then CBVI makes every reasonable effort to gain assistance from family members or other members of that community to facilitate effective communication. Collaborative relationships have also been developed with community agencies such as the Puerto Rican Association for Human Development to foster greater access to the Hispanic/Latino communities.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The CBVI works collaboratively with the New Jersey Department of Education (NJ DOE) to provide quality services to New Jersey's students with disabilities under the auspices of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). CBVI and NJ DOE have an ongoing working relationship, as outlined in a state level cooperative agreement regarding transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities and a Memorandum of Understanding. The goals of the agreements are to assure that cooperation and

collaboration exists in implementing and maintaining a system of VR service delivery to eligible students with disabilities.

The Commission developed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in FFY 2009 with the general VR agency, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and the Division of Developmental Disabilities to promote improved service provision for individuals who are eligible for Supported Employment service. The partners in the inter-agency agreement and staff members of Community Rehabilitation Providers, have been providing training collaboratively on the provisions of the new MOU to their agency staff in joint sessions and to Transition personnel at local education agencies (LEA) throughout the state to improve transition from secondary education into adult services. The Commission worked collaboratively with the School of Education at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) to develop additional programs to assist consumers who are transition-aged (16-21 years old). CBVI staff worked with TCNJ administrators to develop a Teacher of the Blind/Visually Impaired program in the School of Education's Department of Special Education. Initially, the program offered courses as continuing education credits but has now been establish as a master's program that prepares teachers for NJ State Licensure as Teachers of the Visually Impaired. This is the only program in New Jersey to prepare teachers to work in this capacity. The Commission wants to prepare the next generation of teachers who will have an impact on transition-aged students served in vocational rehabilitation programs. In addition, CBVI and TCNJ work collaboratively in operating a summer work skills program for transition-aged youth (16-21) who have multiple disabilities. The two week Work Skills Prep program focuses on assessment and instruction of independent living skills that lead to successful employment outcomes.

J. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

(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;

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) in collaboration with its State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the assistance of the Interwork Institute at the San Diego State University, performed a comprehensive statewide needs assessment to ascertain the rehabilitation needs of individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and vision impaired. The intent of the assessment was to obtain information on these needs, services gaps, and agency strengths/areas of improvement. The SRC was actively involved in all aspects of the assessment including the development of data collection instruments used in the assessment process and served as an active partner in conducting the assessment activities with the agency.

The assessment efforts yielded quantitative and qualitative data on the employment needs of this population from various sources. The information gleaned from these assessment activities will be used by the agency to develop goals, objectives, and strategies that will

improve outcomes for those that receive vocational rehabilitation services from the agency and to improve outreach efforts to unserved or underserved populations.

The process that was developed for conducting the needs assessment involved six primary data-gathering approaches:

- Focus groups conducted with four stakeholder groups (consumers and family, representatives of organizations that provide services to blind, deaf-blind, and vision impaired individuals, CBVI staff, and SRC members);
- A statewide town hall meeting with consumers, partner agencies and concerned citizens;
- Electronic surveys conducted with two stakeholder groups (consumers' families and representatives of organizations that provide services to blind, deaf-blind, and vision impaired individuals);
- Analysis of a variety of existing demographic and case service data relevant to blind, deaf-blind, and vision impaired individuals;
- Satisfaction Survey on Assistive Technology Training Services performed by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; and
- Assessment of Training Curriculum at the Joseph Kohn Training Center.

Data Collection from National Databases

As part of the assessment process, the agency gathered data from sources connected to the United States Census Bureau, specifically data that was originally gathered via the American Community Survey (ACS). The three main data sources used, and that were available during the assessment process, were the 2015 Disability Status Report for New Jersey published by the Employment and Disability Institute at Cornell University, 2016 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium published by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Statistics and Demographics, and the American Foundation for the Blind - Prevalence Rates of Visual Loss (updated January 2017), which provided a further breakdown of data points obtained from ACS methodology.

All Disabilities (Data Source: 2016 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium)

The prevalence rate for all types of disabilities across all age groups was 12.6 percent nationally and 10.4 percent in New Jersey. Based on the prevalence rates for New Jersey of individuals with a wide range of disabilities, it is estimated that 921,026 New Jersey residents have some level of disability. Of that population aged 18-64, 21.1 percent have income that is at or below the Federal poverty rate. In addition, those individuals aged 18-64 with disabilities that are living in the community are employed at a rate of 34.9 percent nationally, and slightly higher in New Jersey at 37.9 percent.

Blindness & Vision Impairment (Data Sources: AFB Prevalence Rates of Visual Loss (1/2017) and 2015 Disability Status Report for New Jersey)

Recent survey data on overall prevalence rates of vision loss across all age groups was available at the American Foundation for the Blind (updated January 2017), and indicates that approximately 161,587 New Jersey residents are blind or vision impaired, a prevalence rate of 1.8 percent of the general population. This prevalence rate is slightly lower than the

national rate of 2.3 percent. For ages 21-64, all races and ethnicities, it is estimated that 74,300 New Jersey residents have vision impairments, a prevalence rate of 1.4 percent of the base population in the State. It was also observed in the data review that the Black/African American population, regardless of ethnicity, living in New Jersey, has a slightly higher rate of vision loss, at 2.5 percent. Individuals who identified their ethnicity as Hispanic, all racial groups, had a prevalence rate of vision impairment at 2 percent of the general population.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

See above response in Section (j) (1) (A).

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

See above response in Section (j) (1) (A).

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

See above response in Section (j) (1) (A).

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

See above response in Section (j) (1) (A).

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

In an effort to develop the capacity for Community Rehabilitation Programs in New Jersey to effectively work with individuals with vision loss and other complex disabilities, CBVI conducted a survey of the training needs of Job Developers and Job Coaches who provide supported employment services in collaboration with the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities, a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service. The CBVI Administrative team forged a collaborative arrangement with the Boggs Center to offer supported employment providers training to expand their awareness of the tools and resources for assisting job seekers with the most significant disabilities, including vision loss, to access successfully employment opportunities. The Boggs Center hosted an all-day training session presented by CBVI staff which included a comprehensive overview of CBVI services and a full range of strategies for working effectively with job seekers who are blind and visually impaired with additional complex disabilities. Emphasis was placed on specific tools and methods for maximizing the functioning of individuals with multiple disabilities in the workplace. Instructors in the areas of orientation and mobility, independent living and assistive technology shared techniques and methods for enabling blind and visually impaired individuals to function independently and demonstrated a variety of adaptive devices.

Participant survey questionnaires were distributed to solicit feedback about the training session, to gage the understanding of the concepts shared during the session and recommendations for carrying out similar sessions in the future. The majority of responses indicated that the training session provided practical strategies for supported employment

providers to carry out their work with blind and visually impaired job seekers. Recommendations included adding an interactive component to the training session and providing more information about activities offered at the Joseph Kohn Training Center. CBVI will provide customized training on an annual basis through the assistance of the Boggs Center, based on the results of the surveys of staff to assist in developing the capacity of providers of supported employment services to effectively work with those with the most significant disabilities.

On August 14, 2017, CBVI issued a Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) and a Request for Letters of Interest (RLI) inviting Supported Employment provider agencies to participate in a Blindness Learning Community (BLC) that focused on building the capacity of staff at these agencies to more effectively serve individuals who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind and require supported employment services to obtain and maintain a job. The Commission accepted letters of interest until the close of business on September 1st and a total of five agencies applied for this opportunity. The BLC was established in partnership with The College of New Jersey Center for Sensory and Complex Disabilities and provided targeted training and coaching on evidence-based, non-visual methods of instruction for individuals with low or no vision. It also presented an opportunity for CBVI staff to work with staff of provider agencies on building of a community of practice that focuses on developing intervention strategies that serve individuals who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind, and who have multiple disabilities, including intellectual and developmental disabilities. Blindness-specific training topics included: dispelling misconceptions about blindness, training in alternative/non-visual techniques, access technology, and travel techniques and strategies. Further topics included Person-Centered Planning/Discovery, Collective Impact Strategies, Customized Employment, and Business Engagement. The final day of training brought together the two regional cohorts for a wrap-up session that addressed additional topical areas identified by cohort members, a facilitated Kaizen (continuous improvement) session with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to identify what is working now with the provision of supported employment services, what areas can be improved, and the development of action steps to further improve the working relationships with agency staff and provider agency staff to expand employment outcomes for our customers. Follow-up with the participating agencies will occur in the first half of 2018 to provide additional technical assistance and training, as needed. Planning for the offering of the training to expand to additional provider agencies is also anticipated to occur in 2018.

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 .

CBVI, since its inception, has assisted school districts in providing education programs that address the unique needs of children with vision impairments, blindness, and deaf-blindness. In 1993 this partnership was formalized with local school districts through provider service agreements. The agreements identify the specific level of services that the Commission will provide for each child in the school district. These services are tiered according to individual student needs and are provided by Commission staff within the

Education Service Unit. CBVI is currently reviewing and revising its Blindness Education program delivery to more closely align with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, focusing specifically on more individually tailoring service delivery to students based on their specific needs and governed less by services that may be offered under a level-based system. When students reach the age of fourteen, the Commission's Teachers for the Blind and Visually Impaired refer all these students to one of the six transition counselors who work in the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit, i.e., four transition counselors assigned to the agency's service centers and two Deaf-Blind Specialists.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES;

Annual Estimate of Individuals to be Served and Costs of Services

It is estimated that the State of New Jersey has approximately 79,000 individuals who are of working age (16-64) and have a visual disability (based on 2015 Disability Status Report for New Jersey, published by the Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability at the Cornell University ILR School). It is estimated that CBVI will serve approximately up to 3,300 of these individuals during FFY 2016.

Of these 3,300 eligible individuals, it is estimated that all will receive services provided under Part B, Title I of the Act and 50 individuals under Part B, Title VI of the Act. Service costs are estimated to be $11,950,187.00 exclusive of amounts for Supported Employment under Title VI and state match under Title I. $126,818.00 is currently allocated for Title VI, Part B services.

The total amount of estimated funds from both Title I and Title VI is $12,077,005.00, serving an estimated total of 3,300, for an average cost of services at $5,522.00.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

See above response in Section (k) (1).

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

See above response in Section (k) (1).

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION;

See above response in Section (k) (1).

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

See above response in Section (k) (1).

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.

See above response in Section (k) (1).

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 following CBVI goals and priorities were developed based on the consultations with the SRC membership and based on data obtained from the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, including information from a Town Hall meeting, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and targeted surveys.

The SRC has consistently provided the agency's administrative staff with valuable feedback on establishing goals and priorities that reflects the Council's commitment to promote quality employment outcomes for individuals with vision loss. SRC members took an active role in development and implementation of assessment activities performed during the needs assessment in FY 2014. In addition, the Council's Vice Chair, is a member of the Strategic Plan Design Team, as well as representation from the leadership of major constituency groups in New Jersey.

The Strategic Plan Design Team also consists of a diverse representation of staff across the organization that worked to develop strategic initiatives and work plans that form the core of the strategic plan. The agency has completed a multi-year strategic plan for the agency. The project began in February 2013 and will be finalized by December 2014. The plan is composed of strategic initiatives that will drive the transformation of the agency. A final work plan was completed by December 2014. The following are the strategic initiatives connected with vocational rehabilitation services that will drive agency priorities:

GOAL 1: Service Delivery System Redesign:

- CBVI will develop a model of service delivery to ensure the agency's five major programmatic components (Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living, Access Technology, and Eye-Health Services) function more collaboratively and seamlessly in the provision of comprehensive, life-long services to consumers.

GOAL 2: Development of Quality Career and Employment Programs:

- CBVI will develop innovative quality career and employment programs, in response to needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment and connected to meeting performance indicators connected with quality employment outcomes.

GOAL 3: External Partnerships, Resources and Alliances:

- CBVI will focus on growing external partnerships, resources, and alliances to support consumer services and outcomes. This will include development of new community rehabilitation programs to meet the unmet needs of consumers.

GOAL 4: Communications, Public Information, and Community Outreach:

- CBVI will develop improved internal and external communications strategies, public information campaigns, and community outreach efforts to heighten the profile of the agency and to inform the general public about the diverse capabilities of blind and vision-impaired people.

GOAL 5: Human Resources Staff Development:

- CBVI will devote resources and energy to various issues related to human resource staff development.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.

See above response in Section (l) 1.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

See above response in Section (l) 1.

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

See above response in Section (l) 1.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

See above response in Section (l) 1.

C. OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VR PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

See above response in Section (l) 1.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES.

CBVI is not implementing an Order of Selection.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER.

See above response in Section (m) 1. A.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS.

See above response in Section (m) 1. A.

D. THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER.

See above response in Section (m) 1. A.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

See above response in Section (m) 1. A.

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.

See above response in Section (m) 1. A.

N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS.

1. SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

CBVI utilizes a wide array of vendors on a fee-for-services basis to provide supported employment services for those individuals with the most significant disabilities. Consumers and/or their representatives are able to select the vendor to provide these services from a list kept in conjunction with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD).

In addition, the agency recently signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the DVRS, the general VR agency, and DDD, a sister agency within the New Jersey Department of Human Services and an agency that provides a full array of employment supports including extended services to individuals with a wide array of developmental disabilities, with the goal of furthering Employment First principles in the state by increasing access to supports needed to obtain and maintain employment.

CBVI staff also will continue to be involved in training opportunities to providers of supported employment services via the annual New Jersey APSE conference (Association for Persons in Supported Employment) and via the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities to expand cross training opportunities with community rehabilitation providers who provide supported employment services and agency staff.

CBVI seeks to achieve 5% of all successful employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities that require supports on the job, including long-term follow along services.

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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

Funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act will be used for the provision of services that lead to supported employment. The goal is to meet the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities to attain competitive, integrated employment. Priorities will be given to individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities, who demonstrate a need for intensive supported employment support in order to achieve substantial, gainful employment. These goals align with New Jersey's emphasis on Employment First.

Funds specifically designated for the provision of supported employment to youth with the most significant disabilities have been identified and are being tracked. Training will be conducted for all counselors that will emphasize that the provision of extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities, under appropriate circumstances, can be provided up to four years. It is critical that this training identifies the non-delegable nature of this new provision in WIOA.

DVRS and CBVI recently entered into a new MOU with DDD. The MOU identifies that resources to expand extended services and supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities will be allocated for youth being served by DDD through individualized budget allocations specific for employment support in competitive, integrated settings. This agreement further supports New Jersey's emphasis on Employment First.

The DVRS has organized the provision of SE through the use of community rehabilitation programs on a fee-for-service basis generally requiring up to 100 hours of intensive job coaching. The DVRS is currently reviewing the provision of SE services to determine that it is being offered to those in the most need and that there is a true collaboration among the three parties; the consumer, the DVRS vocational rehabilitation counselor and the vendor.

In order to support the work that is being done in these cases, the agency has secured state funds to provide long-term follow-along (LTFA) to ensure job retention during any changes related to disability or environment. One reality to consider is that the number of people in LTFA increases every year as individuals secure employment in competitive settings. The DVRS state funds have not been able to keep up with the need. The DVRS updated its MOU with DDD to reflect DDD's commitment to provide the LTFA once a consumer has been rehabilitated through the DVRS. The division also plans to create an MOU with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to be able to transfer LTFA for individuals with serious psychiatric illness to them.

The New Jersey CBVI continues its commitment to the development of an effective, coordinated system of supported employment work opportunities for blind, deaf-blind, and vision impaired consumers throughout New Jersey, and has two distinct goals regarding the distribution of Title VI, Part B funds.

GOAL 1:

CBVI will provide supported employment services for up to fifty (50) individuals via community-based programs on a fee-for service basis on an annual basis to increase employment in competitive, integrated settings for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The agency seeks to increase the percentage of consumers who gain employment via supported employment services as compared to the total number of successful closures.

The agency maintains a list of approved supported employment providers in collaboration with the Division of Developmental Disabilities in the New Jersey Department of Human Services and the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services via a MOU between the three agencies. Title I funds will be utilized if Title VI funds are not sufficient to meet the needs of the consumers for supported employment services.

GOAL 2:

All graduates of the agency's Work Skills Prep (WSP) program, who are eligible to receive supported employment services and have those services included in their Individualized Plans for Employment, will be provided a job developer/job coach to assist in locating employment opportunities in competitive, integrated settings.

WSP is collaborative project with the Center for Sensory and Complex Disabilities at The College of New Jersey. Students aged 16 - 21, who are still in a secondary school program and have complex disabilities, participate in a two-week residential program. Work Skills Preparation is a vocational oriented program that focuses on activities that will the employment potential of youth in transition from school to adult life and provides a comprehensive assessment report on students' skills, abilities, and interests.

Additionally, under the MOU with The College of New Jersey's Center for Complex and Sensory Disabilities, a pilot program called Youth Employment Solutions (YES) was initiated to facilitate competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with the most significant disabilities who have exited the secondary school system. This program utilizes the Customized Employment model to engage the youth in the Discovery Process, and, in partnership with a supported employment provider and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, develops a Customized Employment placement. Once an employment placement has been achieved, the identified supported employment service provider takes over with providing on-the-job supports.

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.

See above response in Section (2) A.

O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections

101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

CBVI will continue to expand the consultative role of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) regarding the review and comment on the development, implementation, and revision of agency policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. The SRC meets five times a year as a full council and also additional times in sub-committees to assist the agency in moving forward with developing new initiatives and to improve service provision. The SRC previously formed sub-committees to explore the expansion of specific service areas, including Information/Access Technology training for individuals 55 and older and improvement initiatives around Transition services. Specific initiatives that arose from these goals included the development of the Library Equal Access Program (LEAP); expanding the capacity of CBVI's itinerant Rehabilitation Teachers/Home Instructors to provide instruction on assistive technology, including iPad instruction; and the assignment of a Technological Services Specialist to consult and serve consumers receiving services through the Independent Living and Older Blind program. As those goals were achieved, a new subcommittee was created to facilitate the agency's expansion of business engagement efforts. Previous public forums identified these populations as possibly needing additional services. In addition, assessment activities performed as part of the 2014 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) provided data of unmet needs. Where individuals 55 and older may be an underserved population, especially as it relates to access to information technology which has been identified as a core blindness skill; however, through the new initiatives implemented by CBVI, the 2017 CSNA demonstrates that trend may be changing.

The SRC will continue to evaluate the statewide needs and make recommendations on developing community based programs to begin to address these needs. In addition the SRC Vice-Chair is part of the design team tasked with developing the agency's strategic plan.

The agency will maintain or expand professional/personnel development to ensure service delivery by qualified personnel. In FFY 2014, the agency reassigned a staff person to serve as the Training Coordinator for the agency. The Coordinator has developed protocols for training new counseling staff on the operations of the agency and a comprehensive new staff orientation. The agency will look to expand the training opportunities for all staff to better serve consumers and to ultimately improve the quantity and quality of employment outcomes. There will also be continued funding, as necessary, of the Master's Program in Rehabilitation Counseling at Rutgers University to ensure that staff is qualified at the highest level as determined by the standards detailed in the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD). The university has also added a post-masters certificate program to further assist staff with a master's degree in a related field, and to receive the proper education to be eligible for CRC certification. The agency will continue to maintain this relationship also to recruit qualified personnel for future job openings. The agency will remain committed to the comprehensive system of personnel development and is aligned with the precept that individuals with disabilities deserve to receive services from counselors and instructors who are highly skilled in their respective professions as indicated by their levels of education and certification, as well as their clinical performance.

The agency recognizes the importance of assisting wounded warriors to resume or begin a civilian career. To assist in that effort, the agency will continue to explore ways to expand the scope of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Veteran's Administration in order to most effectively use the resources of the respective agencies. In cases of dual eligibility, it is anticipated that using the resources of each agency will result in enhanced and expanded service delivery and more successful outcomes. It is hoped that collaborative efforts by Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment staff and the Commission will improve employment outcomes for wounded veterans.

In recognition of Executive Order 13548: Increasing Federal Employment of Individuals with Disabilities, the agency will continue to promote consumer access to Federal employment opportunities. The agency has worked collaboratively with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services for the last three years to develop and participate in an annual Career Fair that focuses on agencies that can participate in Schedule A hiring. This effort has been expanded to two events a year, one in the north and one in the south of the state. The agency will look for additional methods to expand consumer access to these types of jobs, including engagement and outreach by the Business Relations Unit to target federal contractors for services from the unit.

The agency employs four (4) Technology Support Specialists (TSS) that work solely with consumers of vocational rehabilitation services, on an itinerant basis. A fifth Technology Support Specialist also has expertise on technology issues for individuals who are deaf-blind and provides consultation to staff and provides instruction part-time at the Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC). Additionally, CBVI has other such staff that target blind and vision-impaired education students, including those involved with our Transition programs. The JKTC also employs two additional full time TSS staff to provide instruction in information/assistive technology to all students at that facility. TSS staff also assist as needed with the Business Relations Unit, to provide demonstrations, consultation, and assessment to businesses on the topics of assistive technology and accessibility.

The TSS staff performs Assistive Technology Services evaluations to determine assistive technology hardware, software, and training needs of the agency's consumers. Comprehensive training services on Information Technology/Access Technology are provided by one statewide fee-for-service vendor, Advancing Opportunities. The agency funds a full array of assistive technology services and devices throughout the rehabilitation process. During this most recent year, CBVI has inaugurated the Library Equal Access Program (LEAP), where assistive technology was initially placed in three local libraries across the state to help potential blind and vision-impaired employment seekers to find work and gain skills in an integrated setting. This program has since been expanded to include nine libraries, and will continue to be expanded in the years to come. Further, we sponsor an assistive technology loaner program, in partnership with the New Jersey Talking Book and Braille Center, the regional library associated with the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. The agency views assistive technology as a critical component of the rehabilitation process and acknowledges that it is often times a gateway to gainful employment.

Identify what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities; and

what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

For a number of years, the agency has operated the Project Prevention program, which was rebranded to the name, Project BEST (Better Eye-Health Services and Treatment), which is an eye screening and eye health program that conducts eye screenings in regions of the state that have large populations of economically disadvantaged and minority populations. In addition, screenings are conducted in regions of the state that have significant migrant worker populations. The Commission has consistently received referrals from traditionally unserved and underserved populations for services as a result of these outreach initiatives. The agency also has an ongoing working relationship with the Puerto Rican Association for Human Development (PRAHD) to better reach the Spanish speaking population. In addition, the agency is participating, in collaboration with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, with the Targeted Communities - Technical Assistance Center to reach underserved populations in two targeted communities in Newark and Trenton during FFYs 2018 and 2019.

The agency entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Division of Developmental Disabilities and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services to improve the provision of supported employment services through the three agencies. Greater communication with the Division of Developmental Disabilities has helped to identify additional individuals with the most significant disabilities who may benefit from supported employment services to gain employment in integrated settings. The agency also recently expanded its collaborations with the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities to expand cross training opportunities with community rehabilitation providers who provide supported employment services and agency staff. The agency also participates annually in the New Jersey Association for Persons in Supported Employment statewide conference to present on agency services as an outreach effort to additional communities that serve or advocate on behalf of individuals with the most significant disabilities and those that are unserved or underserved. In FFY 2016, CBVI undertook a comprehensive training of all VR staff in the skills of Customized Employment, strengthening the agency's ability to cater well to the diverse needs of the most significantly disabled among its consumers.

Finally, in Fall 2017, CBVI implemented a Blindness Learning Community (BLC) that focused on building the capacity of staff at supported employment agencies to more effectively serve individuals who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind and require supported employment services to obtain and maintain a job. The BLC provided targeted training and coaching on evidence-based, non-visual methods of instruction for individuals with low or no vision. It also presented an opportunity for CBVI staff to work with staff of provider agencies on building a community of practice that focuses on developing intervention strategies that serve individuals who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind, and who have multiple disabilities, including intellectual and developmental disabilities. Blindness-specific training topics included: dispelling misconceptions about blindness, training in alternative/non-visual techniques, access technology, and travel techniques and strategies. Further topics included Person-Centered Planning/Discovery, Collective Impact Strategies, Customized Employment, and Business Engagement. Follow-up with the participating agencies will occur in the first half of 2018 to provide additional technical

assistance and training, as needed. Planning for the offering of the training to expand to additional provider agencies is also anticipated to occur in 2018.

2. HOW A BROAD RANGE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES WILL BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT EACH STAGE OF THE REHABILITATION PROCESS AND ON A STATEWIDE BASIS.

CBVI offers New Jersey residents who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind support to acquire assistive technology that is necessary to gain or retain employment. Assistive technology is defined as any item, piece of equipment, or system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is commonly used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. The agency's Technological Support Services department assists consumers to have direct access to computer equipment and other information technology. The goal of the unit is to minimize barriers to task performance by taking into account the consumers specific needs. Technological Services Specialists (TSS) are responsible for maintaining and staffing six comprehensive and up-to-date Regional Technology Assistance Centers (RTAC) located throughout New Jersey. Each RTAC is stocked with a variety of assistive technology devices and is open to the public by individual or group appointments. Four of these labs are located in CBVI's Service Centers (Newark, Freehold, Atlantic City and Cherry Hill); the fifth is operated in partnership with the NJ State Library Talking Book and Braille Center and is located in Trenton; the sixth is located at the Joseph Kohn Training Center in New Brunswick.

In addition, the regional TSS staff performs technology assessments and skill evaluations for consumers who are seeking employment and require equipment adaptations to assist in carrying out their work and/or tasks in an educational environment. The specialists make recommendations suitable for each consumer's unique situation, such that it would enable the individual to efficiently address his/her professional or academic responsibilities. Following the evaluation, both in the regional offices and at the JKTC, a comprehensive report is completed by the TSS, which includes recommendations for equipment, software, integration and/or training. Recommended training is time limited and goals are specifically linked to tasks and learning objectives via vocational training or on the job. The report details the number of training hours anticipated for the consumer to reach proficiency in the needed skill sets. Training services are provided by a service provider under contract with the Commission serving the Northern, Central, and Southern regions of the State. Training is provided one-on-one with consumers in their home, at training locations or work-site. The contracted agency provides periodic progress reports and a final report when training is completed.

The TSS staff installs, sets up, and configures recommended equipment for consumers on-site and provides brief instruction on proper utilization of assistive technology. TSS works with outside agencies, businesses, and institutions to evaluate work environments with respect to accessibility for vision impaired employees, as well as those seeking to reduce barriers for potential future vision impaired employees and customers. The specialists also suggest appropriate solutions to outside agencies that would make these workplaces and the software applications they use more compatible with assistive technology.

TSS staff members at the Joseph Kohn Training Center conduct an initial skills assessment to determine the appropriate assistive computer software and training goals suitable to the

consumers' needs. Training is then provided to strengthen the necessary skills and technological proficiency that facilitates the opportunity to succeed in a work or educational environment. The TSS staff also provide technical support, evaluation, and training during CBVI summer pre-vocational programs for transition-age consumers, such as Life 101.

The Adaptive Technology Loan Program is a CBVI funded project, managed on a day to day basis by the Talking Book and Braille Center. The loaner program is intended to provide computer access for VR consumers receiving assistive technology training as they move toward job readiness for college students taking remedial classes, or during short-term vocational training programs. Equipment available for loan includes desktop PCs, laptops, adaptive software, printers, scanners, and CCTVs. There are also a small number of MacBooks, braille devices and handheld digital magnifiers for loan on a limited basis.

3. THE OUTREACH PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO IDENTIFY AND SERVE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM.

For a number of years, the CBVI has operated the Project Prevention program, which was recently rebranded to the name, Project BEST (Better Eye-Health Service and Treatment), which is an eye screening and eye health program that conducts eye screenings in regions of the state that have large populations of economically disadvantaged and minority populations. In addition, screenings are conducted in regions of the state that have significant migrant worker populations. The Commission has consistently received referrals from traditionally unserved and underserved populations for services as a result of these outreach initiatives. The agency also has an ongoing working relationship with the Puerto Rican Association for Human Development (PRAHD) to better reach the Spanish speaking population.

The agency entered into a MOU with the Division of Developmental Disabilities in the New Jersey Department of Human Services and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services to improve the provision of supported employment services through the three agencies. Greater communication with the Division of Developmental Disabilities has helped to identify additional individuals with the most significant disabilities who may benefit from supported employment services to gain employment in integrated settings. The agency continues its collaborations with the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities to expand cross training opportunities with community rehabilitation providers who provide supported employment services and agency staff. The agency also participants annually in the New Jersey Association for Person in Supported Employment statewide conference to present on agency services as an outreach effort to additional communities that serve or advocate on behalf of individuals with the most significant disabilities and those that are unserved or underserved.

In 2017, the agency appointed a staff member to serve as the Extended Employment Specialist, and have primary responsibility for the implementation of new services required under Section 511 regulations related to sub-minimum wage employment for individuals with disabilities. The Extended Employment Specialist is the designated liaison with all facilities throughout the state that provide extended employment in sub-minimum wage settings, and is responsible for providing career counseling and information and referral

services to identified individuals. As a result of this outreach and services, of 78 individuals identified, 20 individuals were referred for Vocational Rehabilitation services, as they indicate they were interested in pursuing competitive, integrated employment.

4. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES).

CBVI, since its inception, has assisted school districts in providing appropriate education programs that address the unique needs of children who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind. The agency employs over fifty Teachers of the Visually Impaired, to provide itinerant based services to children throughout the state. In 1993 this partnership was formalized with local school districts through provider service agreements. The agreements identify the specific services that the Commission will provide for each child in the school district. These services are tailored according to individual student needs and are provided by Commission staff within the Education Service Unit. When students reach the age of fourteen, the Commission's Teachers of the Visually Impaired refer all these students to one of the eight transition counselors who work in the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit, i.e., six transition counselors assigned to the agency's service centers and two Deaf-Blind Specialists. In addition, Commission staff participate in transition fairs developed by Local Educational Agencies (LEA) and "Planning for Adult Life" seminars hosted by the Division of Developmental Disabilities within the New Jersey Department of Human Services as an outreach effort to reach families who may be unfamiliar with CBVI services.

Planning for Adult Life is a statewide project funded by the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to assist young adults (between the ages of 16-21) with developmental disabilities and their families in charting a life course for adulthood (www.planningforadultlife.org). It offers a variety of resources including Informational sessions, webinars, and resource guides/materials that address the following core areas:

- Postsecondary Education/Employment
- Housing
- Legal/Financial Planning
- Entitlement Programs and Eligibility
- Self-Direction
- Health/Behavioral Health
- Building/Maintaining Community Ties and Friendships
- Planning/Visioning a Life Course

The transition counselors at the agency can directly provide or arrange for the provision of the full range of Pre-Employment Transition Services for potentially eligible high school students. Information and referral services are provided to the students, their parents/guardians, and their school district to assist in the transition process from secondary education to adult outcomes. In addition, assessment activities occur to assist in the process to determining eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services for students who

choose to apply for VR services. When the student is determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, the transition counselor will begin a process of comprehensive assessment to determine services needs that will inform the development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) around the specific needs of the student as well as specialized techniques and training in career awareness, college admission procedures, jobseeking activities, etc.

The Commission maintains, in conjunction with the DVRS, an Interagency Agreement for Transition from School to Adult Life with the appropriate SEA (Offices of Special Education Programs - OSEP). This agreement complies with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.22(b). Under the agreement, the agency provides technical consultations to transition-aged youth and/or their parents/guardians, and other members of the IEP team in the form of telephone consultations, face-to-face meetings, and/or attendance at IEP meetings. The IEP shall designate the individuals and agencies responsible for provision of transition services to be implemented while the student is in school.

Throughout the transition process, contact with the Local Educational Agency (LEA) and the Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired at the agency remains constant. The need for specialized training, specific programs and assistive technology are addressed as part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and are also developed more fully in the Transition IPE. Technical consultation begun in the earlier grades with the Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired is continued through the transition process, and the transition counselor actively seeks participation in the development of IEPs. The transition counselors may also begin evaluative activities at age fourteen that ultimately lead to development of the IPE and continue to play an organizational role with technical consultations and through their active participation in school-to-work activities, task force memberships, career fairs, etc. At various points during the transition process, students are evaluated and presented with opportunities to participate in specific programs funded by the Commission, such as:

- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) 1.0, a year-round program targeted to high school-aged blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers that focuses on development of work readiness and blindness-specific skills of independence, mentorship and instruction in self-advocacy from blind and vision-impaired role models, and a work-based learning opportunity in an integrated setting;
- Life 101, a two-week summer program for Freshman and Sophomores in high school to focus on acquisition of Pre-Employment Transition Services, including core blindness-specific skills of independence, job exploration counseling, including counseling on post-secondary education opportunities and work readiness training, provided in a residential environment at the Commission's Joseph Kohn Training Center;
- The College Prep Experience Program, dedicated to providing students likely to seek post-secondary education with the necessary skills to function successfully as blind or vision-impaired students, including post-secondary enrollment counseling, job exploration counseling, self-advocacy skills instruction, and work readiness skills;
- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) 2.0, an extension of EDGE 1.0, that serves to assist undergraduate college students in successfully making the transition from a secondary to post-secondary academic setting, and

facilitates the development of work readiness and self-advocacy skills, ongoing post-secondary enrollment counseling, job exploration counseling, and work-based learning through internships and other work experiences.

- Work Skills Prep, a two-week summer program for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind students, possessing additional complex disabilities, that delivers workplace readiness and self-advocacy skills instruction through hands-on activities and work-based learning opportunities.

CBVI continues to formally and informally assess the unmet needs and sub-populations of students with disabilities served by the agency. As a result of this assessment, new services and programs are being developed to enhance and complement those already being offered.

On a state level, the Executive Director of CBVI is a member of the State Special Education Advisory Council convened by the NJ Department of Education, with the goal of promoting additional collaboration between programs under IDEIA and WIOA to promote successful transition to adult outcomes for students with disabilities.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

The CBVI expanded the role of Center for Vocational Rehabilitation to assist in providing work experience opportunities in the community surrounding the agency's training center. As part of the curriculum restructuring at the Joseph Kohn Training Center, the sixteen-week program was expanded to twenty weeks to incorporate a four-week community work experience component. The number of local businesses participating in the program has increased, and the program is well received by consumers. The agency expanded the number of staff in the contract to 3 FTE, in order to allow for expansion of business partners and proper supports for consumers while they are involved in their work experiences.

The CBVI developed the Employment, Development, Guidance and Engagement (EDGE) program in FFY 2016, that targets youth, 14-21 years old. The year-round program serves transition-aged youth eligible for vocational rehabilitation services emphasizing employment development, mentoring by employed blind/vision impaired adults, and experiential learning experiences to promote independence.

The Blindness Learning Community, a training and technical assistance initiative that focused on building the capacity of staff at supported employment agencies to more effectively serve individuals who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind and require supported employment services to obtain and maintain a job. This training focused on blindness-specific topics, as well as person-centered approaches to evaluation and job development, including Customized Employment.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

WIOA requires states to establish performance accountability measures that apply across the core programs to assess the effectiveness of states and local areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by those programs. CBVI is involved in workgroups at LWD

that will establish metrics to comply with the accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA. The agency is committed to improving its performance as per these new requirements.

The agency is also undertaking additional strategic initiatives to improve performance in line with the new performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

- Establishing a business relations unit designed to meet the needs of the business community in New Jersey. CBVI is one of eleven state agencies in the first cohort that received intensive technical assistance from the Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center at the University of Massachusetts-Boston with the goal of assisting the agency to develop this service unit to promote employer engagement;
- Coordinate with DVRS to develop targeted hiring events at a regular basis;
- Train all agency counselors on using Labor Market Information (LMI) to increase informed choice in the process of choosing a career pathway;
- Implement at the agency the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) created by the National Employment Team to increase employment opportunities for consumers. The TAP has job listings from companies throughout the United States.
- Coordinate with the Workforce Development System in New Jersey in developing and participating in Career Fairs throughout the state.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

CBVI remains committed to providing training and technical assistance to staff members from the other components of the statewide workforce investment system. Commission staff members have provided training/consultation to staff at One-Stop Career Centers throughout the state on issues related to ways to foster proper access for individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and vision impaired. The agency is available to provide further assistance in these areas to foster greater access for individuals with vision loss.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

CBVI will develop a model of service delivery to ensure the agency's five major programmatic components (Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living, Access Technology, and Eye-Health Services) function more collaboratively and seamlessly in the provision of comprehensive, life-long services to consumers.

- Obtaining and reviewing agency consumer satisfaction information and other constituent feedback, including the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, gathered formally or otherwise, as a prerequisite to developing and informing the appearance of a new Service Delivery System Redesign model;
- Developing quality management and continuous improvement strategies to ensure consistency and timeliness of excellent services for all consumers, collection of valid

and verifiable data related to all program deliverables, establishment and refining of a centralized filing system for correspondence and other agency records not currently captured in the Fully Accessible Client Tracking System (FACTS), and creation of all other agency-wide systems resulting in a robust and accountable blindness service agency;

- Considering methods for enhancing customized, person-centered approaches in service delivery, recognizing the individual talents and interests of each consumer;
- Enhancing the quality and availability of blindness-specific, priority services, e.g. Braille instruction, assistive technology training, orientation and mobility instruction, daily living skills orientation, and vision-loss adjustment services.

CBVI will develop innovative quality career and employment programs, in response to needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment.

- Maintain the EDGE program (Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement) a year-round program for transition-aged youth (14-21) eligible for vocational rehabilitation services emphasizing employment development, mentoring by employed blind/vision impaired adults, and experiential learning experiences to promote independence.
- Establish a Business Relations Unit, charged with educating employers about blindness and catering to the unique needs of business as a secondary customer of CBVI services, in alignment with provisions in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- Redesigning and strengthening the Randolph-Sheppard program in New Jersey (Business Enterprises New Jersey - BENJ)
- Develop competencies for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Supervisors in utilizing evidence-based practices, including incorporating motivational interviewing techniques, labor market information and customized employment methodologies into the counseling relationship to increase employment outcomes.
- Expand vocational exploration, experiential programs, and other career planning opportunities for consumers.

CBVI will focus on growing external partnerships, resources, and alliances to support consumer services and outcomes.

- Analyzing current Memoranda of Understanding for elements that promote CBVI's mission and examining these same documents for aspects that do not contribute to the credit of CBVI's program;
- Developing a protocol for assessing the value of needed partnerships;
- Identifying target organizations for formal agency agreements, e.g. Workforce development agencies, Independent Living Councils and Independent Living Centers, Social services providers, Housing authorities;
- Recommending strategies for securing broader resource services for consumers (e.g. social services, legal aid) in an effort to facilitate social stability while the consumer seeks employment.

CBVI will develop improved internal and external communications strategies, public information campaigns, and community outreach efforts to heighten the profile of the agency and to inform the general public about the diverse capabilities of blind and vision-impaired people.

- Adopt aggressive or more affirmative outreach measures to identify and recruit those who need CBVI services, especially those who are underserved, unserved, or those with the most significant disabilities.
- Devoting professional attention and resources to creating new agency branding and public image approaches;
- Developing strategies to promote qualified consumers directly to employers via the creation of a Business Liaison Unit, charged with educating employers about blindness and catering to the unique needs of business as a secondary customer of CBVI services;
- Expanding internal communications methods, e.g. newsletters, brochures, Website content and resource enhancements, as a means of fostering a more engaged, deliberative, interactive, and invested professional workforce and vibrant agency culture;
- Crafting engagement strategies for various public partners, including advocacy organizations, allied agencies, providers, non-profit agencies, and the like, thereby enhancing CBVI's ability to leverage external resources in pursuit of its goals and mission.

CBVI will devote resources and energy to various issues related to human resource staff development. Measures consistent with this initiative may include:

- Recruiting qualified staff to fill the agency-specific positions, particularly direct blindness services-related roles, and strictly adhering to the guidance in the Comprehensive System for Personnel Development (CSPD), ensuring that vocational rehabilitation counselors comply with the Federal guidelines for this profession;
- Adopting strategic measures for agency-wide succession planning that is in compliance with regulations of the NJ Civil Service Commission and related union contracts;
- Creating systems and resources for development of staff skills, e.g. in-service trainings, webinars, in-person conference participation;
- Developing a matrix for a staff accountability system, e.g. writing clear job descriptions and expanding the performance review process;
- Taking steps to fully maximize all staff resources for optimum program benefit.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

See above response in Section (8) A.

C. OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM.

See above response in Section (8) A.

P. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

Describe:

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.

The CBVI goals and priorities of FY 2013 are listed below:

CBVI Goal 1: Quality Management Initiative

In order to ensure timely and consistent quality VR services for its consumers, CBVI will develop a new comprehensive quality assurance system, which will include improved case review protocols for supervisors, a new quality assurances case review system, and the establishment of clear performance metrics for VR staff. All three components of the project will be completed by February 2013 and implemented during FFY 2013. CBVI will develop baseline data from the QA assessments performed in 2013 and develop plans to improve service provision in the Regional Offices.

Update: CBVI completed the Quality Assurance system on schedule in February 2013. Key components of the system were also slated to be incorporated into the agency's digital case management system called FACTS (Libera System 7) in order to facilitate a seamless and fully accessible means of performing case reviews. These components included a dashboard for performance metrics, a database query for key indicators of timeliness of service provision and consumer engagement, and a case review form to ensure compliance with Section 107 standards under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Those systems are still not totally operational in the FACTS system and they are still under development and refinement.

CBVI Goal 2: Work Skills Prep: Post-Graduation Follow Along

CBVI will improve employment outcomes for its consumers who attended the Work Skills Prep program and graduated from their secondary school program from the current success rate of 22.22% to 30% of all those who exit the VR program. This goal is scheduled to be completed by 9/30/2013. This is a one year pilot project. If successful, the agency will look to expand the strategies to continue to improve employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Update: The job developer hired for this position was able to achieve three additional closures of Work Skills graduates, but unfortunately found other employment before the end of the project year. A new job developer was hired, and began to work with counselors in the services centers and consumers around job development activities. The program has experienced another setback; as the new job developer was diverted to another project. The agency had decided to redesign the program and will roll out the new program in FFY 2016.

Update 2018: The Youth Employment Solutions pilot program was implemented in FFY 2016, and completed its first full year in the fall of 2017. Youth Employment Solutions (YES) was initiated to facilitate competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with the most significant disabilities who have exited the secondary school system. This program utilizes the Customized Employment model to engage the youth in the Discovery Process, and, in partnership with a supported employment service provider and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, develops a Customized Employment placement. Once an employment placement has been achieved, the identified supported employment service provider takes over with providing on-the-job supports. Of the 15 individuals who have worked with the YES program, five have obtained competitive, integrated employment. Given the improved success rate compared to prior employment rates of graduates of the WSP program, additional youth have been identified to begin the program in Spring/Summer 2018, and CBVI will look to expand the program in the future.

CBVI Goal 3: LEAD: Leadership Education Advocacy Determination Heightened Independence in Progress

The organization under contract with CBVI to administer the LEAD program, will develop a new curriculum for the program to incorporate more employment readiness activities and community work experiences for transition-aged youth participating in the program by June 30, 2013 and implement the new curriculum by September, 2013. The new curriculum will benefit up to seventy high school students with vision loss who participate in the program with the ultimate goal of improving employment outcomes for this cohort.

Update: The agency decided to end the LEAD program on September 30, 2013. The agency was interested in pursuing a new direction to address the needs of transition-aged youth that would allow for greater emphasis on employment readiness activities. The existing program structure within the LEAD program was not conducive to this program element. The agency developed a new model and implemented the new program called EDGE (Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement) in FFY 2015 to better serve this population.

Update 2018: In the summer of 2015, EDGE 1.0 was started in partnership with the Family Resource Network. EDGE 1.0 is a year-round program targeted to high-school aged blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind consumers that focuses on development of work readiness and blindness-specific skills of independence, mentorship and instruction from self-advocacy from blind and vision impaired role models, and a work-based learning employment or internship opportunity in an integrated setting.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

See above response in Section (P) 1. A.

2. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SUPPLEMENT FOR THE MOST RECENT PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.

The New Jersey CBVI continues its commitment to the development of an effective, coordinated system of supported employment work opportunities for blind, deaf-blind and visually impaired consumers throughout New Jersey.

The Commission allocated Title VI, Part B funds to fund the Center for Vocational Rehabilitation (CVR) to provide contracted services for supported employment to the Agency's central region, as well as to community based providers on a fee-for-service pay structure.

CBVI Goal 1: Work with the Center for Vocational Rehabilitation (CVR) to provide supported employment services to fifteen (15) agency consumers during FFY 2013.

Update: The agency referred eleven (11) participants to CVR for supported employment services up until March 31, 2013. On April 1st, 2013, the contract was converted from a cost-related structure to a fee-for-service arrangement. The contract was moved to a fee-for-services structure to allow a greater level of choice for consumers.

CBVI Goal 2: Provide supported employment services up to 15 individuals via CRP's on a fee-for-service basis for FFY 2013.

Update: The agency served sixteen (16) consumers in FFY 2013, achieving its goal. Overall, CBVI realized an overall improvement in the percentage of cases served via supported employment that achieved an employment outcome. 5.36% of Employment Outcomes in FFY 2013 were individuals who received Supported Employment services. This is an upward trend as compared to FFY 2011 - 4.20% and FFY 2012 - 4.58%. The agency is encouraged by this increase and hopes to continue this trend. The Commission also utilizes Title I funds to provide supported employment services on a fee for service basis.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

See above response in Section (2) A.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

Federal Program Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators

WIOA removed the specific standards and performance indicators for Title IV. Performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA will be the evaluation tool used by CBVI once they are implemented in LWD.

The six primary indicators for performance are:

541. The percentage of participants, who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
542. The percentage of participants, who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
543. Median earnings of participants, who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
544. The percentage of participants who obtained a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent during

participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program. A participant who has obtained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is only included in this measure if the participant is also employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized post-secondary credential within 1 year from program exit;

545. The percentage of participants who during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.
546. Effectiveness in serving employers, based on indicators developed as required by sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(iv) of WIOA

Additional indicators for Title IV include six primary indicators for the youth/student program:

547. Percentage of participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program;
548. Percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
549. Median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
550. The percentage of participants who obtained a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation or up to 1 year after exit. A participant who has obtained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is only included in this measure if the participant is also employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized post-secondary credential within 1 year from program exit;
551. The percentage of participants who during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress towards such a credential or employment;
552. Effectiveness in serving employers, based on indicators developed as required by sec. 116(b)(2)(iv) of WIOA.

The data below reflects the CBVI's compliance with the standards and indicators. The Commission met or exceeded the required performance levels in five of the six indicators for Standard 1, also meeting the standard for two of the three primary indicators. In addition, the agency met the performance indicator for Standard 2, thereby exceeding the required performance level for both standards.

Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes

Indicator 1.1: Difference in the Number of Individuals with Employment Outcomes

Target: Equal or exceed the previous reporting period

- Number of Employment Outcomes for FY 2014: 611

- Number of Employment Outcomes for FY 2015: 627

CBVI passed this indicator

Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Individuals Receiving Services Who Had Employment Outcomes after Exiting VR Services

Target: 68.9%

Agency Performance: 68.9%

CBVI passed this indicator

Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Individuals with Employment Outcomes Who Were Competitively Employed with Earnings Equivalent to At Least the Minimum Wage

Target: 35.40%

Agency Performance: 94.90%

CBVI passed this indicator

Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Individuals with Competitive Employment Outcomes Who Had Significant Disabilities

Target: 89%

Agency Performance: 91.30%

Indicator 1.5 (Primary): Measures the income ratio of those individuals who are closed as competitively employed to the State average hourly wage.

Target: .59

Agency Performance: .53

CBVI did not pass this indicator

- The Commission did not pass this indicator. The standard is 0.59 and the Commission's score was 0.53. The high average hourly state wage for New Jersey, has proved challenging for the agency to pass Indicator 1.5. The agency will continue to outreach to large employers to continue to expand the scope of employment opportunities for consumers, especially jobs that offer wages commensurate with the average hourly wage for the state. The Commission has also been working to expand internship or work experience opportunities for high school and college students in order to develop career paths to higher paying jobs.

Indicator 1.6: This indicator represents the increase or decrease in the percentage of individuals who achieved competitive employment who had their own income as a primary source of support at closure compared to the percentage who had their own income as a primary support source when they applied for VR services.

Target: 30.4%

Agency Performance: 31.3%

CBVI passed this indicator

Standard 2.1: This indicator measures the ratio of the minority population served by the VR program compared to the ratio of the non-minority population served by the VR program.

Target: .8

Agency Performance: 1.05

CBVI passed this indicator

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED.

I&E funds were utilized by CBVI in several ways:

On August 14, 2017, CBVI issued a Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) and a Request for Letters of Interest (RLI) inviting Supported Employment provider agencies to participate in a Blindness Learning Community (BLC) that focused on building the capacity of staff at these agencies to more effectively serve individuals who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind and require supported employment services to obtain and maintain a job. The Commission accepted letters of interest until the close of business on September 1st and a total of five agencies applied for this opportunity. The BLC was established in partnership with The College of New Jersey Center for Sensory and Complex Disabilities and provided targeted training and coaching on evidence-based, non-visual methods of instruction for individuals with low or no vision. It also presented an opportunity for CBVI staff to work with staff of provider agencies on building of a community of practice that focuses on developing intervention strategies that serve individuals who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind, and who have multiple disabilities, including intellectual and developmental disabilities. Blindness-specific training topics included: dispelling misconceptions about blindness, training in alternative/non-visual techniques, access technology, and travel techniques and strategies. Further topics included Person-Centered Planning/Discovery, Collective Impact Strategies, Customized Employment, and Business Engagement. The final day of training brought together the two regional cohorts for a wrap-up session that addressed additional topical areas identified by cohort members, a facilitated Kaizen (continuous improvement) session with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to identify what is working now with the provision of supported employment services, what areas can be improved, and the development of action steps to further improve the working relationships with agency staff and provider agency staff to expand employment outcomes for our customers. Follow-up with the participating agencies will occur in the first half of 2018 to provide additional technical assistance and training, as needed. Planning for the offering of the training to expand to additional provider agencies is also anticipated to occur in 2018.

The agency also developed the Youth Employment Solutions (YES) program in partnership with The College of New Jersey's Center for Complex and Sensory Disabilities to facilitate competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with the most significant disabilities who have exited the secondary school system, and who will benefit from supported employment services. This pilot program targeted of the agency's Work Skills Preparation Program (WSP), a summer Pre-Employment Transition Services Program for

students who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind, who have multiple disabilities, including intellectual and developmental disabilities. This program utilizes the Customized Employment model to engage the youth in the Discovery Process, and, in partnership with a supported employment services provider and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, develops a Customized Employment placement. Once an employment placement has been achieved, the identified supported employment service provider takes over with providing on-the-job supports. Of the 15 individuals who have worked with the YES program during the first 18 months of the pilot, five have obtained competitive, integrated employment. Given the improved success rate compared to prior employment rates of graduates of the WSP program, additional youth have been identified to begin the program in Spring/Summer 2018, and CBVI will look to expand the program in the future.

Q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

Include the following:

1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

Supported employment means competitive work in integrated work Supported employment means competitive work in integrated work settings in which individuals are working and earning at least minimum wage. Individuals with the most significant disabilities can benefit from these services when:

• Competitive employment has not traditionally occurred;

• Competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and

• As a result of the nature and severity of their disability need intensive supported employment services in order to perform such work.

New Jersey became the 14th state to embrace the concept of Employment First (EF) in April 2012. EF is a framework that is centered on the premise that all citizens are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life. This initiative identified that competitive employment in an integrated setting is the preferred first choice for every individual seeking employment in New Jersey. This effort shifts assumptions about whether individuals with certain categories of disabilities can to work to one of determining the supports and services necessary so that these individuals will be successful in competitive employment. The DVRS adheres to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. An individual with a disability must want and qualify for the services.

Counselors in all the offices received training on trial work experiences (TWE) in the spring of 2014. CRPs were also given access to the same training. TWE will be utilized when the DVRS counselor needs clear and convincing evidence regarding whether an individual with a disability will benefit from VR services.

The DVRS has consistently encouraged the development of programs that meet the needs of a wide variety of individuals with the most significant disabilities based on either geographic and/or disability driven needs. Traditional community rehabilitation programs

and programs for SE without traditional facility-based operations are available throughout the state.

All of the vendors are required to follow the same criteria in their service delivery:

• Referral;

• Assessment;

• Job development;

• Job Placement;

• Intensive coaching; and

• Follow-along.

Supported employment continues to be a valuable service and has opened doors to individuals with disabilities who are now expected to work in a competitive setting. The DVRS is currently assessing the need for more intense post-employment services for individuals with the most complex disabilities; training will commence in the fall to instruct counselors on the proper way to identify DVRS consumers in need of this service.

For transition students with disabilities, in particular students with the most significant disabilities, counselors will coordinate the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in order to ensure that students can move from Pre-ETS services to extended services when appropriate. Care will be taken to make sure students do not lose funding upon the end of IDEA entitlement.

LTFA is provided to consumers through the use of state funds to provide less intense ongoing support. It is estimated that the DVRS, through its provision of LTFA, is helping to maintain 3,388 individuals with disabilities on the job. This does not only have a significant social impact on their lives, but it demonstrates that people with disabilities can be contributors to their community. The DVRS provides extensive on-the-job services or job coaching for individuals for up to 18 months but evaluates each case and the person's need on an individual basis. In the pre-IPE meeting that includes the counselor, the CRP vendor and the client, a determination is made whether extended services will be required. As the case progresses the counselor makes sure that the CRP vendor will be available to provide long-term follow-along services.

Under the DVRS EF strategy, long-term SE services will be provided by the DDD and the DMHAS for consumers who qualify for these services after a DVRS consumer is successfully placed in employment. This braiding of funding provides supports to a higher number of consumers. The DVRS continues to partner with the DDD and the DMHAS in order to do this.

DDD - DVRS and CBVI successfully negotiated a new MOU with the DDD in FFY 2015. The DDD recently changed its policy and now requires all individuals who receive DDD services to apply for services with the DVRS as a condition to receiving DDD funding. While the DVRS is very willing to provide services to individuals who qualify and want services, the division will adhere to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in WIOA.

DMHAS - for many years the DVRS and the DMHAS combined resources to fund 22 county-based SE programs specific for individuals with pervasive mental illness. This partnership will conclude September 30, 2014. The SE vendors have been notified and have been given the opportunity to apply to the DVRS to become a vendor with the division. Local office counselors will work with consumers with pervasive mental illness to identify SE providers that meet their needs and will provide the SE on a fee-for-service basis.

The DVRS recognizes that the census of those needing LTFA will grow incrementally as those consumers achieve employment. With that reality in mind and the shortage of state funds, the DVRS has organized several efforts to remedy the situation. These include:

• Identifying DDD and DMHAS consumers in the DVRS case management system to ensure that these consumers are transferred to the appropriate funding stream

• Ensuring that the state-funded program will be monitored to provide the most effective services to this cohort; and

• An examination of cases that may have evolved toward independence and are no longer in need of the service

Additionally, the New Jersey CBVI remains committed to increasing the quality, scope and extent of supported employment services to eligible consumers who are blind, deaf-blind, or vision impaired and also may have additional disabilities. The Commission's Title VI Part B funding is generally inadequate to support the full scope of supported employment services. However, in the absence of Title VI funds, the Commission does use Title I funds to ensure that adequate services are provided.

There are presently an approved cadre of community providers throughout the state who provide supported employment services on a fee for service basis. The Commission continues to make use of time limited job coaching services to address the needs of consumers who are chronically unemployed and those who present with issues of mental health or are otherwise ineligible for services from the DDD. The Commission has traditionally placed approximately between four and five percent of all successful rehabilitations into supported employment.

A MOU regarding supported employment is currently in effect between the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the DDD, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The MOU delineates the procedures and protocols that define the provision of supported employment services within and between these three agencies. An ongoing training program has been developed and delivered to the appropriate staff in the three agencies. The agency has established a working relationship with the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities and developed a full day training for supported employment providers throughout the state, addressing issues of vision loss and supports in the workplace. Training topics include assistive technology, safe travel, and non-visual instructional techniques. It is anticipated that the agency will offer the training through the Boggs Center several times in FFY 2015.

It should be noted that the Commission does not fund extended services. Extended services are provided by the DDD and or other identified sources. The previously mentioned MOU includes a form (F-3) that is completed at the appropriate time, as defined by the IPE and consumer's progress at the work site, which moves an eligible consumer into an extended

services status. The transition to Extended Services must occur no later than twenty-four (24) months after placement in supported employment, unless a longer period is established in the IPE and only if the individual has made substantial progress toward obtaining the employment goal listed in the IPE.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

See above response in (q) 1.

CERTIFICATIONS

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate **NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

Name of designated State agency **NJ Department of Human Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Dr. Bernice Davis**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Acting Executive Director**

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 **NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Dr. Bernice Davis**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Acting Executive Director**

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 **NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Dr. Bernice Davis**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Acting Executive Director**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:**The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

1. PUBLIC COMMENT ON POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

2. SUBMISSION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT:

The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN:

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:

A. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EITHER A STATE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OR STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(21) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable **(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council**

C. CONSULTATIONS REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(16)(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

D. THE FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION BY THE STATE, OR IF THE STATE SO ELECTS, BY THE STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES, TO PROVIDE THE AMOUNT OF THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF THE COST OF CARRYING OUT THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(3).

E. THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds **No**

F. THE SHARED FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION OF JOINT PROGRAMS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs: **No**

G. STATEWIDENESS AND WAIVERS OF STATEWIDENESS REQUIREMENTS, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(4) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. **No**

H. THE DESCRIPTIONS FOR COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(11) AND (24)(B); AND 606(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

I. ALL REQUIRED METHODS OF ADMINISTRATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(6) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

J. THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(7) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

K. THE COMPILATION AND SUBMISSION TO THE COMMISSIONER OF STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS, ESTIMATES, STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES, STRATEGIES, AND PROGRESS REPORTS, AS APPROPRIATE, AND AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(15), 105(C)(2), AND 606(B)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

L. THE RESERVATION AND USE OF A PORTION OF THE FUNDS ALLOTTED TO THE STATE UNDER SECTION 110 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, PARTICULARLY INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

M. THE SUBMISSION OF REPORTS AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(10) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES:

The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

A. COMPLY WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 101(A)(5)(D) AND (20) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. IMPOSE NO DURATION OF RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT AS PART OF DETERMINING AN INDIVIDUAL'S ELIGIBILITY FOR VR SERVICES OR THAT EXCLUDES FROM SERVICES UNDER THE PLAN ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO IS PRESENT IN THE STATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(12) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

C. PROVIDE THE FULL RANGE OF SERVICES LISTED IN SECTION 103(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AS APPROPRIATE, TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT?

Agency will provide the full range of services described above **Yes**

D. DETERMINE WHETHER COMPARABLE SERVICES AND BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE INDIVIDUAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

E. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

F. COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE PROVISIONS OF INFORMED CHOICE FOR ALL APPLICANTS AND ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(D) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

G. PROVIDE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES TO AMERICAN INDIANS WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING IN THE STATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(13) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

H. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF SEMIANNUAL OR ANNUAL REVIEWS, AS APPROPRIATE, FOR INDIVIDUALS EMPLOYED EITHER IN AN EXTENDED EMPLOYMENT SETTING IN A COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAM OR ANY OTHER EMPLOYMENT UNDER SECTION 14(C) OF THE FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT OF 1938, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(14)OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

I. MEET THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTIONS 101(A)(17) AND 103(B)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT IF THE STATE ELECTS TO CONSTRUCT, UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, FACILITIES FOR COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

J. WITH RESPECT TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THE STATE,

ΔΛçI. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT,

. STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ASSESSMENTS; AND

A. 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

ΔΛçII. 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:

ΔΛçIII. 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

ΔΛIΞ. AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT , WHICH IS DEVELOPED AND UPDATED WITH TITLE I FUNDS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 102(B)(3)(F) AND 606(B)(6)(C) AND (E) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE ASSURANCES FROM THE STATE

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program— and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program.* If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" in Sections II and III of that document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program (available on www.regulations.gov for public comment). The requirements that a State must address for any of the partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan are provided in this separate supplemental document. The Departments are not seeking comments on these program-specific requirements, which exist under separate OMB control numbers and do not represent requirements under WIOA. For further details on this overall collection, access the Federal eRulemaking Portal at http://www.regulations.gov by selecting Docket ID number ETA-2015-0006.

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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.

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

Upon intake into the One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) system, jobseekers are given a quick assessment to identify the best career or training services options for that individual. Veteran's status and eligibility for Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) services are also determined during this initial assessment. The criteria used for deciding whether to refer a veteran to JVSG or non-JSVG staff is based on 38 U.S.C. 4103A(a)(1) which includes in priority order special disabled veterans, other disabled veterans, and other eligible veterans in accordance with the priorities determined by the Secretary of the US Department of Labor.

Serving the workforce directed needs of New Jersey's veterans is a responsibility shared by all One-Stop Career Center staff. Effective intake and customer flow procedures, staff training, technical assistance/reinforcement, and monitoring contribute to ensuring that only a subset of eligible veterans identified as having a significant barrier to employment as defined in 38 U.S.C. 4103A(a)(1) and various guidance, are served by the DVOP. All veterans served by the DVOP will be assessed and have an employability plan that directs the delivery of intensive services.

JVSG, non-JVSG, and One-Stop management communicate to Veterans Business Representatives (Local Veteran Employment Representatives, or LVERs) the skills, education, work history, aptitudes, and career aspirations of the veterans they are serving to help direct employer outreach efforts. LVERs, likewise, communicate to One-Stop staff working with jobseekers the needs of employers in the local area to assist with the preparation of veterans for job placement. The role of the LVERs is consistent with 38 U.S.C. 4104(b).

Over the next several years, LWD anticipates an increasing number of employers will develop formal military veterans' recruitment programs. Several large New Jersey employers have committed to hiring more veterans by setting numerical targets, designing media outreach programs, working closely with One-Stop Career Center staff on posting job orders, organizing hiring events, and dedicating company staff to veterans' recruitment activities. Examples include Home Depot with a goal to increase military and veteran hires by 10% each year for the next five years resulting in the hiring of an additional 55,000 veterans nationwide.

National initiatives are also helping New Jersey successfully place veterans into employment. Prominent among the 160 employer strong "100,000 Jobs Mission" (now increased to 200,000 jobs) with substantial employment openings in New Jersey are JP Morgan Chase, Amazon, Johnson & Johnson, and Merck. JP Morgan Chase, for example, has major back office Wall Street operations in New Jersey as well as banking and finance positions throughout the state and Amazon recently began recruiting for new warehouse facilities in Robbinsville and Avenel that could total 1,000 new jobs over the next year.

Changes enacted under a 2013 state law, the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA), provide a range of incentives to boost development and bring jobs to New Jersey. Announcements in early summer 2014 of tax credit approval through the program for a nuclear equipment manufacturer potentially with up to 1,000 jobs to be created over the next five years and the relocation of the Philadelphia 76ers practice facility and corporate headquarters with 50 new jobs are providing opportunities for urban veterans in the City of Camden to find career employment paying wages that can lead to economic self-sufficiency. One-Stop Career Center staff will be actively working with employers and partners to fill the employer need for qualified and dependable workers.

Veterans interested in federal employment opportunities receive preference based on the conditions of their military service and the presence of a service-connected disability. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and One-Stop Career Center staff will work with veterans to provide them with information on the federal application process and how to locate and apply for federal job opportunities using usajobs.gov.

With the average age of New Jersey's state employee workforce continuing to increase, employment opportunities for veterans will likely occur in significant numbers. Veterans having served during specific time periods are given advantages over non-veterans in hiring and promotion by New Jersey's civil service system. Local government agencies whether operating under the state's civil service system or not, also provide opportunities for veterans to secure career service employment.

Federal contractors and sub-contractors provide another avenue for veterans looking for well-paying jobs leading to economic self-sufficiency. Federal contractors are required to post their job openings with New Jersey's labor exchange system (OnRamp at CareerConnections.nj.gov).

LWD will promote the hiring of military service veterans using staff, technology, and state leadership that support the goal of full-employment for military service veterans. One-Stop Career Center and LWD management staff will promote the hiring and retention of military service veterans by direct outreach to employers by Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs), which New Jersey terms Veterans Business Representatives, and other non-JVSG business outreach staff, who will continue to organize and promote to employers hiring events such as job fairs and targeted recruitment efforts, and conduct periodic business seminars/presentations to employer membership groups such as the New Jersey Business & Industry Association and chambers of commerce. Technology, including CareerConnections.nj.gov with increased functionality and labor exchange matching capabilities, automated mass call telephone messaging system, and ability to blast e-mail announcements to targeted veterans will help LWD create a more efficient and transparent market for employers and jobseekers. State leadership will continue to be an important component for keeping the focus on the hiring of military service veterans

through special initiatives; past efforts included Operation: Hire a Jersey Hero conducted in partnership with major employers like Prudential Insurance Company of America.

Veterans participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program are deemed high priority customers. In accordance with Veterans Program Letter (VPL) 01-16 Change 1 or most recent guidance, LWD has a state level Memorandum of Understanding with the US Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (US DOL/VETS) and the VA/VR&E program that delineates roles and responsibilities for staff in the partner agencies. LWD's primary roles are to provide workforce information to veterans who are entering a VR&E Program and to provide priority job search assistance for those veterans who are completing their VR&E Program. All partner agencies are involved in a quarterly review of VR&E customers and their progress in reaching their career goals. LWD has assigned a VR&E Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) from among the DVOP specialists assigned to the Newark One-Stop Career Center. The staff is out-stationed at the VA/VR&E office at 20 Washington Place in Newark.

DVOP specialists are expected to provide intensive case management services for the VR&E customers which include a comprehensive assessment and individual employment plan based upon the employment plan provided by the VA. The goal is to provide the VR&E veterans with the tools to be successful in the job search such as a robust résumé, career guidance, and job search assistance.

JVSG staff is deployed with clearly delineated distinct duties for the DVOP specialist and LVER. These clearly distinct duties include the delivery of intensive services to targeted veterans by the DVOP specialist and outreach to the employer community and facilitation within the state's employment service delivery system for the LVER. DVOP specialists and LVER provide specialized service that complement and add value to OSCC veterans' services. DVOP specialists and LVER do not duplicate services provided by other OSCC labor exchange staff.

In order to maximize the return on investment that the specialized staff contributes to the OSCC, LWD will work to quickly fill vacancies.

LWD will assign Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) funded staff members to locations where they can best serve veteran populations that have been targeted for specialized services. DVOP specialists and LVERs are assigned geographically based on the concentration of eligible veterans and demographic factors that would suggest a greater need for services such as local unemployment rates, proximity to military bases and high poverty areas, and areas with returning ex-offender populations.

Consistent with guidance provided in VPL 03-16 or most current guidance, DVOPs assigned to the Camden OSCC will outstation on a regular basis at the HVRP grantee Home for the Brave to provide intensive services and ensure co-enrollment of homeless veterans into WIOA services. If other HVRP grants are awarded, New Jersey will ensure a similar relationship.

In FFY 2014, LWD reorganized veterans' services to better align and focus JVSG funded staff toward the goal of improving employment and job retention outcomes for New Jersey's jobseeking veterans. This included moving the LVER staff from the Office of Employment

Services under the supervision of the Workforce Development manager to the Office of Business Services to be better aligned and coordinated with business outreach staff.

Success in placing veterans into employment requires understanding and appropriately responding to the needs of the business customer. Historically, One-Stop Career Center staff used a labor supply model to refer jobseekers to employers rather than a labor demand model. This model often resulted in employer and jobseeker frustration since employers were disappointed with the matches and jobseekers were not offered employment. Recognizing the inherent conflict of the same staff working on behalf of jobseekers and employers, New Jersey created an Office of Business Services staffed by business representatives serving as advocates for the business customer. Applying the same logic to New Jersey's veterans' programs, LWD will continue working to complete the reorganization and integration of the LVER staff from the Office of Employment Services in the Division of Workforce Field Services to the Office of Business Services in the Division of Workforce Field Services. DVOPs will remain aligned with other staff assisting jobseekers in the Office of Employment Services.

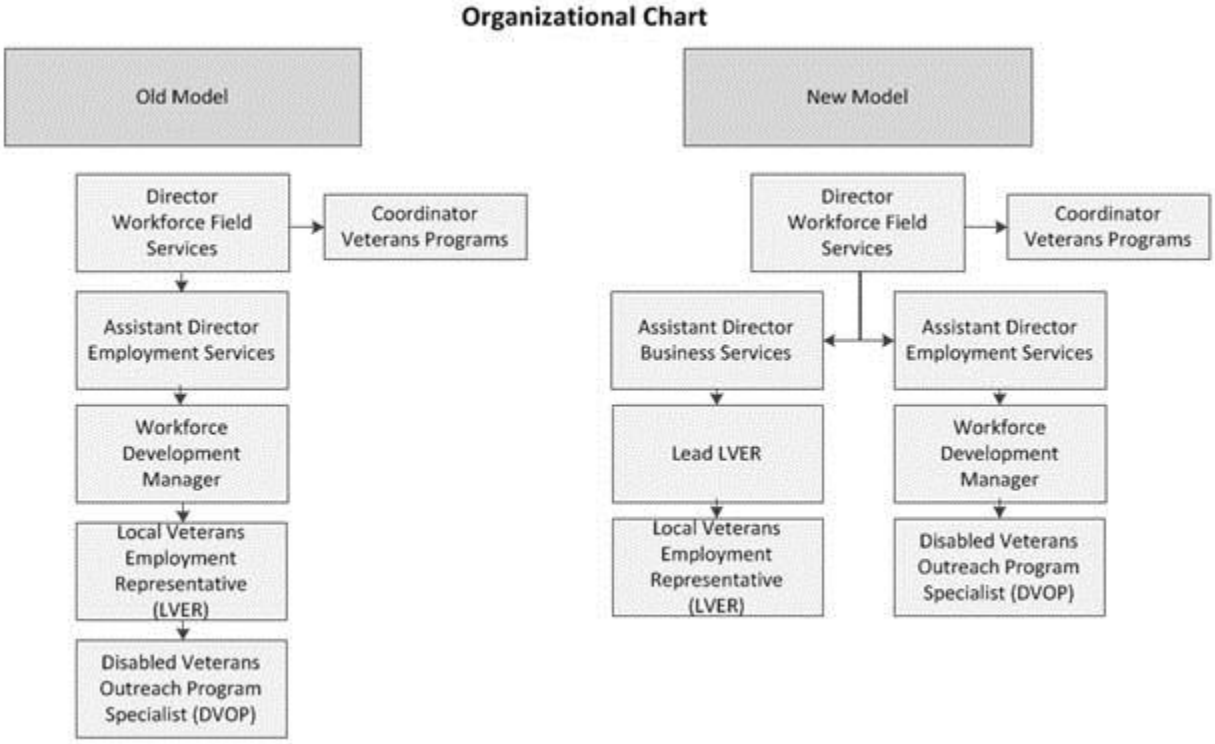

FIGURE 53

New Jersey has embraced technology tools for targeting veterans for services based on their needs. As an example, unemployment insurance claimants are assigned a probability of exhaustion score upon filing for benefits. The score is determined by the personal characteristics of the claimant by looking primarily at the education and work history. Depending on the score, claimants can be directed to self-service tools and a Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) workshop. Veterans applying for

unemployment benefits from this virtual triaging will be directed to services prior to the first visit to the One-Stop Career Center.

The triage staff uses a desk aid listing the significant barriers identified in current guidance. One-Stop Career Center managers and DVOP specialists have received training on the new roles and responsibilities. Customers entering into the One-Stop Career Center are given a preliminary assessment incorporated into the intake or registration form. Intake forms are reviewed by OSCC staff to determine whether the customer should be referred to a DVOP.

Ensuring that every veteran conducts a focused, determined and robust job search has been greatly enhanced by the introduction of CareerConnections.nj.gov and the career assessment, résumé writing and job matching power of OnRamp accessible at CareerConnections.nj.gov. OnRamp helps veterans to focus their job search, create a detailed online résumé and, through a unique search engine, find job matches through skills matching rather than traditional keyword comparisons.

New Jersey implemented Salesforce, a new business management and accountability system in May 2017. Salesforce will help coordinate services within each region and manage business outreach efforts. All partners will have access to the system to help coordinate service and avoid duplicative work. It will also help tighten the process of job orders by having one representative handle business outreach and efforts to refer clients to these businesses instead of splitting these duties across multiple representatives.

Additionally, the Jersey Job Club aims to create a backbone for service delivery by having both JVSG and RESEA feed into it. Jersey Job Club replaces the Professional Service Group, which as targeted toward higher skilled individuals, expanding services to a larger pool of clients, thus ensuring that a client will receive the same uniform service delivery regardless of their reason for entering a One-Stop Career Center. Jersey Job Club offers three types of service workshops:

• Core workshops - résumé writing, interview skills, social media training

• Enrichment workshops - talent networks, industry specific workshops (beneficial for mass hiring efforts)

• Specific workshops based on population

Jersey Job Club efforts help advance career pathways by extending training into companies to skill-up incumbent workers and offer work-based learning and on-the-job training opportunities.

B. THE DUTIES ASSIGNED TO DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF BY THE STATE; SPECIFICALLY IMPLEMENTING DVOP AND LVER DUTIES OR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS OUTLINED IN 38 U.S.C. § 4103A AND 4104. THESE DUTIES MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT GUIDANCE;

Serving the workforce directed needs of New Jersey's veterans is a responsibility shared by all One-Stop Career Center staff. Effective intake and customer flow procedures, staff training, technical assistance/reinforcement, and monitoring contribute to ensuring that only a subset of eligible veterans identified as having a significant barrier to employment as defined in 38 U.S.C. 4103A(a)(1) and guidance containing the Secretary's priorities. All

veterans served by the DVOP will be assessed and have an employability plan that directs the delivery of intensive services.

LVERs in New Jersey are aligned with the business services team in order to keep their focus on employer engagement. Jobseeker staff communicate on a regular basis with the LVERs to ensure they are generating job orders consistent with the skills, education and aptitude of the veterans being served.

The following veterans' customer flow chart was developed to visually communicate to JVSG and non-JVSG staff the process for ensuring that every veteran should not be automatically routed to the DVOP specialist and that the terms DVOP specialist and veterans' representative are not synonymous.

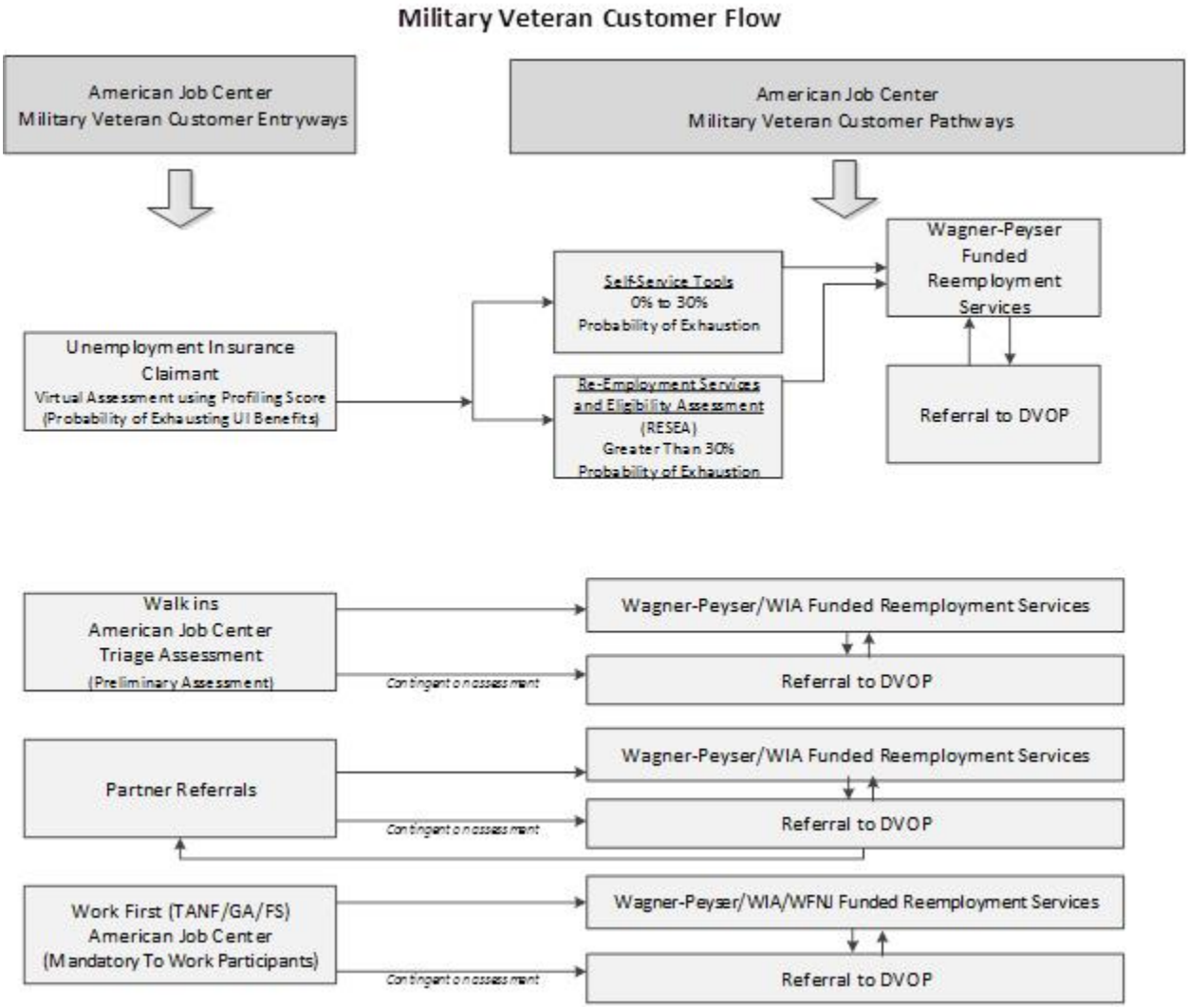

Figure 54

Upon the release of VPL 03-14, VPL 04-14 and VPL 08-14, LWD created a desk aid that was distributed to all staff and trained OSCC managers on the revised roles and responsibilities for the DVOP specialist and LVER. The training and desk aid explained priority of service, definitions for covered and eligible, and definitions for the six significant barriers as

contained in the original, and is updated as additional guidance is released. The desk aid included a checklist for staff use to document the significant barrier and justify referral and services by the DVOP (see below).

Eligible Veteran Name:	AOSOS ID:
Significant Barrier to Employment	If any Apply, Check off and Send Eligible Vet to DVOP for Intensive Services
1	Special Disabled/Disabled
2	Homeless (as defined by McKinney Homeless Assistance Act)
3	Recently Separated Service Member unemployed for 27 or more weeks during previous 12 months
4	Offender
5	Lacks a HS Diploma or Equivalent Certificate
6	Low Income as defined by WIOA
7	Veteran Age 18 - 24

Figure 55

The desk aid defines a "covered person" as a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. Active service includes full-time duty in the National Guard or Reserve, other than full-time duty for training purposes.

Once a veteran is referred to a DVOP specialist, staff complete a comprehensive assessment, document barriers, discuss job readiness, offer career advice/planning, and develop with the veteran an employability plan that may include barrier reduction strategies, referral to basic and/or occupational skills training, job search assistance through the Jersey Job Club, and referral to Vocational Rehabilitation or the Veterans Administration. Once a veteran successfully achieves the employment goal, staff are available to provide post-employment coaching as an employment retention strategy.

LVERs play a critical role in promoting the employment of veterans to the business community. LVERs have been fully integrated into the Business Services team and possess the same robust toolbox as other Business Representatives, which includes on-the-job training grant funds, navigational assistance for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), knowledge of other state and local programs for defraying the extraordinary costs of hiring and training new workers such as Skills Partnership, Opportunity Partnership, and the Talent Networks/Talent Development Centers. LVERs work closely with the One-Stop Managers and DVOPs to target their outreach efforts to employers based on the skills and career aspirations of the veteran looking for employment. Coordination between the LVERs,

BRs, WDB Directors, One-Stop Operations, DVOPs and Wagner Peyser staff will be greatly strengthened with the launch of the Salesforce Customer Management System in late CY 2016

C. THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNER NETWORK;

JVSG funded staff are fully integrated into New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) system. Veterans entering the system are assigned the level of service that they need to be successful in their employment efforts. On average, 80 percent of veterans registering with the OSCC can be served through self-service (e.g. OnRamp accessible at CareerConnections.nj.gov) and/or non-JVSG staff-assisted (e.g. Jersey Job Club, Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment/Worker Profiling programs, one-on-one job search assistance). The characteristics of this 80% group are very similar to non-veterans served - good employment history, possession of an educational credential, labor demand skills, and desire to work. Similarly, there is a component of the OSCC customer base that has significant barriers to employment including little or no work history, homelessness, alcohol, drug, or legal issues, lack of a high school diploma, low income, and mental or physical problems. If members of this latter group are eligible veterans, they can best be served by the DVOP specialist. By focusing on fewer veterans, but those with the most pronounced barriers, DVOP specialists can provide the time-intensive, quality services that this subset of veterans needs to overcome their barriers and find a job.

DVOP specialists concentrate on the delivery of intensive services to veterans with significant barriers to employment as defined in USDOL guidance using a case management approach. Subsequent guidance with additional eligibility categories will not substantially impact service delivery. In a fully-integrated environment where resources are leveraged to maximize efficiency and positive outcomes, the DVOP specialist is not personally delivering all of the career services but is managing the customer toward employment based on the outcome of an assessment and employment plan. In this environment, the DVOP needs to ensure that this management is recorded in the LWD AOSOS case management system under the DVOP specialist's account. To help ensure that accountability information is recorded in a consistent manner that reflects the level of effort by the DVOP, LWD has created a custom tab in the AOSOS case management system specifically for the DVOP specialist. Management exception reports are also being developed in partnership with LWD's newly created Division of Workforce Research and Analytics. Unlike traditional, after-the-fact, reports that provide summary tabulations, exception reports provide actionable information from individual customer records that can be run on a regular or ad-hoc basis to identify potential mistakes, oversights, or need for customer follow-up. Items on the exception report include whether the customer is an eligible veteran, whether they have received an intensive service, whether they are in case management, and whether they have a significant barrier. Future enhancements may include whether there is a completed employment plan, and whether Federal Bonding program eligibility letter was generated for the customer.

New Jersey's workforce development system recognized that a one-size fits all approach to labor exchange services was no longer a viable strategy for meeting the needs of jobseekers and employers. Employers in retail trade, for instance, look for customer service skills while

an employer in the advanced manufacturing industry may be looking for analytical skills. Informing the workforce system of the particular needs of different industries was the impetus for creating New Jersey's Talent Networks. Originally, New Jersey focused on creating Talent Networks in six strategic industries that employed about half of all New Jersey workers and paid about two-thirds of all New Jersey wages. The six strategic industries include advanced manufacturing, financial services, healthcare, life sciences, technology/entrepreneurship and transportation/logistics/ distribution. A seventh Talent Network was created covering retail, hospitality, and tourism which while not noted for high wages paid, employs a considerable number of workers. In 2018, New Jersey added the Construction & Utilities and the Food Industry Talent Networks, recognizing these as new strategic industries for the state. The Talent Networks work to build high-quality, business-driven partnerships within eight industry sectors to develop strategies to meet the skill needs of business and facilitate the development of career pathways with varying access points. The Talent Networks also gather industry intelligence directly from businesses to better inform workforce and education investments. This intelligence informs and assists New Jersey's K-12 and higher education systems, and training providers, with the development of programs that meet the skills and credentials demands of employers, and deliver seminars and networking opportunities for jobseekers. The Talent Networks will continue to be important partners in helping LVERs better understand employer requirements and help LVERs more effectively connect to employers for promoting veterans for employment.

LWD will conduct activities that promote job training and employment opportunities for veterans, working with partner agencies to leverage resources. These activities include Job Fairs, Veterans Information Fairs, Vocational Rehabilitation, WIOA, Senior Community Service Employment Program (55+), state Workforce Development Partnership programs including Workforce Learning Link and WIOA Title II for low literate veterans, Opportunity Partnership industry supported training, NJ BUILD for veterans who are women and/or minorities, Helmets to Hardhats, Troops to Teachers, On-the-Job Training Grants, GI Bill, Tuition Waiver program for state and county college courses, apprenticeship, and Trade Act support and training for workers dislocated due to international competition.

LWD works closely with other agencies such as the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to ensure that all staff serving veterans is aware of the myriad of resources available to veterans. Strategies include providing partner links on web sites and joint participation in informational programs targeted to veterans and veteran service providers. The One-Stop Career Center is a primary point of contact for employers, non-profit agencies, educational and training institutions and other service providers who are interested in recruiting or serving veterans. These contacts are shared with other OSCC partners to promote linkages at the local level.

Business partnerships will continue to grow in importance as industry assumes a larger role in directing the expenditure of training resources. LWD has used state resources to fund industry informed "bulk" training classes that have resulted in almost 100% placement at a more cost-efficient price point than the individual training account model under WIA. With the reauthorization of WIA as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), LWD anticipates the flexibility to move federal funding towards this successful job-driven employment and training model.

More and more employers are requesting LVER assistance to conduct veteran recruitments. A prime example of a company specific recruitment event is the ongoing effort to recruit veterans for job openings at the Port of Newark/Elizabeth. NY Shipping Association has committed to hiring 700 military service veterans and has hired 153 veterans in coordination with New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center, the American Legion, and other partners since the beginning of CY 2014. Instead of organizing a multi-employer, traditional job fair, interested veterans can be pre-screened by One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) staff to see if they meet the minimum requirements demanded by the employer, OSCC staff can conduct invitation only job fairs for the employer, and can help jobseekers navigate pre-employment requirements like in the case of the port jobs, the acquisition of a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC card) from the TSA. Unlike, traditional events where successful employment outcomes are often anecdotal, events coordinated for single employers, present a better opportunity for measuring return on investment through hiring feedback from the employer.

OnRamp accessible at CareerConnections.nj.gov has more than 425,000 registered users as of July 2016. LWD has devoted considerable resources over the nearly three years since this site launched in August 2011 by promoting the value of OnRamp to jobseekers and employers. Promotion has included bus wraps, direct mailings to UI claimants, novelty items, public service announcements, radio, TV, social media, and newsprint publicity, through workshops and Rapid Response meetings, and endorsements by library associations and other partners. OnRamp gives jobseekers the tools to focus their job search, create a robust résumé, and automatically receive leads based on compatibility with more than 100,000 current New Jersey job openings posted by employers. OnRamp is accessible at CareerConnections.nj.gov.

LWD has a state level Memorandum of Understanding with the US Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (US DOL/VETS) and the VA/VR&E program that delineates roles and responsibilities for staff in the partner agencies. LWD's primary roles are to provide workforce information to veterans who are entering a VR&E Program and to provide priority job search assistance for those veterans who are completing their VR&E Program. All partner agencies are involved in a quarterly review of VR&E customers and their progress in reaching their career goals. LWD has assigned a VR&E Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) from among the DVOP specialists assigned to the Newark One-Stop Career Center. The staff is out-stationed at the VA/VR&E office at 20 Washington Place in Newark.

DVOP specialists are expected to provide intensive case management services for the VR&E customers which include a comprehensive assessment and individual employment plan based upon the employment plan provided by the VA. The goal is to provide the VR&E veterans with the tools to be successful in the job search such as a robust résumé, career guidance, and job search assistance.

DVOP specialists will provide weekly job search services including job matching and referrals. In addition, DVOPs will engage business outreach staff to place customers by communicating characteristics of the veterans' population such as a general sense of their skills, education, experience, and career aspirations. LVERs and non-JVSG business outreach staff will use this information to more effectively communicate the value of the labor pool to employers.

DVOP specialists are out-stationed at facilities where there are veterans that might benefit from intensive services, including the East Orange Campus of the VA New Jersey Health Care System at 385 Tremont Street in East Orange.

Outreach activities to identify and assist veterans in need of intensive services have fostered relationships with the Lyons Campus of the VA New Jersey Health Care System in Lyons, Fort Monmouth Shelter in Freehold, NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs at multiple locations, Lunch Break in Red Bank (homeless veterans), MOCEANS (homeless, low income, and educationally deficient veterans) in Long Branch, and the Veterans Transitional Housing Program (Veterans Haven) in Winslow.

Outreach and out-stationing efforts are designed to engage and provide intensive services to disabled veterans and/or veterans with significant barriers to employment, especially homeless veterans and the other categories defined in VPL 03-14, VPL 04-14 and VPL 08-14. In order to maximize services to those veterans, LWD actively works with the following types of organizations and services:

- Veteran Service Organizations: An organization whose charter and purpose is to provide goodwill to veteran members and to serve the needs of veterans and the community at large.
- VA Outpatient Clinics: Clinics that offers comprehensive primary care and behavioral health services.
- Faith-Based Organizations: Organizations that typically delivers a variety of services to the public.
- Homeless Shelters: Shelters that are temporary residences for homeless people. Usually located in urban neighborhoods, they are similar to emergency shelters.
- Community-Based Organizations: An organization that is representative of a community or significant segments of a community and provides educational or related services to individuals in the community.
- Veteran Service Officers: An employee of the state/county who is tasked with ensuring that veterans within the state and county receive their entitled benefits.
- Supportive Service Organizations: Organizations part of a coordinated system of services designed to help maintain the independence of the participant.
- One-Stop Career Center Personnel: Qualified professionals who can assist with obtaining employment or the training needed to meet the demands of New Jersey's workforce.
- NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation: OSCC partner agency providing work-directed assistance to veterans with disabilities.
- Workforce Investment Act: OSCC partner agency providing basic and occupational skills training to veterans.
- State and County College Network: partner agencies providing educational credentials and job search assistance to veterans.
- Military Installations: A facility directly owned and operated by or for the military or one of its branches that shelters military equipment and personnel, and facilitates training and operations.

Active referrals of veterans to and from these partner organizations are made based on pre-assessments and the assessment and employability plans developed by the DVOP specialists

and other One-Stop Career Center staff. The delivery of intensive services is often managed by the DVOP using a case management approach where the delivery of intensive services to the veterans is shared by the DVOP specialist and others. New Jersey developed the Jersey Job Club to assist jobseekers including veterans with workshops on job search basics, résumé writing, interviewing skills, industry specific seminars, using social networking and other 21st century job search tools, and veterans' specific topics. The Jersey Job Clubs are staffed with One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) employees funded under Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Dislocated Worker (25% funds), TANF/GA/FS, and smaller miscellaneous funds.

JVSG staff is deployed with clearly delineated distinct duties for the DVOP specialist and LVER. These clearly distinct duties include the delivery of intensive services to targeted veterans by the DVOP specialist and outreach to the employer community and facilitation within the state's employment service delivery system for the LVER. DVOP specialists and LVER provide specialized service that complement and add value to OSCC veterans' services. DVOP specialists and LVER do not duplicate services provided by other OSCC labor exchange staff. In the case of the DVOP specialist, this is ensured by a requirement that the significant barrier/18-24 year old veteran designation be documented for every customer served.

New Jersey created a separate Business Services team in the late 1990s in an effort to better connect employers to the One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) system. OSCCs created on-site business resource centers and staffed them with Business Representatives trained to help employers find qualified and dependable workers, promote federal, state, and local business programs, and help businesses navigate government bureaucracy. The roles and responsibilities of the Business Representatives are to provide employer outreach and facilitation within the state's employment service delivery system. Business Representatives do not work directly with jobseekers leaving that to Employment Services staff under the direction of the OSCC Workforce manager. Business Representatives report to senior Business Representatives who report to the Assistant Director of Business Services in Workforce Field Services.

LVERs will be assigned duties that promote to employers, employer associations, and business groups the advantages of hiring veterans. LVERs will do this in conjunction and as active members of the business services team. LVERs will advocate for all veterans served by the OSCC with business, industry, and other community-based organizations by participating in appropriate activities such as:

• Planning and participating in job and career fairs

• In conjunction with employers, conducting job searches and workshops, and establishing job search groups

• Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs and businesses or business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs for veterans

• Informing federal contractors of the process to recruit qualified veterans

• Promoting credentialing and licensing opportunities for veterans

• Coordinating and participating with other business outreach efforts

LVERs are also responsible for facilitating employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans in New Jersey under the OSCC service delivery systems. VETS defines this facilitation duty as the act of capacity building within the state's employment service delivery system to ensure easier access to the appropriate employment and training services for jobseeking veterans. LVERs will play an important role in assisting with the development of the service delivery strategies for veterans in their assigned OSCC, as well as educating all OSCC partner staff with current employment initiatives and programs for veterans.

In the FY 2014 Annual Plan Modification request, LWD proposed moving the LVERs from Employment Services to Business Services. Restructuring of LVERs as an active part of the Business Services team will benefit OSCC customers, the veteran jobseekers and employers. In addition, this will allow LWD to serve veterans more effectively and efficiently by requiring LVER staff to focus on their primary role, which is employer outreach on behalf of veterans without the distraction of other assigned duties overwhelming the primary business outreach role of the LVER.

As the LVER reorganization moves forward, LWD anticipates more job order development successes as DVOP specialists and LVERs define their roles and responsibilities along guidance supplied in most current guidance. LWD will concentrate LVER staff efforts on targeted job development services for veterans especially veterans determined to be job ready after receipt of intensive services from a DVOP specialist. These measures will assist LWD in enhancing existing processes and oversight to ensure DVOP specialists provide intensive services for veterans with employment barriers, including homeless veterans, veterans with disabilities, and the other service categories listed in more recent guidance.

D. THE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED USING THE 1% GRANT ALLOCATION SET ASIDE FOR THIS PURPOSE, AS APPLICABLE;

LWD plans to use the award to send selected DVOPs and LVERs to job-related professional development that could include National Veterans Training Institute sponsored training or other appropriate training as determined by LWD management.

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) Incentive Award Plan:

One-Stop staff or One-Stop offices providing exemplary service on behalf of veterans as compared to their peers are eligible for incentive awards.

Two types of incentives are provided:

1. Recognition Events/Awards Ceremonies

2. Conferences/Training Events/Incentive Travel

Office Awards

Offices that have demonstrated providing exemplary services to veterans will qualify for an award. Each office will be rated and ranked to determine top performers. Both qualitative and quantitative categories will be used in the rating process, examples of these categories are:

- The number of veterans served in proportion to total customers served;

- The percentage of veterans employed in the second quarter after exit;
- The number of success stories submitted to USDOL;
- The number of veterans served expressing positive feedback to the office through a letter or email;
- Outreach relationships that the office has with community-based partners;
- The percentage of veterans served receiving a comprehensive assessment and a resulting employment plan;
- The percentage of veterans returning to the One-Stop for follow-up after an initial visit;
- The average starting salary of veterans placed into employment;
- The number of veterans assisted in securing federal government employment;
- The number of job orders for veterans received; and
- The number of veteran specific employer recruitments.

Individual Awards

An individual award will be decided using the following criteria:

1. Analysis of objective data for DVOP and LVER award consideration- such as the number of veterans in case management, percentage of veterans served receiving a comprehensive assessment and resulting employment plan, percentage of veterans returning for follow-up after an initial visit, percentage of veterans served receiving appropriate job referrals, number of job orders created and filled by veterans, outreach activities, and percentage of veterans employed in second quarter after exit.

2. Subjective nomination - Staff may be nominated for an award by themselves, by their peers, by a customer and/or by supervisory staff or managers. Nominations for the individual awards will be submitted to the Veterans' Program Coordinator. Subjective nomination provides a means for all staff, not just JVSG staff to receive an incentive award for helping veterans achieve their employment goals. Factors leading to a nomination may include, receiving positive feedback from an employer or jobseeker regarding the quality of services received, outreach activities/community relations efforts, successful one-time or infrequent labor exchange engagement such as a hiring ramp up for a new or expanding major employer, and successful outcome for a veteran with multiple barriers to employment.

Staff and offices will be ranked against their peers in the various measures. A Performance Awards Committee led by the Veterans Program Coordinator, and consisting of two other members at the level of Chief or higher will be responsible for final determinations on award criteria, number of awards, and awardees.

Incentive Program Goals

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) has designed the JVSG Incentive Award Plan to communicate and promote those staff actions that lead to positive employment outcomes for military service veteran customers and recognize and reward individuals or offices that achieve excellence in the provision of services to veterans. Expected secondary benefits are improved morale, staff retention and job satisfaction and improvements to the system for the delivery of employment directed services. LWD will use one-percent of the annual JVSG award for incentives.

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);

New Jersey will expand the definition of dislocated workers to include military spouses consistent with WIOA. Military spouses who have lost employment as a direct result of a relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of the spouse, if family income is significantly reduced because of a deployment, a call to active duty, a permanent change of station, or the service connected death or disability of a service member, or if they are unemployed or underemployed and are experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

Military service members preparing to return to civilian life will also be afforded the opportunity to receive training and services under WIOA Adult and/or Dislocated Worker by discounting military pay that would otherwise disqualify them for program eligibility. LWD has a long-standing relationship with the military leaders at Joint Base Maguire-Dix-Lakehurst. While state staff no longer deliver Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshops, staff of the Burlington County American Job Center regularly visit the Joint Base to assist veterans and transitioning service members. This relationship will be reviewed to ensure that a formal mechanism exists to communicate to transitioning service members the services offered through New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center (American Job Centers) system and understand the steps needed to avail themselves of those services. The goal is to provide a more seamless transition from military to civilian life with little or no intervening period of unemployment during the transition period. A tangible example of New Jersey's efforts to ensure a more seamless transition is the Military Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Skills Waiver Program. The New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission is helping military personnel transition their military driving experience into civilian employment. By waiving the CDL Skills Test (behind-the-wheel exam) qualified military applicants will no longer have to provide a commercial vehicle in order to obtain a New Jersey CDL license.

New Jersey will continue to distinguish military service veterans according to USDOL guidance primarily to determine eligibility for DVOP services.Covered persons must be given priority of service which means they go to the front of the line for all One-Stop services including employment, training, and placement services. In some limited cases, a spouse of a veteran can be classified as a covered person and must be given priority of service. Only covered persons who are also defined as "eligible" can be served or should be referred to the DVOP.

An eligible veteran meets one or more of the following:

- served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days and was discharged or released with other than a dishonorable discharge
- was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability
- was a member of a reserve component <u>under an order to active duty</u> pursuant to section 12301(a), (d), or (g), 12302, or 12304 of title 10, served on active duty

during a period of war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is authorized and was discharged or released from such duty with other than a dishonorable discharge
- was discharged or released from active duty by reason of a sole survivorship discharge

Special disabled/disabled are those eligible veterans who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs or who were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.

Veterans participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program are deemed high priority customers. In accordance with most current guidance, LWD has a state level Memorandum of Understanding with the US Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (US DOL/VETS) and the VA/VR&E program that delineates roles and responsibilities for staff in the partner agencies. LWD's primary roles are to provide workforce information to veterans who are entering a VR&E Program and to provide priority job search assistance for those veterans who are completing their VR&E Program. All partner agencies are involved in a quarterly review of VR&E customers and their progress in reaching their career goals. LWD has assigned a VR&E Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) from among the DVOP specialists assigned to the Newark One-Stop Career Center. The staff is out-stationed at the VA/VR&E office at 20 Washington Place in Newark.

Although New Jersey recognizes three American Indian tribes - Ramapough Lenape Indian Nation, Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribe, and the Powhatan Renape Tribe, there are no designated tribal lands or individuals living on tribal lands.

F. HOW THE STATE IMPLEMENTS AND MONITORS THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO COVERED PERSONS;

Covered persons must be given priority of service which means they go to the front of the line for all One-Stop services including employment, training, and placement services. In some limited cases, a spouse of a veteran can be classified as a covered person and must be given priority of service. Only covered persons who are also defined as "eligible" can be served or should be referred to the DVOP.

An eligible veteran meets one or more of the following:

- served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days and was discharged or released with other than a dishonorable discharge
- was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability
- was a member of a reserve component <u>under an order to active duty</u> pursuant to section 12301(a), (d), or (g), 12302, or 12304 of title 10, served on active duty during a period of war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is authorized and was discharged or released from such duty with other than a dishonorable discharge
- was discharged or released from active duty by reason of a sole survivorship discharge

New Jersey provides all veterans with priority of service across all services and job training programs available through the One-Stop Career Center system. LWD requires that all staff members provide priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses while DVOP specialists and LVERs focus their efforts on serving veterans most in need of their services including disabled veterans and the targeted veteran populations identified in most current guidance. Local areas must ensure that veterans and eligible spouses are served first and that this protocol is addressed in customer flow processes.

Priority of Service strategies include:

(1) Signage - LWD recognizes that appropriate signage will play a pivotal role if priority of service is to be implemented successfully. As such, LWD will design, publish, and distribute high quality signage to be used at all OSCCs and affiliate service sites throughout the state.

(2) Improvement of Self-Service Resources and Electronic Strategies - In an effort to improve access by and information for veterans, CareerConnections.nj.gov makes it easier for veterans to navigate and find the information that they need to be successful in their job search.

(3) Outreach - LWD uses one-page information sheets to promote the services available to veterans at the OSCC and references that veterans receive priority of service including going to the front of the line for training, employment counseling, job search assistance, public access, and workshops.

(4) Application of Priority of Service - Federal regulations specifically state that all program activities (including those obtained through Requests for Proposals, solicitation for grant awards, sub-grants, contracts, sub-contracts, and Memoranda of Understanding) issued or executed by qualified job training program operations, must be administered in compliance with priority of service. As a result of this regulation, LWD will add language to its own contract documents to ensure awareness of priority of service requirements with state level grantees. Military service veterans will also go to the front of the line for all training related grants funded by state or federal resources including WIOA, WorkFirst, and WorkFirst On-the-Job Training, New Jersey's Tuition Waiver Program, and state funded training such as that provided under Opportunity4Jersey.

(5) Customer Flow - OSCC staff is required to provide priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses and to serve these customers first.

(6) Technical Assistance and Compliance Monitoring - Ensuring that OSCC partners are familiar with the requirements for priority of service and that priority of service is uniformly administered requires comprehensive guidance, technical assistance by the veterans program coordinator, and compliance monitoring by the LWD Office of Research and Information. Compliance monitors use tools jointly developed with program staff that include checking OSCC signage, customer flow plans, and staff understanding of priority of service.

(7) The above strategies should help guarantee the following:

a. Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans will be made aware of their entitlement to priority of service and will be identified at the point of entry

b. Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans will be given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service by discovering the full array of employment, training, and placement services available to them

Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans will be made aware of any applicable eligibility requirements specific to USDOL funded programs. Veterans receive priority of service in all USDOL and state funded employment and training programs and have first access to employment opportunities. In addition, many veterans have earned substantial educational benefits as a result of their military service. These benefits will provide veterans with the ability to pursue the educational and training credentials that will allow them to successfully compete for both current and emerging employment opportunities.

Often employers are willing to hire veterans that possess most of the qualities they desire in an ideal employee if the hire can in some way be incentivized. LVERs have been using the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, VOW, Federal Bonding Program, and on-the-job training (OJT) grants to help seal the connection between veterans and employers. New Jersey's state-funded Workforce Development Partnership Program has helped employers through the Opportunities4Jersey on-the-job training program defray some of the extraordinary costs involved in training new workers by paying up to 50% of new hires salary for up to six months.

G. HOW THE STATE PROVIDES OR INTENDS TO PROVIDE AND MEASURE, THROUGH BOTH THE DVOP AND ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNER STAFF:

1. JOB AND JOB TRAINING INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES,

Critical to ensuring that veterans' services are consistent with state and federal guidelines, LWD has empowered a Veterans Program Coordinator to provide technical assistance, performance monitoring, program coordination, and program planning. Exceeding annual negotiated performance standards serve as the primary measure of program success. The coordinator will work in conjunction with the LWD Office of Research and Information staff using the VETS 200 and ETA 9002 reports, management reports, desk audits, self-assessments, on-site validation visits and discussions/feedback from partner agencies to assess program success.

The LWD Monitoring and Compliance unit in the Office of Research and Information conducts regular programmatic audits using a monitoring tool developed with input from the Veterans Program Coordinator. All aspects of the veterans program are monitored including JVSG and non-JVSG services delivered to veterans from priority of service to service delivery by JVSG funded staff to ensure consistency with most current guidance.

As the LVER reorganization moves forward, LWD anticipates more job order development successes as DVOP specialists and LVERs define their roles and responsibilities along guidance supplied in VPL 03-14, VPL 04-14 and VPL 08-14. LWD will concentrate LVER staff efforts on targeted job development services for veterans especially veterans determined to be job ready after receipt of intensive services from a DVOP specialist. These measures will assist LWD in enhancing the existing processes and oversight to ensure DVOP specialists provide intensive services for veterans with employment barriers, including homeless veterans, veterans with disabilities, and the other service categories listed in most current guidance.

Over the next several years, LWD anticipates an increasing number of employers will develop formal military veterans' recruitment programs. Several large New Jersey employers have committed to hiring more veterans by setting numerical targets, designing media outreach programs, working closely with One-Stop Career Center staff on posting job orders, organizing hiring events, and dedicating company staff to veterans' recruitment activities. Examples include Home Depot with a goal to increase military and veteran hires by 10% each year over a course of five years resulting in the hiring of an additional 55,000 veterans nationwide.

2. EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT SERVICES, AND

See above response in Section (g) 1.

3. JOB-DRIVEN TRAINING AND SUBSEQUENT PLACEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS;

See above response in Section (g) 1.

H. THE HIRE DATE ALONG WITH MANDATORY TRAINING COMPLETION DATES FOR ALL DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF; AND

DVOP SPECIALISTS	.	.	.	.
Office Name and Address by County	Grant Funded Staff Name	Date Appointed to Current Position	Date Completed Case Management/ Intensive Services Training	Date Completed Employment Specialist (VS) Training
Atlantic County One-Stop Career Center - Pleasantville, 2 South Main Street, Pleasantville, NJ 08232	Richard Schaeffer	6/24/2013	2/4/2014	4/1/2014
.	James Mosby, 609-813-3907	1/23/2017	5/9/2017	8/11/2017
Bergen County One-Stop Career Center, 60 State Street, 2nd Floor, Hackensack, NJ 07601	Jennifer Castellanos, 201-329-9600 x5655	4/21/2014	3/9/2012	6/24/2014
Burlington County One-Stop Career Center, 795 Woodlane Road, Westampton, NJ 08060-6100	Henry Bass, 609-518-3917	5/29/2007	10/16/2007	4/22/2008

DVOP SPECIALISTS	.	.	.	.
.	Dimitri Cromwell, 609-518-3900	1/11/2016	6/21/2016	8/15/2016
Camden County One-Stop Career Center, 2600 Mt. Ephriam Avenue, Camden, NJ 08104	Geoffrey Taylor, 856-614-3186	2/23/2015	8/20/2015	11/20/2015
.	Sukoya Johnson	5/29/2018	.	.
Cape May County One-Stop Career Center, 3810 New Jersey Avenue, Wildwood, NJ 08260-0210	Jacqueline Blaydes, 609-729-0997	8/2/2010	7/12/2011	4/24/2012
Cumberland County One-Stop Career Center, 275 N. Delsea Drive, 2nd Floor, Vineland, NJ 08360-8067	Angel Gutierrez, 856-696-8371	9/24/2012	4/9/2013	4/16/2013
Essex County One-Stop Career Center - East Orange, 50 South Clinton Street, 2nd floor, East Orange, NJ 07017	Tonia McKenzie	7/25/2016	5/2/2017	.
VA Hospital, 385 Tremont Avenue, East Orange, NJ 07017	Jason Sutton, 973-395-5839	7/25/2011	2/7/2012	6/19/2012
Gloucester County One-Stop Career Center, 215 Crown Point Road,Thorofare, NJ 08086	Edwin Morgan, 856-384-3700	12/5/2011	12/4/1995	3/27/2012
Hudson County One-Stop Career Center - Jersey City, 438 Summit Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07306-3175	Marimer Navarrete, 201-795-8800	6/27/2016	12/9/2016	3/10/2017
.	Ian Richmond, 201-795-8800	6/24/2017	12/15/2017-	.
Mercer County One-Stop Career Center, 26 Yard Avenue, 1st Floor, Trenton, NJ 08625-0954	Lois Bunch, 609-292-3059	6/21/2004	9/28/2004	9/27/2005
.	LaTesha Wright, 609-292-0656	1/23/2017	6/9/2017	.

DVOP SPECIALISTS	.	.	.	.
Middlesex County One-Stop Career Center - New Brunswick, 550 Jersey Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1392	Donald Thermesi, 732-937-6228	5/29/2018	.	.
.	Vacant	.	.	.
Middlesex County One-Stop Career Center - Perth Amboy, 161 New Brunswick Avenue, Perth Amboy, NJ 08861-4193	Ingrid Macias, 732-293-5016	4/7/2014	7/29/2014	8/5/2014
Monmouth County One-Stop Career Center - Neptune, 60 Taylor Avenue, Neptune, NJ 07753-4844	Victor Alvarado 732-775-1566 x165	2/27/2006	5/16/2006	8/22/2006
Morris County One-Stop Career Center - Randolph, 13 Emery Avenue, Randolph, NJ 07869	Michael Vicari, 862-397-5600	7/1/2013	6/2014	8/2014
.	Mark Ortega, 862-397-5600	2/23/2015	11/6/2015	12/11/2015
Newark One-Stop Career Center - Newark, 990 Broad Street, Newark, NJ 07102	Peter Cullen, 973- 297-3211	3/29/1983	2/26/1990	7/13/1998
.	Nelly David, 973-648-6252	11/18/2013	7/29/2014	
VA Regional Office, 20 Washington Place,Newark, NJ 07102	Thomas Cole, 973-648-3706	9/13/2010	5/3/2011	8/2/2011
Ocean County One-Stop Career Center, 1027 Hooper Avenue, Toms River, NJ 08753-8392	Rekishia McMillan, 732-286-5616	11/16/2015	5/13/2016	5/27/2016
Passaic County One-Stop Career Center- Passaic, 25 Howe Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055-4007	Vacant	.	.	.
Passaic County One-Stop Career Center - Paterson, 200 Memorial Drive, Paterson, NJ 07505	Wendel Green, 973-340-3400	6/17/2000	11/28/2000	4/9/2002

DVOP SPECIALISTS	.	.	.	.
Salem County One-Stop Career Center, 174 E. Broadway, Salem, NJ 08079	Johnnie Ball, 856-351-2215	6/19/2010	.	.
Somerset County One-Stop Career Center, 75 Veterans Memorial Drive, Ste. 102, Somerville, NJ 08876-2950	Louis Scibelli, 908-575-3230	8/23/2004	11/16/2004	4/5/2005
Sussex County One-Stop Career Center - Newton, Sussex County Mall, Route 206 North, Newton, NJ 07860-1818	Vacant	.	.	.
Union County One-Stop Career Center -Elizabeth, 921 Elizabeth Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07201	Laurence Carter, 908-965-3939	6/9/2008	1/27/2009	3/31/2009
.	Terrence Lee, 908-965-3939	5/29/2018	.	.
Union County One-Stop Career Center - Plainfield, 200 W. 2nd Street, 2nd Floor, Plainfield, NJ 07060-1595	Tiffany Bienbeau, 908-412-7980	5/29/2018	.	.
Warren County One-Stop Career Center - Phillipsburg, 75 South Main Street, Phillipsburg, NJ 08865	Jennifer Tanforan	.	.	.
Figure 56				

.

LVER STAFF	.	.	.
Office Name and Address (By County)	Grant Funded Staff Name	Date Appointed to Current Position	Date Completed Employer Outreach Training
Trenton Central Office, PO BOX 055, 7th Floor, John Fitch Plaza, Trenton, NJ 08625-0055	Wayne Smith, 609-777-3105	5/2/2015	N/A

LVER STAFF	.	.	.
Camden County One-Stop Career Center, 2600 Mt Ephraim Avenue, Camden, NJ 08104	Jason Newman	6/26/2017	9/29/2017
Essex County One-Stop Career Center (Lead LVER), 50 South Clinton Street, East Orange, NJ 07018-3120	Vacant	.	.
Gloucester County One-Stop Career Center, 215 Crown Point Road, Thorofare, NJ 08086	Ricky Ohara, 609-358-3662	9/20/2014	9/23/2011
Morris County One-Stop Career Center - Randolph (Northwest Region) (Lead), 13 Emery Avenue, Randolph, NJ 07869	John Lehnert, 609-358-3660	10/30/2017	8/21/2009
Hudson County One-Stop Career Center, 438 Summit Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07306	Angelica Lindo, 973-916-2643	6/16/2017	.
Somerset County One-Stop Career Center - Somerville (Central Region), 75 Veterans Memorial Drive, Suite 102, Somerville, NJ 08876-2950	Vacant	.	.
Ocean County One-Stop Career Center, 1027 Hooper Avenue, Toms River, NJ 08753-8392	Stanley Sinicki, 609-358-3675	2/10/2015	12/2015

Figure 57

I. SUCH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) anticipates a positive employment outlook for military service veterans over the next several years as trends suggest a continuing improvement in general economic conditions, more employers finding value in actively recruiting and hiring returning service members, state administered employment and training efforts continuing to meet the needs of the labor market, business attraction incentives receiving greater employer acceptance, and state efforts to facilitate connections continuing to make it easier for employers and jobseekers to find each other. These factors will also improve employee retention as companies improve profitability, receive better prepared workers, employ retention incentives such as tax credits, and find better matches due to better labor exchange technology.

Many firms are seeking qualified and dependable veterans, and many have stepped up, such as Home Depot and JPMorgan Chase, to hire a large number of veterans. To assist these businesses, the State has a lead person, a main point of contact, with the employer to support their needs statewide

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistic's Current Population Survey for the first quarter of 2014, there were 364,000 veterans residing in New Jersey. Of those, 140,000 were in the labor force, 132,000 were employed, and 8,000 were unemployed for an unemployment rate of 5.8%. The national unemployment rate for veterans during the first quarter of 2014

was 6.0%. New Jersey's first quarter veterans' unemployment rate was down from an average of 10.8% in 2013.

DVOP specialists (203—500), LVERs (202—500), Lead LVER (202—500), and Veteran Program Coordinator (202—500) staff charge directly to the grant using separate project codes to record their time in the e*cats electronic timekeeping system. Leave time is charged in the e*cats system using separate codes for vacation, sick, administrative, and leave without pay.

Costs will be assigned to a particular program based on whether the cost is associated with a DVOP or LVER. This applies to personnel as well as non—personal services costs such as equipment, travel, and training. Indirect costs and mixed costs would be applied proportionally to the direct costs for each program. An example of mixed costs would be when training is provided to both LVERs and DVOPs and the total cost allocated proportionally based on attendance between the two cost categories.

All staff are budgeted as fulltime under the grant application. The budget Information for FY 2015 was as follows: the PS + PB to Total ratio is 79.91% for DVOP and 79.93% for LVER.

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)

At minimum, in the SCSEP stand-alone submission and the SCSEP portion of the Combined State Plan, States should comprehensively cover the following elements.

A. ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS AND IMPACT

States must:

1. DISCUSS LONG-TERM PROJECTIONS FOR JOBS IN INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS IN THE STATE THAT MAY PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER WORKERS. (20 CFR 641.302(D))(MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

New Jersey has a richly diverse population, proximity to major metropolitan areas and a history of invention and innovation that continues to grow. New Jersey's commitment to investment, collaboration and talent development supports growth in key industry clusters that drive economic expansion. New Jersey is committed to helping older workers obtain employment and self-sufficiency. The chart below projects industries in New Jersey that may provide potential employment opportunities for older workers.

New Jersey Workers by Industry Sector			
Total Workers	**Workers Age 55 and Over**	**Percent Age 55 and Over**	
All Industries	2,887,310	710,607	24.60%

New Jersey Workers by Industry Sector			
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1,301	405	31.10%
Manufacturing	230,644	71,142	30.80%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	50,404	14,752	29.30%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	7,446	2,131	28.60%
Utilities	13,581	3,746	27.60%
Educational Services	67,343	18,404	27.30%
Wholesale Trade	200,502	54,495	27.20%
Transportation and Warehousing	133,328	36,178	27.10%
Health Care and Social Assistance	484,155	127,120	26.30%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	111,465	28,871	25.90%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	206,027	50,519	24.50%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	261,553	61,606	23.60%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	78,473	18,176	23.20%
Construction	118,373	27,180	23.00%
Finance and Insurance	168,185	38,326	22.80%
Retail Trade	397,544	88,784	22.30%
Information	71,281	15,268	21.40%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	45,460	8,892	19.60%
Accommodation and Food Services	240,249	44,616	18.60%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU - LOCAL EMPLOYMENT DYNAMICS QUARTERLY WORKFORCE INDICATORS, AVERAGE OF Q4, 2014 (MOST RECENT DATA) + 3 PRIOR QUARTERS (PRIVATE OWNERSHIP).

PREPARED BY NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND INFORMATION, DECEMBER 2015

FIGURE 58

LWD will target employers in the following industries to increase training and unsubsidized employment opportunities for seniors:

Health Care Industry

- Contributed over $30 billion to New Jersey's Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2012, or roughly 7 percent of all state output;
- Added 186,300 new jobs (from 1990 through 2013) while all other industries combined had a net gain of only 113,400;
- Added jobs in the state every year (from 1990 through 2013) and increased its share of jobholding from 7.5 percent in 1990 to 11.6 percent in 2013;
- Projected from 2013 through 2022 to add more than 88,600 jobs, an annual increase of 2.0 percent; and
- Paid more than $23.3 billion in total wages in 2013, or about 12.2 percent of all wages paid statewide.

Leisure, Hospitality and Retail (LHR)

- Contributed $44.7 billion (or 9.8%) to the state's Real Gross Domestic Product in 2013
- Generated more than $40 billion in tourism demand in 2013;
- Totaled 796,788 in 2013, or 24.6 percent of the state's private sector workers.
- Paid (via employer wages) nearly $22 billion in wages during 2013, or 11.5 percent of the state total. The average annual wage paid in 2013 was $27,516.
- Concentrated in three counties: Bergen, Monmouth and Middlesex. Atlantic County ranks fourth for LHR employment due to the presence of the casino hotel industry. Note: LWD SCSEP serves Monmouth, Middlesex and Atlantic Counties.

SOURCE: LWD OFFICE OF RESEARCH INFORMATION 2015

2. DISCUSS HOW THE LONG-TERM JOB PROJECTIONS DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN RELATE TO THE TYPES OF UNSUBSIDIZED JOBS FOR WHICH SCSEP PARTICIPANTS WILL BE TRAINED AND THE TYPES OF SKILL TRAINING TO BE PROVIDED. (20 CFR 641.302(D))

The SCSEP program will partner with Talent Networks which have been established to focus on the specific needs of key industries in order to connect employers, jobseekers, the One-Stop Career Centers (OSCC) and educational institutions to help jobseekers develop relevant skills that lead to job opportunities and enable employers to find qualified employees.

Through partnerships with Talent Networks, participants will have greater access to the training and educational opportunities that lead to jobs of the future. The mission of each Talent Network is to:

- Support the efforts of the workforce development system and educational institutions;
- Prepare workers for opportunities in key industry sectors;
- Serve as the primary workforce contact for the industry sector; and

- Encourage networking between jobseekers, employers and training providers.

SCSEP program staff will continue to work with host agencies to develop community service assignments that provide participants with on-the-job training and skill development to increase their opportunities to achieve unsubsidized employment. Though many participants possess work skills, often they lack literacy and computer skills which are necessary in New Jersey's highly competitive job market. New Jersey is committed to expanding participant training opportunities that will assist them with becoming self-sufficient.

3. DISCUSS CURRENT AND PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE STATE (SUCH AS BY PROVIDING INFORMATION AVAILABLE UNDER §15 OF THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT (29 U.S.C. 491-2) BY OCCUPATION), AND THE TYPES OF SKILLS POSSESSED BY ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS. (20 CFR 641.325(C))

LWD will work with One-Stop Career Centers to expand training services to ensure participants are enrolled in learning links, and obtain employability and computer skills. Through partnerships with community colleges and libraries participants will have access to a wealth of training within their local communities. This will encourage participants to advance their skills and increase their opportunities for employment.

Figure 59 below reflects projected employment opportunities in New Jersey through 2022.

FIGURE 59

B. SERVICE DELIVERY AND COORDINATION

States must:

1. PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

This may alternatively be discussed in the State strategies section of the strategic plan, but regardless of placement in document, must include:

A. ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH WIOA TITLE I PROGRAMS, INCLUDING PLANS FOR USING THE WIOA ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND ITS PARTNERS TO SERVE INDIVIDUALS AGED 55 AND OLDER. (20 CFR 641.302(G), 641.325(E))

The SCSEP program is managed by New Jersey's Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) Division of Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity. This Division is directly responsible for providing seamless and comprehensive services to jobseekers and employers. For over ten years, SCSEP/Workforce 55+ has been integrated into the One-Stop Career Center System. This integration provides older workers with job placement assistance, vocational counseling, career exploration, job search instruction and, basic educational skills, occupational and skills training and a wealth of supportive services.

B. ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT IN THE STATE UNDER THE OTHER TITLES OF THE OAA. (20 CFR 641.302(H))

SCSEP has a strong working relationship with other programs authorized by the Older Americans Act (OAA) operating in New Jersey. The Program Manager works with various state and local agencies such as NJ Division of Human Services Offices of Aging and NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services to coordinate services that support not only employment, but also health, wellness, and independence for seniors. Referrals are made to all appropriate services to assist participants as needed.

As New Jersey's senior population continues to grow, LWD continues to develop strategies to keep pace with workforce needs through planning, advocacy, public awareness, and collaboration with other organizations focused on the well-being of older New Jersey workers. The state recognized the need for reliable older workers in the workforce and continues to collaborate with other key organizations to expand opportunities for employment and self-sufficiency.

C. ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ENTITIES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE SERVICES TO OLDER AMERICANS, SUCH AS COMMUNITY AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS, TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS, AND PROGRAMS FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES. (20 CFR 641.302(I))

The SCSEP program is currently working with host sites to leverage resources that will ensure successful outcomes for participants that foster individual economic self-sufficiency, and expanding training opportunities in community service activities. The state will also provide a wide range of programs and services to participants, spanning multiple divisions and departments. Funds for the Older Americans Act are leveraged with state general funds, and other programs and services located within the Division of Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity.

D. ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER LABOR MARKET AND JOB TRAINING INITIATIVES. (20 CFR 641.302(J))

SCSEP coordinates with other programs, initiatives and entities within LWD in an ongoing effort to train and increase employment opportunities for participants. Specifically, program staff will work with the Office of Research Information (ORI) to obtain labor market information which targets occupational and employment growth trends in New Jersey. Additionally, the program will work with Talent Networks, Business Services and Customized Training to strengthen and develop partnerships with the business community.

E. ACTIONS THE STATE WILL TAKE TO ENSURE THAT SCSEP IS AN ACTIVE PARTNER IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND THE STEPS THE STATE WILL TAKE TO ENCOURAGE AND IMPROVE COORDINATION WITH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. (20 CFR 641.335)

The SCSEP Program/WorkForce 55+ has been integrated in the One-Stop system for over ten years which has resulted in participants receiving training, supportive services and employment. The Program Manager and staff will work with the One-Stop system to increase:

- Participant referrals to literacy labs, training, job clubs and supportive services are via One-Stop counselors;
- Access to basic skills training via county colleges and libraries;
- Senior access to occupational training via Talent Networks;
- Employment opportunities for participants via linkages with Business Service job fairs and job orders; and
- Referrals to supportive services such as housing, medical services, and safety services, are via county Offices of Aging.

F. EFFORTS THE STATE WILL MAKE TO WORK WITH LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICES IN RURAL LOCATIONS.

LWD's SCSEP program is integrated with Business Services, Talent Networks and Customized Training, which link One-Stop programs and the business community. The Business Representatives (which are located statewide in every county) work closely with economic development partners in both urban and rural areas, Chambers of Commerce, and other business associations to promote LWD programs. Thus, Business Representative help market the SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ program to the business community in rural locations.

2. DESCRIBE THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ENGAGING EMPLOYERS TO DEVELOP AND PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PLACEMENT OF SCSEP PARTICIPANTS IN UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT. (20 CFR 641.302(E)) (ALTERNATELY, THE STATE MAY DISCUSS THIS IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN IF SUBMITTING A COMBINED PLAN.)

To increase the unsubsidized employment rate, SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ will strengthen its relationship with LWD Business Services and Talent Networks. In turn, LWD Business Services Representatives will actively solicit job openings for older workers and market the SCSEP program to employers. High demand, high growth industries that provide suitable employment for older workers will be profiled and targeted. Additionally, labor market data

will assist with outreach to key industries that will hire participants. LWD Business Services Representatives and Talent Networks will work with program staff, economic development partners, Chambers of Commerce and business associations to promote and increase unsubsidized job opportunities for participants.

3. DESCRIBE THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SERVING MINORITIES UNDER SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (C))

In New Jersey, SCSEP collaborates with One-Stop Career Centers, community-based and faith-based organizations to assist in outreach and provide services to populations that are most in need or at risk. This population includes minorities who are low-income older workers. SCSEP staff continually analyzes participant demographics to identify populations that may be under-served or under-represented. During PY 2015, 72.6 percent of those served by SCSEP were minorities, while the percent of minorities overall in New Jersey's population was 53.9 percent. The percent of SCSEP minorities served, compared to the overall minority population in New Jersey was 134.7 percent.

In an effort to provide ongoing outreach to low-income minorities, SCSEP staff will continue to partner with various community-based and faith-based organizations such as: Puerto Rican Community for Progress, Hispanic Family Centers and Family Success Centers. These organizations provide assistance with outreach to minority, older worker populations. SCSEP staff will analyze statistics from individual minority populations to identify areas that may be under-served or under-represented. Additionally, the program's marketing materials and LWD's website has been revised to encourage enrollment of minority participants.

4. LIST NEEDED COMMUNITY SERVICES AND THE EXACT PLACES WHERE THESE SERVICES ARE MOST NEEDED. SPECIFICALLY, THE PLAN MUST ADDRESS THE NEEDS AND LOCATION(S) OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS MOST IN NEED OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND THE GROUPS WORKING TO MEET THEIR NEEDS. (20 CFR 641.330)

In New Jersey statewide, seniors must deal with the high cost of living, economic insecurity and often health issues. The community services that seniors need are listed in Figure 60 below:

COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS
Quality Healthcare & Supportive Services (such as long-term care, prescription drug programs, rehabilitation services, disease prevention education)
Mental Health
Disability Awareness & Treatment
Housing Assistance
Utility Assistance Programs

COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS
Transportation
Financial Literacy
Nutritional Education
Food Banks and Farm Fresh Foods
Consumer Fraud & Protection Services (identity theft)
Domestic Abuse Awareness & Prevention Programs
Literary, Occupational and Vocational Training
Job Preparation and Readiness Skills
Computer Training

FIGURE 60

The following state agencies that oversee OAA-authorized programs collaborate to provide community programs and services to New Jersey seniors:

- Department of Health
- Department of Human Services, Office of Aging
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development

o One-Stop Career Centers

o Vocational Rehabilitation Services

o Business Services

o Talent Networks

o Customized Training

o Learning Links

5. DESCRIBE THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY TO IMPROVE SCSEP SERVICES, INCLUDING PLANNED LONG-TERM CHANGES TO THE DESIGN OF THE PROGRAM WITHIN THE STATE, AND PLANNED CHANGES IN THE USE OF SCSEP GRANTEES AND PROGRAM OPERATORS TO BETTER ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THE PROGRAM. THIS MAY INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT AS APPROPRIATE. (20 CFR 641.302(K))

SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ is successfully integrated into the One-Stop delivery system. Skilled program staff will continue to provide quality services to older workers and employers who have reported high satisfaction with SCSEP participants who have entered employment.

LWD's long-term strategy is to continue to partner with workforce development partners, the business community and senior service partners to ensure successful outcomes for older workers and employers alike.

6. DESCRIBE A STRATEGY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THE LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE FOR SCSEP PARTICIPANTS' ENTRY INTO UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT, AND TO ACHIEVE, AT A MINIMUM, THE LEVELS SPECIFIED IN OAA SECTION 513(A)(2)(E)(II). (20 CFR 641.302(F))

SCSEP will collaborate with LWD's workforce development system (Business Services, Talent Networks, Customized Training, Apprenticeship, Office of Research Information, and One-Stop Career Centers) to ensure participants have access to a wealth of programs, services, training, and employment opportunities. This will ensure the program's success in obtaining its unsubsidized employment goal.

C. LOCATION AND POPULATION SERVED, INCLUDING EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

States must:

1. DESCRIBE THE LOCALITIES AND POPULATIONS FOR WHICH PROJECTS OF THE TYPE AUTHORIZED BY TITLE V ARE MOST NEEDED. (20 CFR 641.325 (D))

Areas of Persistent Unemployment

New Jersey's population will continue to become older and racially and ethnically more diversified from 2012 to 2032. The counties/localities with the greatest need for SCSEP services are:

COUNTY	POPULATION	RATIONALE
Atlantic (Atlantic City),	275,209	Atlantic County has 46,063 age 55+ households (45.5% of all county households). It averaged 9.6% unemployment in 2015. Due to casino closings in Atlantic City, the economy has experienced job loss that impacted many older workers.
Camden (Camden City),	511,038	Camden County has 80,074 age 55+ households (42.8% of all county households).). It averaged 6.5% unemployment in 2015. Camden City within the county experiences higher unemployment.
Cape May	95,344	Cape May has 20,016 age 55+ households (56.3% of all county households). It averaged 11.3% unemployment in 2015. Seniors are negatively impacted by the large number of seasonal - rather than full-time permanent jobs - in the county, and access to public transportation is limited.

COUNTY	POPULATION	RATIONALE
Cumberland	157,389	Cumberland County has 22,584 age 55+ households (44.8% of all county households). It averaged 9.1% unemployment in 2015. This is a rural county which lags in basic literacy and ESL skills and has limited access to public transportation.
Essex	795,723	Essex has 108,459 age 55+ households (39.0% of all county households). It averaged 9.1% unemployment in 2015. Seniors are negatively impacted by the county's high cost of living. The City of Newark also has higher unemployment than the county.
Hudson	669,115	Hudson County has 78,583 age 55+ households (39.0% of all county households). It averaged 5.6% unemployment in 2015. Many Seniors are negatively impacted by the county's high cost of living and must compete for employment in a highly skilled job market.

FIGURE 61

2. LIST THE CITIES AND COUNTIES WHERE THE SCSEP PROJECT WILL TAKE PLACE. INCLUDE THE NUMBER OF SCSEP AUTHORIZED POSITIONS AND INDICATE IF AND WHERE THE POSITIONS CHANGED FROM THE PRIOR YEAR.

LWD operates the SCSEP/Workforce 55+ program in the following counties:

County Served	Authorized Positions PY 16	Authorized Positions PY 17	Difference
Atlantic	38	34	-4
Camden	13	12	-1
Cape May	10	9	-1
Cumberland	22	23	1
Essex	37	35	-2
Gloucester	12	9	-3
Hudson	54	47	-7
Middlesex	19	17	-2
Monmouth	12	12	0

County Served	Authorized Positions PY 16	Authorized Positions PY 17	Difference
Sussex	9	8	-1
Union	25	24	-1
TOTAL	251	230	-21

FIGURE 62

3. DESCRIBE ANY CURRENT SLOT IMBALANCES AND PROPOSED STEPS TO CORRECT INEQUITIES TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.

Program staff will view SPARQ weekly reports to ensure all county slots are filled. Exits due to durational limit, breaks and employment will be tracked and monitored to ensure equitable distribution is achieved enrollment. In the event over-enrollment occurs, staff will increase employer outreach efforts and work with Talent Networks and Business Service Representatives to increase training and employment opportunities for participants. Additionally, On-the-Job Experience (OJE) funding will be utilized as an incentive for employers to hire participants.

Program staff will:

- Ensure all program slots are filled by monitoring SPARQ intakes and exits;
- Educate One-Stop staff, partners, employers and the public about the value of the SCSEP program and what it can do for seniors and employers alike;
- Partner with Talent Networks, Business Services and Customized Training to increase training and employment opportunities for participants;
- Recruit host agencies that will provide diversified training and employment opportunities for participants; and
- Improve participant access to One-Stop programs and services.

4. EXPLAIN THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING AN EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF SCSEP POSITIONS WITHIN THE STATE THAT:

A. MOVES POSITIONS FROM OVER-SERVED TO UNDERSERVED LOCATIONS WITHIN THE STATE IN COMPLIANCE WITH 20 CFR 641.365.

Program staff in over-served locations will increase outreach to employers to increase unsubsidized employment opportunities for participants. Staff will collaborate with Business Services, Talent Networks and On-the-Job Training (OJT) representatives and utilize OJT and OJE to promote the hiring of SCSEP participants in an effort to serve more participants and prevent over-enrollment of slots.

Program staff in underserved locations will strengthen marketing efforts using the LWD website, CareerConnections.nj.gov and will partner with state agencies, local non-profit organizations, and community and faith-based organizations to recruit participants.

The Program Manager will work closely with SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ staff and the NJ National Grantees to ensure equitable distribution statewide. The NJ Grantee Quarterly Meetings will focus on and discuss equitable distribution to prevent counties from being over-served and underserved. Additionally, New Jersey grantees will continue to partner, share, and streamline costs by transferring slots from over-served to under-served locations.

B. EQUITABLY SERVES BOTH RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

SCSEP will continue to be available to all eligible participants statewide. The state's long term strategy is to continue to make program services and training available to both urban and rural areas of the state through partnerships with One-Stop Career Centers, libraries, county colleges, faith-based and community-based organizations.

C. SERVES INDIVIDUALS AFFORDED PRIORITY FOR SERVICE UNDER 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(A), 641.365, 641.520)

The program's selection of participants is based on the priority of service and income eligibility requirements. Pursuant to federal regulations, an eligible individual shall have priority for the community service employment and other authorized activities provided under the Older American Act Amendments of 2006, Title V - Older Americans Community Service Employment Program.

In selecting eligible individuals for SCSEP participation priority will be given to individuals who have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Are 60 years of age or older
- Have a disability
- Have limited English proficiency or low literacy skills
- Reside in a rural area
- Are veterans (or, in some cases, spouses of veterans)
- Have low employment prospects
- Have failed to find employment after using services provided through the One-Stop delivery system
- Are homeless or are at risk of homelessness

5. PROVIDE THE RATIO OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN EACH SERVICE AREA TO THE TOTAL ELIGIBLE POPULATION IN THE STATE. (20 CFR 641.325(A))

The United States Census Bureau estimates that the population of New Jersey was 8,958,013 on July 1, 2015, a 1.89% increase since the 2010 United States Census.[6] As of the 2010 census, there were 8,791,894 people residing in the state. The table below shows the percentage of citizens age 55 and older in each area compared to the number of citizens age 55 and older statewide.

County	Total Population	Age 55 and Older	Percent of Statewide Age 55 and Older
Atlantic	275,209	81,510	0.9
Camden	511,038	139,087	1.6
Cape May	95,344	38,395	0.4
Cumberland	157,389	39,881	1.0
Essex	795,723	191,925	2.1
Gloucester	290,951	80,061	0.9
Hudson	669,115	141,578	1.6
Middlesex	836,297	215,669	2.4
Monmouth	629,279	189,403	2.1
Sussex	144,909	44,267	0.5
Union	552,939	139,984	1.6

FIGURE 63

6. PROVIDE THE RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO:

Provide the relative distribution of eligible individuals who:

A. RESIDE IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS WITHIN THE STATE

New Jersey counties/cities which have, the greatest economic need, minority populations, limited English proficiency and the greatest social needs are:

- Atlantic
- Cape May
- Cumberland
- Hudson
- Essex (Newark)
- Camden (City)

B. HAVE THE GREATEST ECONOMIC NEED

See above response in Section (6) A.

C. ARE MINORITIES

See above response in Section (6) A.

D. ARE LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT.

See above response in Section (6) A.

E. HAVE THE GREATEST SOCIAL NEED. (20 CFR 641.325(B))

See above response in Section (6) A.

7. DESCRIBE THE STEPS TAKEN TO AVOID DISRUPTIONS TO SERVICE FOR PARTICIPANTS TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE, WHEN POSITIONS ARE REDISTRIBUTED, AS PROVIDED IN 20 CFR 641.365; WHEN NEW CENSUS OR OTHER RELIABLE DATA BECOMES AVAILABLE; OR WHEN THERE IS OVER-ENROLLMENT FOR ANY OTHER REASON. (20 CFR 641.325(I), 641.302(B))

Program staff will take the following steps to avoid disruption when positions are redistributed (resulting in the transfer of participants) by:

- Providing participant informational sessions in which grantees will explain the transfer process, answer questions/concerns and confirm there will be no disruption of services. Field staff who will be responsible for servicing participants will be present and will confirm their role to provide ongoing assistance.
- Participants will be scheduled individually and given an extensive program overview and fill out intake/payroll paperwork. The payroll process will be fully explained to participants to ensure there is not disruption in payroll or services. Participants will be advised that they will remain at their host sites and assured that no immediate changes will occur.
- Participant files will be exchanged among grantees to ensure the continuation of supportive services, training and goals as identified in participant IEPs. Additionally, participants will be informed of grantee supportive services, and their durational limit.

Over-enrollment is only considered when it is determined that there is a significant amount of unobligated program funds that can be moved to the participant wages and fringe category of the budget to pay for the additional enrollment of participants. The additional enrollments are distributed in accordance with Equitable Distribution and the percent of the older workers in the counties.

(D) SCSEP OPERATIONS

(1) ADMINISTRATIVE: DESCRIBE THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT AND HOW SUBPROJECTS WILL BE MANAGED, INCLUDING:

(A) IDENTIFICATION OF THE KEY STAFF, INCLUDING THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE AMOUNT OF TIME ASSIGNED TO THE SCSEP GRANT;

The SCSEP program is located within the LWD Division of Workforce Grant and Program Management, under the supervision of the Executive Director of Workforce Development and Economic Opportunities and the Chief of Employment and Training. Effective July 1, 2017, LWD's SCSEP staff now consist of the following positions which are 100% dedicated to the implementation of the grant/program:

<u>Program Manager</u>

- Responsible for the management of the SCSEP Program and coordination of older worker services throughout the One-Stop Career Center system;
- Leads in developing the state SCSEP plan and ensures coordinated collaboration of stakeholders involved in enhancing the quality of life for seniors;
- Monitors the program's budget and performance goals;
- Coordinates and reports the equitable distribution of NewJersey's 1,636 older worker positions funded by the USDOL and administered by state and national SCSEP grantees;
- Develops programmatic work plans and interprets federal regulations and the impact on older worker policy and issues;
- Oversees the activities of all program support and fieldstaff;
- Develops staff and participant training materials; and
- Reviews and analyzes laws and regulations pertinent to the SCSEP, such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Re-authorized Older Americans Act, 20 CFR Part 641, Senior Community Service Employment Program Final Rule, Economic Stimulus Legislation, H.R.1.

Clerk/Payroll

- Responsible for clerical functions and procedures involving payroll including but not limited to: participant wage requests, processing of W-4 and direct deposit forms;
- Verifies participant training and host agency hours;
- Assists with maintaining participant files; and
- Tracks program forms such as intakes, and answers program inquiries.

SPARQ Administrator

- Collects and data enters participant intakes, community service assignments, and employer information into the SCSEP data collection and reporting system (SPARQ);
- Logs and distributes mail;
- Verifies participant employment retention; and
- Assist with calculating community service hours.

Regional Employment Coordinator (Five statewide)

- Oversees and provides assistance to participant staff in assigned counties;
- Ensures appropriate procedures for timely development of IEPs, and re-certifications;
- Develops participant employment goals and action plan;
- Refers and documents participant case notes and supportive services;
- Provides recruitment and enrollment of most-in need participants;
- Develops participant IEP's, employment goals and action plan;
- Maintains participant case notes and document supportive services and referrals;
- Schedules counseling appointments for participants as needed;
- Establishes partnerships with host agency supervisors and develop quality host agency assignments;

- Facilitates skills training for participants to increase marketability for transition into unsubsidized employment;
- Maintains partnerships with various agencies for support services referrals;
- Partners with employers to develop unsubsidized employment opportunities for participants;
- Tracks participant durational limit dates and equitable distribution slots;
- Markets program to community and faith-based organizations, state partners and employers; and
- Ensures Community Service, Entered Employment, Employment Retention, Average Earnings, Service Level and Most in Need performance goals are met.

Participant Staff (20 statewide)

- Assists with completion of participant intakes on-line;
- Helps market program to participants, host agencies and employers;
- Develop partnerships with One-Stop Career Center to make appointment for participants for supportive services;
- Answers phones and schedules appointments for Regional Employment Coordinator.
- Ensures participants are serviced;
- Tracks participant IEP's, Recertification, Training and Referrals to Supportive Services and ensure participant folders contain case notes and referral activity;
- Responsible for maintaining participant file folders; and
- Contacts host agencies and employers and monitors participant performance.

Figure 64

(B) INCLUDE AN ORGANIZATION CHART DEPICTING ANY SUBGRANTEES OR LOCAL AFFILIATES IMPLEMENTING THE GRANT. INCLUDE A TABLE WITH AUTHORIZED POSITIONS FOR EACH SUBGRANTEE OR AFFILIATE, IF APPLICABLE;

LWD directly administers the SCSEP program. The program has no sub-grantees.

(C) DESCRIBE TRAINING THAT WILL BE PROVIDED TO LOCAL STAFF;

Ongoing training for all program staff is continuously provided. Staff is updated regularly regarding SCSEP program rules, regulations and performance via weekly conference calls and at staff meetings which are held at minimum quarterly. In PY 2015 all program staff received training by the USDOL vendor on regulations, policies, procedures, performance and SPARQ. Additionally, staff has been provided all program rules, regulations, policies, performance measures and SPARQ access for use and reference.

(D) DESCRIBE HOW PROJECTS WILL BE MONITORED FOR PROGRAM AND FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE, INCLUDING AUDIT PLANS; AND

The Program Manager will work with LWD Budget and Accounting to provide oversight and ensure program compliance. The Division of Budget and Accounting will be responsible for the timely submission of the program's quarterly financial reports, grant budget and

closeouts. Additionally, the Program Manager will continue to work with LWD's Internal Monitoring and Compliance Unit to conduct data validation and ensure the grant is monitored yearly.

(E) DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MANAGE ITS PROVIDERS AND HOW IT WILL TRANSFER PARTICIPANTS IF NEW PROVIDERS ARE SELECTED TO SERVE IN THE STATE.

Currently, LWD administers the SCSEP/Workforce 55+ program directly, without providers.

(2) RECRUITMENT: DESCRIBE HOW GRANTEE WILL RECRUIT AND SELECT OF PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ACHIEVED. THE ELIGIBILITY OF PARTICIPANTS IS DESCRIBED UNDER 20 CFR 641.500 AND 641.525.

SCSEP/Workforce 55+ program staff is located in the One-Stop Career Centers work to recruit and select participants in accordance with priority of service. Additionally, program staff partner with community and faith-based organizations to recruit participants.

In selecting eligible individuals for SCSEP participation priority will be given to individuals who have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Are 60 years of age or older
- Have a disability
- Have limited English proficiency or low literacy skills
- Reside in a rural area
- Are veterans (or, in some cases, spouses of veterans)
- Have low employment prospects
- Have failed to find employment after using services provided through the One-Stop delivery system
- Are homeless or are at risk of homelessness

Recruitment efforts will be ongoing in order to maintain full enrollment throughout the year. New Jersey promotes the SCSEP program with participant recruitment posters and pamphlets, senior citizen newsletters, radio and television interviews, announcements and presentations.

Referrals in the priority of service categories will be accomplished through intensified outreach focused on the targeted populations. SCSEP/Workforce 55+ staff will reach out to One-Stop Career Center staff, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the State Veterans Program, county welfare agencies, local offices on aging and other community and faith-based organizations to recruit participants.

(3) INCOME ELIGIBILITY: DESCRIBE HOW PARTICIPANT INCOME WILL BE RECERTIFIED EACH YEAR, INCLUDING WHERE ELIGIBILITY RECORDS WILL BE MAINTAINED.

All SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ participant income will be recertified annually in March. Participants are notified 30 days prior to the date of recertification. A recertification package will be completed by the Regional Employment Coordinate with proof of income documentation. The participant is offered an annual physical assessment if eligible to continue on the program. All paperwork will be reviewed and approved by Regional Employment Coordinators and central staff. Eligibility records and documents will be maintained at local offices and in the central office in Trenton.

(4) ORIENTATION: DESCRIBE THE ORIENTATION PROCEDURES FOR:

(A) PARTICIPANTS

The initial orientation is provided to the participant at the time of enrollment by the Regional Employment Coordinators. At the time of orientation, the participant is provided with a Participant Orientation Package. Included in this package is the *Terms of Enrollment* form, which the participant signs. The *Terms of Enrollment* states that the participant received a verbal orientation along with the Orientation Package. The orientation covers the following:

- SCSEP rules and regulations, termination policy, and grievance policy
- SCSEP/Workforce 55+ Participant Bill of Rights and attendance policy
- NJ Division Civil Rights, Lipman Bill, and Hatch Act
- Income eligibility, and *Terms of Enrollment*

(B) HOST AGENCIES

The initial orientation is provided to the Host Site at the time of enrollment by the Regional Employment Coordinator. At the time of orientation, the Host Site is provided with a Host Agency Orientation Package. Included in this package is the *Terms of Enrollment* form, which the Host Site also signs as a part of the Letter of Agreement. The Orientation Package includes the following:

- Host Agency roles and responsibilities
- SCSEP rules and regulations, termination policy, and grievance policy
- SCSEP/Workforce 55+ Participant Bill of Rights and attendance policy
- NJ Division Civil Rights, Lipman Bill, and Hatch Act
- Income eligibility, and *Terms of Enrollment*

(5) DURATION LIMITS: DESCRIBE ANY POLICY FOR MAXIMUM DURATION OF ENROLLMENT OR MAXIMUM TIME IN COMMUNITY SERVICE AND PROVIDE A COPY OF THE CURRENT DURATION LIMIT POLICY.

LWD strictly adheres to the 48-month durational limit policy and does not grant exceptions to extend the timeframe for participation in the SCSEP/Workforce 55+ program. The durational limit policy is reviewed with participants during orientation. Prior to reaching durational limit, participants are notified in advance, one year, 90-days, 60-days and 30-days prior to exiting the program. Throughout a participant's enrollment in the program, Regional Employment Coordinators provide ongoing job placement assistance in conjunction with the One-Stop Career Center. Additionally, participants within one year of their durational limit receive transitional services, including employment counseling, job search assistance, referrals to supportive services such as food banks, meals-on-wheels, medical, housing, and social services.

(6) ASSESSMENTS: DESCRIBE THE PROCEDURES FOR ASSESSING JOB APTITUDES, JOB READINESS, AND JOB PREFERENCES OF PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO TRANSITION INTO UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT. ALSO DESCRIBE HOW THE ASSESSMENT WILL BE USED TO DEVELOP THE PARTICIPANT'S INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYMENT PLAN (IEP).

An Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is completed between the participant and Regional Employment Coordinator. As part of the IEP process, the Coordinator identifies the participant's job aptitudes, job preferences, job readiness and potential for transition into unsubsidized employment. The IEP must include: an appropriate employment goal; objectives with timeline; barriers; and be jointly agreed upon with the participant. The IEP is developed with the participant during the first 30 days of enrollment in the program and annually thereafter. IEPs are frequently reviewed and updated via case notes.

The IEP includes both short-term and long-term goals with action steps and timelines. The IEP uses information which identifies:

- Participant goals
- Barriers
- Training needs
- Specialized skill development
- Education needs
- Supportive service needs

In an effort to transition participants into unsubsidized employment, participants are matched with appropriate host agency assignments for on-the-job training and work experience.

(7) COMMUNITY SERVICE ASSIGNMENTS: DESCRIBE HOW THE PARTICIPANT WILL BE ASSIGNED TO COMMUNITY SERVICE INCLUDING:

(A) THE TYPES OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITY THAT WILL BE EMPHASIZED AND HOW THEY WERE CHOSEN; METHODS USED TO MATCH PARTICIPANTS WITH COMMUNITY SERVICE TRAINING;

Regional Employment Coordinators interview applicants at the time of enrollment to determine the most suitable Host Site that will enhance the participant's skills, interests and abilities. Participants are assigned to community service based on their initial assessment and IEP. Their employment interests and goals are evaluated during the initial enrollment process. Participants are reviewed at least once annually and may be rotated to another host agency, classroom based training that may meet their needs.

The Coordinator will monitor the host site and participant to ensure training is continually provided which enhances the participant's skills, goals and increase their opportunities to obtain unsubsidized employment.

(B) THE EXTENT TO WHICH PARTICIPANTS WILL BE PLACED IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROJECT ITSELF;

In PY 2015, the program started utilizing participants as staffers to assist with recruitment and enrollment activities. Participant staffers will work no more than 25 hours a week. Regional Employment Coordinators will ensure participant staffer receive on-the-job and classroom training as indicated in their IEP and meet their identified goals.

(C) THE TYPES OF HOST AGENCIES USED AND THE PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA FOR SELECTING THE ASSIGNMENTS;

Only non-profit 501(c)3 agencies and federal, state and local government employers are used for Host Sites. Types of host agencies utilized by the program include:

- Government agencies (Courts, One-Stops, Housing Authorities)
- Libraries
- Food/Nutrition Programs (Meals on Wheels)
- Schools and Daycare providers
- Social Service agencies (Goodwill)
- Faith-Based Organizations (Catholic Charities)
- Community-Based Organizations (Puerto Rican Action Committee - PRAC)

The host site provides the SCSEP/Workforce 55+ program with the job description for the CSA, which is matched with participant's job skills and employment goals. More important, the participant's IEP is vital and is reviewed frequently to ensure the CSA is able to assist the participant in increasing their skills and achieving their employment goals.

(D) THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS IN A PARTICIPANT'S TRAINING WEEK;

Participants train on average 15 - 20 hours weekly.

(E) THE FRINGE BENEFITS OFFERED (IF ANY); AND

Participants are offered an annual Physician's Exam. All efforts are made by program staff to promote the physical exam fringe benefit. If the participant declines, they are required to sign an exception documenting their refusal. Participants are offered this benefit at the time of enrollment and at recertification.

(F) PROCEDURES FOR ENSURING ADEQUATE SUPERVISION.

As per the program's CSA Agreement, all host sites are required to have a Supervisor who will oversee the participant at their assigned work site. Regional Employment Coordinators frequently visit host sites and conduct safety monitoring visits to ensure compliance. Additionally, Host Site Supervisors are required to electronically sign participant timesheets verifying their hours of work.

(8) TRAINING: DESCRIBE THE TRAINING THAT WILL BE PROVIDED DURING COMMUNITY SERVICE ASSIGNMENTS AND ANY OTHER TYPES OF TRAINING PROVIDED, INCLUDING LINKAGES WITH LOCAL ONE-STOP CENTERS, AND REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP.

Host Agency Supervisors are responsible for training participants assigned to their agency. All training is designed to increase participant opportunities to achieve unsubsidized employment. Regional Employment Coordinators monitor and determine if the training site is providing suitable training and safe working conditions as outlined in the Host Agency Agreement.

Participants via the One-Stop Career Centers are able to participate in:

- Adult Literacy Programs
- ESL Training Programs
- Effective job search and readiness workshops
- Interviewing techniques workshops
- Job Fairs/Positive Recruitments

- Job Clubs

The USDOL Office of Apprenticeship is responsible for all Registered Apprenticeships in New Jersey. LWD works closely with USDOL to support pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship program expansion. Many of the local Workforce Development Boards and One-Stop Career Centers work with these programs to assist in identifying qualified candidates. For some programs, the local areas have become part of the recruitment process, as with the New Jersey Locals of the Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters (NRCC) Sisters in the Brotherhood (SIB) program. New Jersey will seek to expand these successful models into other occupational areas by continuing to build high quality partnerships that meet the needs of employers in growth industries.

The SETC also will explore avenues to strengthen the concepts that created the New Jersey Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education (NJ PLACE) initiative, awarding college credit to Registered Apprenticeship programs, as well as programs providing certificates, and/or credentials. Providing academic credit to these types of programs will potentially increase the number of New Jersey residents who obtain an advanced degree, increase their earning potential and provide broader career pathway opportunities.

(9) SUPPORTIVE SERVICES: DESCRIBE THE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES THAT WILL BE OFFERED TO HELP PARTICIPANTS OBTAIN AND RETAIN AN UNSUBSIDIZED JOB, INCLUDING TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE (IF APPLICABLE).

In addition to the services noted above, the One-Stop Career Centers will offer the following to SCSEP/Workforce 55+ participants:

- Employment Counseling;
- Literacy and ESL;
- Vocational/Occupational training;
- Transportation Assistance;
- Referrals for supportive services;
- Job Search and Job Coaching Assistance;
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services; and
- Access to jobs via:
    - Marketing of program and participants to employer community;
    - OnRamp, the state's job board, accessible at CareerConnections.nj.gov, with over 16,000 employer openings;
    - Virtual Job Fairs; and
    - Targeted Job Fairs for Older Workers.
- Participants are informed of local transportation options, including free or reduced fare options that are offered by their counties. Every effort will be made to obtain job-related transportation services for the participants from local resources at no cost to the program.

(10) TERMINATION: DESCRIBE PROCEDURES FOR TERMINATING A PARTICIPANT, INCLUDING IEP TERMINATIONS. PLEASE PROVIDE A COPY OF THE CURRENT TERMINATION PROCEDURES.

Terminations can be made in the following instances:

- For Cause

- Income eligibility requirements no longer met at time of Recertification
- IEP-related

For-cause terminations are made when a participant violates the rules and policies of the program as outlined in the Termination Policy. This policy is described in the Participant Orientation Package. Prior to participants reaching the termination stage they must receive a verbal warning, a written warning and a written warning follow-up detailing the outcome. All decisions to terminate a participant for cause are at the discretion of the Program Manager.

If the decision to terminate a participant for cause is reached, the participant is given a 30-day notice in writing prior to being exited from the program. The Grievance Procedure and Grievance Form are included in the 30-day Termination Letter. Exceptions to the 30-day notice are instances where a participant commits a violation such as violence, gross misconduct, larceny or possession of drugs. These acts would result in immediate termination.

If at the time of their annual recertification a participant's income exceeds the guidelines, the participant will be exited from the program after a written 30-day notice is given.

The SCSEP/Workforce 55+ Program will use IEP-related terminations as a last option. Removal from the program occurs only after all options have been exhausted and the participant has been provided written notice.

Written grievance procedures for complaint resolution for applicants are included in the Orientation Package and the following is verbally explained at Orientation:

- Participants are informed of their rights;
- All terminations are subject to the grievance policy;
- Documentation is kept on file; and
- Participants are informed of their right to appeal.

(11) COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCES: DESCRIBE THE PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING AND RESOLVING COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES RELATED TO PROGRAM TERMINATION. PLEASE PROVIDE A COPY OF THE CURRENT COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE POLICIES.

If the decision to terminate a participant for cause is reached, the participant is given a 30-day notice in writing prior to being exited from the program. The Grievance Procedure and Grievance Form are included in the 30-day Termination Letter. Exceptions to the 30-day notice are instances where a participant commits a violation such as violence, gross misconduct, larceny or possession of drugs. These acts would result in immediate termination.

Written grievance procedures for complaint resolution for applicants are included in the Orientation Package and verbally explained at Orientation at which time:

- Participants are informed of their rights;
- All terminations are subject to the grievance policy;
- Documentation is kept on file; and
- Participants are informed of their right to appeal.

The SCSEP/WorkForce 55+ Program has established policies and procedures for participants. These policies are administered uniformly. Each participant is provided with a copy of the approved grievance procedures during the initial orientation. Participants terminated due to administrative adverse action, i.e. IEP related termination, are provided with a copy of the approved grievance procedures at the time of termination.

The grievance procedure consists of an informal and formal hearing process. To initiate the informal grievance process, the participant must notify the Regional Employment Coordinator. The Coordinators must meet informally with the participant and CSA Supervisor within five working days of the reported grievance to attempt to reach a resolution. If an acceptable solution is not reached, the participant must contact the Regional Employment Coordinator Supervisor or Program Manager immediately. The Regional Employment Coordinator Supervisor and/or Program Manager will attempt to resolve the problem within twenty working days after review. If dissatisfied with the recommended resolution, the participant must file a written appeal to the Program Manager within five working days of the hearing.

The Program Manager must hold a hearing to make a decision within five working days of the receipt of the appeal. If dissatisfied with the Program Manager's decision, the participant must file a written appeal to the Assistant Commissioner, LWD, through the Director, Division of Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity within five working days after the second decision. The Hearing Officer appointed by the Assistant Commissioner must conduct a hearing within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal. The Hearing Officer shall render a decision within 10 working days of the hearing.

(12) MAXIMIZING ENROLLMENT: DESCRIBE PROCEDURES FOR FULLY ENROLLING ALL AVAILABLE SLOTS, INCLUDING OVER ENROLLING PARTICIPANTS, AND HOW OVER-ENROLLMENTS WILL BE BALANCED WITH EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS.

Program staff are stationed at One-Stop Career Centers and partner with community-based, and faith-based organizations to recruit participants. Additionally, the Program Manager and Field Supervisor monitor slots and participant durational limits (via SPARQ QPR reports) to ensure equitable distribution is achieved and slots are filled.

Over enrollment is only considered when it is determined that there is a significant amount of unobligated program funds that can be moved to the participant wages and fringe category of the budget to pay for the additional enrollment of participants. The additional enrollments are distributed in accordance with Equitable Distribution and the percent of the older workers in the counties.

(13) PERFORMANCE: INCLUDE A PROPOSED LEVEL FOR EACH PERFORMANCE MEASURE FOR EACH OF THE PROGRAM YEARS COVERED BY THE PLAN. WHILE THE PLAN IS UNDER REVIEW, THE STATE WILL NEGOTIATE WITH THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION TO SET THE APPROPRIATE LEVELS FOR THE NEXT YEAR. THE STATE MAY ALSO NEGOTIATE PERFORMANCE LEVELS IN A SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATION. AT A MINIMUM, STATES MUST IDENTIFY THE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS REQUIRED UNDER THE SCSEP FINAL RULE PUBLISHED ON SEPTEMBER 1, 2010, AND, FOR EACH INDICATOR, THE STATE MUST DEVELOP AN OBJECTIVE AND QUANTIFIABLE PERFORMANCE GOAL FOR THE NEXT YEAR. THE PERFORMANCE MEASURES INCLUDE:

(A) ENTERED EMPLOYMENT,

(B) EMPLOYMENT RETENTION,

(C) AVERAGE EARNINGS,

(D) SERVICE LEVEL,

(E) SERVICE TO MOST-IN-NEED, AND

(F) COMMUNITY SERVICE

QUANTIFIABLE PERFORMANCE GOALS	.	.
QUANTIFIABLE GOAL	PY 2017 PERFORMANCE	PROPOSED GOAL PY 2016 - PY 2020
Entered Employment	47.4%	45.0%
Employment Retention	80.0%	75.0%
Average Earnings	$8,755	$7,500
Service Level	158.6%	160.0%
Community Service	80.0%	80.0%
Most In Need	2.69	2.55

Figure 65

(14) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS: DESCRIBE ANY REQUEST FOR AN INCREASE IN ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS CONSISTENT WITH SECTION 502(C)(3) OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT.

In an effort to increase training and employment opportunities for participants, LWD will request additional administrative funding on an as-needed basis.

SCSEP ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that where SCSEP is included in the Combined Workforce Plan, the State has established a written policy and procedure to obtain advice and recommendations on the State Plan from:

Representatives of the State and area agencies on aging; Yes

State and local boards under WIOA; Yes

Public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations providing employment services, including each grantee operating a SCSEP project within the State, except as provided under section 506(a)(3) of OAA and 20 CFR 641.320(b); Yes

Social service organizations providing services to older individuals; Yes

Grantees under Title III of OAA; Yes

Affected Communities; Yes

Unemployed older individuals; Yes

Community-based organizations serving older individuals; Yes

Business organizations; and Yes

Labor organizations. Yes

STATE COMMENTS ON SCSEP ASSURANCES

REINTEGRATION OF EX-OFFENDERS PROGRAM (REXO)

NOTE: PLEASE NOTE THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR HAS UPDATED THE NAME OF THE REXO PROGRAM. THIS PROGRAM IS NOW THE REENTRY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM (REO).

There are no program-specific state planning requirements for RExO. If the state includes RExO in a Combined State Plan, the state must incorporate RExO in its responses to the common planning elements in sections II, III, IV, and V WIOA State Plan requirements instrument.

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	71.90	73.30	71.90	74.00
Dislocated Workers	75.20	77.00	75.20	77.50
Youth	48.70	65.00	48.70	66.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	49.00	50.00	49.00	55.00
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	71.20	71.20	71.20	72.00
Dislocated Workers	74.10	74.10	74.10	75.00
Youth	34.80	41.00	34.80	50.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	49.00	55.00	49.00	56.00
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	5,300.00	5,300.00	5,300.00	5,500.00
Dislocated Workers	6,900.00	6,900.00	6,900.00	7,000.00

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	5,000.00	5,200.00	5,000.00	5,300.00
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	58.70	58.70	58.70	59.00
Dislocated Workers	57.00	63.50	57.00	64.00
Youth	59.00	64.00	59.00	65.00
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	50.00	51.00	51.00	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

User remarks on Table 7

ENDNOTES

[i] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, 2014 Annual Averages on March 2015 Benchmark, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[ii] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, May 2015 Estimates, Prepared by NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information

[iii] New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages, 2014 Annual Averages, NJLWD, Division of Workforce, Research & Analytics, Bureau of Labor Market Information, December 2015.

[iv] Percentage totals are the sum of all mutually exclusive component industries. Therefore, the sum of individual industry cluster annual averages will not equal the total cluster industries annual averages. In addition, the sum of individual industry cluster percentages of totals will not equal the percentage of total.

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

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

[vii] Burning Glass Technologies Inc., Labor Insight, Prepared by New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, December 2015

[viii] The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development through its agreement with Burning Glass technologies is able to provide labor market information aggregated from online employer job listings. This data provides valuable insight regarding current demand for characteristics such as knowledge, skills and abilities, sought by employers.

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

[x] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Selected Economic Characteristics*

[xi] NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Research and Information, Economic and Demographic Research, March 15, 2016

[xii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Sex by Age by Employment Status for the Population 16 years and over*

[xiii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Sex by Age by Employment Status for the Population 16 years and over*

[xiv] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Age by Veteran Status by Employment Status for the Civilian Population 18 to 64 years*

[xv] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Employment Status by Disability Status*

[xvi] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Work Experience by Disability Status*

[xvii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months of Individuals by Sex by Employment Status*

[xviii] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Selected Social Characteristics in the United States*

[xix] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Educational Attainment and Employment Status by Language Spoken at Home for the Population 25 Years and Over*

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

[xxi] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-year estimates, *Educational Attainment by Employment Status for the Population 25 To 64 Years*

[xxii] Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc., Analyst, 2015

[xxiii] While Annual Openings are reported for the 2-digit SOC groups, Most Required Education Level represents the minimum education level required for the highest number of annual openings of the 5-digit SOC groups that fall within each 2-digit group. Percent reports the portion of openings in this occupations with the most common educational requirement.

[xxiv] A full explanation and definitions of these additional performance measures are included in Section III.(b)(4) of this plan.

[xxv] SETC, *Investing in New Jersey's Adult Learners - Needs Analysis and Recommendations Regarding the State of Adult Literacy Education in New Jersey*, January 2013.

APPENDIX 1: PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR CORE PROGRAMS AND NJ ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

New Jersey Department of Labor of Workforce Development (LWD)

Assumptions in Developing Appendix 1 for PY16 and PY17 / Modification 2018 - for PY18 and PY19

Many key concepts associated with performance measurement and their relation to workforce program operations are still in draft form. LWD reserves the right to revisit and amend all proposed targets contained in this appendix that may be inconsistent with final regulations/guidance provided by the Departments of Education and Labor <u>or</u> that prove

unattainable with the proposed alignment of resources and our ability to collect the necessary data.

Establishing PY16 and PY17 performance targets are challenging as the transition from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) introduces substantial programmatic and technical changes which will require evaluation, testing, and modification.

I. Co-Enrollment of WIOA Title I and Title III Participants

New Jersey will co-enroll WIOA Title I and Title III (Wagner-Peyser) participants in both programs, as appropriate, based on individual customer assessment results. The appropriate staff will utilize the common NJ Intake and Initial Assessment Form to ensure a consistent intake process statewide.

LWD has also initiated a pilot co-enrollment of RESEA participants who receive 80 percent or higher exhaustion probability score into the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program. The impact of this co-enrollment is being evaluated. New Jersey also will continue its co-enrollment of Trade Act eligible participants with the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program.

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

APPENDIX 1: PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR CORE PROGRAMS - PY 2016 AND 2017

	PY2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Adults	57%	73.3%	58%	73.3%
Dislocated Workers	57%	77.0%	58%	77.0%
Youth*	62%	68.6%	63%	69.0%
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	57%	47.8%	58%	48.8%
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)				
Adults	53%	66.3%	54%	66.3%

	PY2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Dislocated Workers	53%	74.0%	54%	74.0%
Youth*	60%	40.2%	61%	41.0%
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	53%	48.2%	54%	49.2%
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Adults	$5,700	$5,250	$5,750	$5,250
Dislocated Workers	$7,800	$6,876	$7,850	$6,876
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	$7,400	$4,834	$7,450	$4,882
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

*Measure for youth includes percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment

APPENDIX 1: PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR CORE PROGRAMS - PY 2016 AND 2017 (CONTINUED)

	PY2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Credential Attainment Rate				
Adults	50%	56.3%	51%	57.3%
Dislocated Workers	50%	55.9%	51%	56.4%
Youth	50%	72.8%	51%	73.5%
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

	PY2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Wagner-Peyser	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skill Gains				
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	46%	46%	47%	47%
Wagner-Peyser	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers				
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Baseline: An indicator for which States will not propose an expected level of performance in the plan submission and will not come to agreement with the Departments on adjusted levels of performance.

APPENDIX 1: PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR CORE PROGRAMS - PY 2018 AND 2019

.	PY2018 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2018 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY2019 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2019 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level

.	PY2018 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2018 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY2019 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2019 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	.	.	.	.
Adults	71.90%	TBD	71.90%	TBD
Dislocated Workers	75.20%	TBD	75.20%	TBD
Youth	48.70%	TBD	48.70%	TBD
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	49.00%	TBD	49.00%	TBD
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	.	.	.	.
Adults	71.20%	TBD	71.20%	TBD
Dislocated Workers	74.10%	TBD	74.10%	TBD
Youth	34.80%	TBD	34.80%	TBD
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	49.00%	TBD	49.00%	TBD
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	.	.	.	.
Adults	$5,300	TBD	$5,300	TBD
Dislocated Workers	$6,900	TBD	$6,900	TBD
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	$5,000	TBD	$5,000	TBD
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Baseline: An indicator for which States will not propose an expected level of performance in the plan submission and will not come to agreement with the Departments on adjusted levels of performance.

APPENDIX 1: PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR CORE PROGRAMS - PY 2018 AND 2019 (CONTINUED)

.	PY2018 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2018 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY2019 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY2019 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Credential Attainment Rate	.	.	.	.
Adults	58.70%	TBD	58.70%	TBD
Dislocated Workers	57.00%	TBD	57.00%	TBD
Youth	59.00%	TBD	59.00%	TBD
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skill Gains	.	.	.	.
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	50%	TBD	51%	TBD
Wagner-Peyser	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	.	.	.	.
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Baseline: An indicator for which States will not propose an expected level of performance in the plan submission and will not come to agreement with the Departments on adjusted levels of performance.

Additional Indicators of Performance:

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

744. Number of program participants served by the program
745. Number of program participants exited from the program
746. Percentage of program participants served with barriers to employment as follows:
    . Disability
    a. Ex-offender
    b. No high school diploma
    c. Previously or currently in foster care
    d. Homeless
    e. Limited English Proficiency or Low Level Literacy
    f. Long-Term Unemployed (continuously unemployed for at least 12 consecutive months)
    g. Public Assistance customer

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

Measures for WIOA Title I ONLY

5. Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification

The State will evaluate the WDB's local area achievement based on its ability to meet all WDB certification requirements.

6. Number of High Quality Partnerships established:

High Quality Partnerships are those workforce and education efforts which are employer-driven and have developed a clearly defined mission and vision statement, with defined roles, responsibilities and impact measures for all partners. All programs will integrate the use of career pathways, and provide both interim process measures as well as outcome measures, which will be particularly focused on industry valued credentials, employability skills, and experiential learning.

7. Regional Coordination

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

APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY - 2016

Economic Development	*Disposition*
1. In my quick review of this document, I don't see mention of the key role the transportation infrastructure plays to New Jersey's economy and workforce. In order to maintain a healthy economy, especially one this densely populated and regional, our transportation network (including highways, bridges, tunnels and public transit) must remain healthy, properly maintained and properly funded. If the transportation network is not properly maintained and funded, the state's economy and workforce will suffer. Many job seekers need a cost effective public transportation system to be able to get to jobs. Also public transportation plays important role for the 17% of NJ residents who work out of state, which a large portion traveling through and use Hudson County as a gateway to get to their jobs in NYC. (N010)	For Consideration; Transportation issues will be addressed through the WIOA regional planning process.
2. Don't forget that one size doesn't fit all when developing policies. Areas such as Cape May County have limited opportunities for full time year round employment. Cape May County statistically has had the highest unemployment in the State. The implementation of the Combined State Plan should be able to address the support of economic opportunities and growth in areas as small as the population in Cape May County. (N018)	For Consideration; Regional economic development issues will be addressed through the WIOA regional planning process.

Key Industries	*Disposition*
1. • **Since Healthcare is an industry specific sector, it may be beneficial to separate it out from Education when reporting metrics.** • **Replace "Writing" with "collaboration" as one of key skills for healthcare industry.** • **Information provided on healthcare industry that for many RN positions, particularly at acute care facilities, a Bachelors (BSN) is now needed, not an Associates. Recommendation that BSN be included as educational expectation for RN position. (N002)**	For Future Consideration Section 2: Strategic Planning Elements

APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY - 2016 (CONTINUED)

Talent Development	*Disposition*
1. ○ **<u>Credential</u>: Microsoft Office Specialist Certification/ <u>Issuing Agency:</u> Microsoft/ <u>Industry:</u> Technology** ○ **<u>Credential:</u> Certified Patient Care Technician (CPCT) /<u>Issuing Agency:</u> National Certification Career Association/<u>Industry:</u> Health Care (N024)**	Referred to Credential Review Board

APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY - 2016 (CONTINUED)

Partner Considerations	*Disposition*
1. While the draft plan includes several mentions of area vocational-technical schools and career and technical education high schools as partners in the workforce development system, it does not include county vocational-technical schools as part of the high-quality employer-driven partnerships that will be central to the various WIOA initiatives. We recommend including county vocational schools (or a generic reference to area vocational/technical education providers) as potential partners in the provision of high quality employer driven partnerships, as career and technical education programs already provided by county vocational-technical schools already include the desired partnerships with employers and are a model for replication. (N015)	We recognize the important role that these organizations fulfill and will incorporate this into the Plan, implementation and process, as appropriate.

Partner Considerations	*Disposition*
2. The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board appreciates this opportunity to provide Public Comment to the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission. We also appreciate the work of the Board and its staff in responding to changes in the local workforce delivery system necessitated by passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, or WIOA. Our comments today are focused on the federal requirement for competitive selection of a One Stop Career Training Services Operator at the local level. We understand this requirement has been the subject of much discussion. Our request, and primary concern, is that Greater Raritan, and other Local Areas throughout the State, be provided adequate time to engage in a competitive selection process for Career Training Services procurement. We know that the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission and its staff have been working on local level Competitive Selection of One Stop Operators, and we look forward to specific direction, through adoption of policy, from the Commission. The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board is chartered by the Boards of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Hunterdon and the County of Somerset, NJ. Under the Joint Agreement between the two Freeholder Boards, Greater Raritan is subject to public procurement processes. These processes require us to develop a Scope of Work, issue a Request for Proposals, receive, review and score proposals, secure approval of the selection, and then proceed to contract. In summary, for a project of this magnitude, and assuming all goes smoothly, the Request for Proposals process at our local level is easily a 6 month endeavor. This assumes of course that legitimate responses to the Request for Proposals are received and that no further changes to the Scope of Work and re-issuance are necessary to achieve responsive proposals. While there may seem now to be adequate time to meet a July 1, 2017 implementation deadline for competitive selection of a One Stop Career Training Service Operator, that time is rapidly being diminished. We have prepared and submitted a formal statement to accompany our remarks, and greatly appreciate the Commission's consideration of our comments. <u>Statement Continued for Submission as Part of the Official Record</u> Procurement of a One Stop Career Training Services Operator will require the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board to provide policy direction to staff and to review, debate, discuss, and approve the Scope of Work contemplated. Once our Scope of Work is in place, we will need to consult with our Fiscal Agent to begin the public procurement process. Upon Public Notice of our Request for Proposals we will need to allow adequate time for potential Respondents to review our request. This time frame will need to include a questions and answers period. Answers to any questions must be issued to all parties through an Addendum to the original Scope of Work. Upon receipt of responses to our Request a selection team will need to score each Proposal and Greater Raritan will need to approve selection prior to a contract being approved by the Freeholders. Our Fiscal Agent, and thus the Freeholder Board, will then need to approve the contract. We will then finally be in a position to execute an agreement with the selected party. It is reasonable to	Addressed in Section 3: Operational Planning Elements. We recognize the importance of the time element in this process.

Partner Considerations	*Disposition*
3. Page 166 states that: New Jersey's agricultural employers hire more foreign workers than local workers…..This is incorrect or just the exact opposite. For instance, during the 2016 season a number of 39 (only 39) employers utilized the Temporarily Agricultural Alien Labor Certification program; namely the H-2A Program- and the number of petitions is 905 (905 workers or job openings to hire domestic workers). This represents the highest number of H-2A employer and worker petition ever in the history of New Jersey. (N028)	Updated in Section 6: Program Specific Requirements for Core Programs
4. Attached please find comments from the NJ Library Association regarding the state plan. (separate attachment) (N032)	We recognize the important roles of libraries in providing critical services in New Jersey, as discussed in the Plan, and will continue to explore opportunities for additional partnerships with libraries.
5. Please see attached document for the NJ Senior Public Colleges and Universities comments. (separate attachment) (N033)	We recognize the important role that these organizations fulfill and will incorporate this into the Plan, implementation and process, as appropriate.

APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY - 2016 (CONTINUED)

Individuals with Barriers to Employment	*Disposition*
1. Please see attached document for the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities comments. (separate attachment) (N011)	These comments will be referred to DVRS and CBVI for consideration and consultation with the SRCs, as appropriate.

Individuals with Barriers to Employment	*Disposition*
2. Concerns include: ○ **My programs, like many, serves a populations of over 60% ESOL & EL-Civics clients with most of the remaining students being ABE (mostly 4th to 6th grade level)** ○ **The state as a whole serves 95% low level learners (per LACES)** ○ **Within the last year the state went from serving close to 30 thousand to almost 20 thousand Tittle II participants (per LACES)** ○ **With all the changes and requirements in WIOA we are risking disservice to most of our population since they are low level and cannot attain a High School Diploma within a fiscal year and much less a recognized certification** ○ **Undocumented participants cannot obtain a state certification and cannot be served at the One Stop Centers, but they are recognized as clients under Title II** ○ **Most students need many hours of training to be taking from a zero grade level to a High School Diploma, in average 1 1/2 years** ○ **We work with adults and there are many barriers that preclude them from dedicating their time to education (work schedule, childcare, economic issues, support system, etc.) and cannot commit in many cases to even 10 weeks of training. (on average 50% of the students stop before the end of each session)** ○ **Most of the high school dropout students that get to our programs have behavioral issues that couldn't be addressed in the school system and certainly cannot be address in our programs due to lack of funds** ○ **Many of our ESOL & EL-Civics clients are not with us to obtain a HSD or certification, they already have credentials from their countries** ○ **Some of our clients are with us just to obtain their citizenship and other very important goals that do not align with WIOA** **As a state, we need to guarantee equal opportunity to a future for all the population and rather than limit or reduce the number of students served within the Title II programs, we have to increase them. I ask that you consider the WIOA regulations and our state needs to find the way to stop reducing the services provided to our population. The Department of Labor has created many committees to develop and implement best practices and there are some initiatives for collaboration with us the providers. We should continue developing collaborative partnerships in order to better serve our clients while expanding our services. About 10% of the population in New Jersey does not have a High School Diploma. (N012)**	These comments will be referred to the Title II Program for consideration and consultation with SCALES, as appropriate.

Individuals with Barriers to Employment	*Disposition*
3. We here at RespectAbility wanted to send you our thoughts, ideas, and comments on your State Plan. Even once your State Plan has been completely approved by DOL, there will be continuing challenges and opportunities to improve outcomes for your state's citizens with disabilities. (separate attachment) (N013)	These comments will be referred to DVRS and CBVI for consideration and consultation with the SRCs, as appropriate.
4. In briefly reviewing the document, I was pleased to see the Adult Literacy and Community Library Pilot Program mentioned. Many of our libraries are actively involved in providing adult literacy and ESL classes. For many these classes are a critical first step in acquiring the basic literacy skills which provide the foundation for any employment opportunity. We anticipate the need for this program to grow. Many proposals regarding obtaining citizenship status for those currently living in the United States would require that the individual learn English. Providing those opportunities should be a priority of our State. (N017)	These comments will be referred to the Title II Program for consideration and consultation with SCALES, as appropriate.

APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY - 2016 (CONTINUED)

Individuals with Barriers to Employment (continued)	*Disposition*

Individuals with Barriers to Employment (continued)	*Disposition*
5. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Combined State Plan for WIOA. I wish that the notification for comments had arrived sooner than this morning as my comments on the 375 page document would be more thoughtful and comprehensive. While I applaud a number of areas in the plan that look to improve workforce development outcomes for NJ residents, I have specific concerns for the critical role that community based organizations play as workforce development partners, specifically for people with disabilities. I am the President and CEO of Abilities Solutions (formerly Abilities Center of Southern NJ, Inc.) which has been providing workforce development under an Employment First philosophy since 1963. I am concerned that long serving and successful CBOs will have a diminished role based on the following: **o Focus on industry valued credential or degree** **o Eligible Training Provider List** **o Consumer Report Card** **o Performance Data** **Many, if not most, of the individuals served by CBOs like Abilities, do not enter the labor market with a credential, nor it is reasonable to expect that they will. There are exceptions, yes, but I am concerned about the majority. To expect that 50-80% of these individuals will be in such programs within a 5 year period is not reasonable. Much of the work done by CBOs focus on "Employability" Skills - described within the plan as those soft skills of career readiness and work habit development. Employability Skills are expected to be part of the curricula for the industry valued training programs. While that is important, these soft skill programs often stand alone and make the difference of employment or unemployment for a person with a disability. There is no industry credential for these soft skills. Since referrals and contracts for service will likely be made based on performance data generated by the consumer report card for the Eligible Training Provider List, it is imperative that the metrics used not be "one size fits all". The critical soft skills training that has been done for decades for persons with disabilities and resulted in thousands of job placements cannot be allowed to be lost in this process. It needs to be recognized and applauded and not re-invented. Metrics that will be used to measure outcomes and success for a community college will be grossly different from those used for CBOs. I ask that this be reflected and that thoughtful attention, with input from the CBO community, be given to the topic. I am also concerned that "NJ is building a new network of One Stop Career Centers, community colleges, libraries, CBOs, faith based organizations, organized labor and educational institutions .... toward access to high quality career guidance and job search assistance." Again, Community Based Organizations have been providing high quality career guidance and job search assistance for decades. I would hope that this extensive network of talent not be overlooked in this process, and that resources would not be needlessly spent to develop a new network resulting only in duplication of service. (N019)**	We recognize the role of CBOs in providing these important services and will continue to consider the impact of Plan policies on the delivery of these services.

Individuals with Barriers to Employment (continued)	*Disposition*
6. ACCSES New Jersey commends the SETC and its many stakeholders on putting together an excellent plan and affording opportunity to comment, though with extremely short notice and very limited time. We look forward to working the SETC and the various state agencies with whom we partner to further refine and implement this plan. First a general comment: It will be very important the NGOs, including community rehabilitation providers, faith based and women and minority owned agencies that have provided proven effective services to many customers with the most challenges to employment remain on the Eligible Training Provider List and have their valuable effective service recognized even if they don't always provide Industry Valued Credentials. ○ **We recommend the following: "DVRS accepts the recommendation to enhance opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities currently participating in segregated employment programs who, through informed choice, identify the desire to move into integrated employment."** ○ **We recommend the following change: "The Directors of DRVS and CBVI are active members of the Commodities and Services Council (CSC) which is the oversight and review Board of the state set-aside program that exists to ensure that individuals with disabilities have the right opportunity for industrial competition. The Central Non Profit Agency (CNA) and the CSC work directly with the state Purchase Bureau to develop no-bid contracts. Employment opportunities for people with disabilities created by the set-aside program are most often paid well above minimum wage. The set-aside program has proven to be and will continue to be an important source of competitive integrated employment for NJ citizens with disabilities and WIOA programs. These jobs, in which persons can work either alone or in settings where 75% or more of fellow workers are persons with disabilities, have always been considered competitive integrated employment by DVRS and CBVI when they pay minimum wage or better."** ○ **We applaud the SETC and DVRS for including the set-aside program in the Combined State Plan. We believe that the set-aside program has been and will continue to be an important vehicle for developing jobs for NJ citizens with all types of disabilities.** ○ **We also commend DVRS and the SETC for including this in the Combined Plan. Opening up cases from Extended Employment will be necessary to provide the services needed for individuals to enter competitive integrated employment. We also wish to recognize that the set-aside program has been and will continue to be an important source of competitive integrated employment for DVRS.** ○ **We recommend not using dated term "sheltered workshop." The program in New Jersey is titled Extended Employment. We recommend that wherever the term "sheltered workshop" is used in this document, it should be replaced by "extended employment program." This would allow consistency within DVRS and the provider community. In addition this statement should be revised to remain consistent with the language used on page 190 regarding**	These comments will be referred to DVRS and CBVI for consideration and consultation with the SRCs, as appropriate.

Individuals with Barriers to Employment (continued)	*Disposition*
7. ○ **Theme 1: Employment First Framework: We need to impact the culture of education from grade school on to ensure that attitudes of "can't" change and children with disabilities are not pulled out of mainstream classes and again, (from as early as grade school) to ensure a true Employment First framework is assimilated among families, schools, students and the adult stakeholder network.** ○ **How will the WIOA Combined State Plan have workforce centers leverage revised Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to increase opportunities under WIOA (especially through discourse with employers)?** ○ **Credentials- one thing we must ensure if we are focused on workers receiving credentials is that we do not exclude or have unintended negative consequences on lower-skilled workers. Those jobs and workers are needed and should be supported under WIOA, too.** ○ **Are the New Jersey and US BLN and SHA being engaged as part of the High Quality Partnership network?** ○ **If the plan is focusing on "middle-skilled" jobs that require some kind of post-high school training and education, the plan should address paths to low-cost, subsidized, and or free post-high school education so all New Jerseyans will have access to job opportunities under WIOA, not only those who can afford post-high school training and education. (N030)**	These comments will be referred to DVRS and CBVI for consideration and consultation with the SRCs, as appropriate.
8. Please see attached document for the New Jersey Association of People Supporting Employment First comments. (separate attachment) (N031)	These comments will be referred to DVRS and CBVI for consideration and consultation with the SRCs, as appropriate.

APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY - 2016 (CONTINUED)

General	*Disposition*
1. On the list of Figures on Page 317, I think it would be easier for readers if we list the title of each Figure. There are just too many acronyms to be familiar with. It will be very helpful if we have an index of all the acronyms with their full titles. (N001)	Future Consideration
2. Great report! I applaud the effort and vision set forth in the state plan. (N022)	NA

Lack of Time for Public Comment	*Disposition*
1. Not providing reasonably sufficient time for public comment, New Jersey violates the spirit of WIOA. Because the Final Plan will drive New Jersey Regional and Local Plans later this year, we want our voices to be heard at the outset of the Plan's existence - before it begins to take on a life of its own. We respectfully request the SETC provide a more transparent and thorough process of receiving and reviewing public comment for the State Plan to implement WIOA, a potentially beneficial Act to New Jersey work force and those facing barriers to employment. (N003)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
2. On behalf of the Middlesex County Workforce Development Board, I have to express both dismay, and disappointment that the above referenced plan was sent to the local areas early this morning with requested comments due back at 4 PM today. Since the document is 375 pages, it will take some time to review and digest what has been presented. In order to provide useful comments, much more time is needed. Additionally, while I would like to seek the input of our board members, I cannot impose such an unrealistic time constraint on them. While Middlesex County would like to provide input to this important plan, it is very difficult to do so, on such short notice. I will do my best to review and provide comments in the few hours that have been allotted to do so. (N004)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
3. Couldn't at least 3 days be allowed for review and comment of this critical plan? (N005)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
4. We respectfully request more time to read, and comment on, this important document. (N006)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
5. There should be more notice for public comment for something this important. (N007)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
6. I am in receipt of the draft plan, but am troubled by the less than 1 day comment period. (N008)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
7. "[We are concerned] about the quick turnaround [for public comments]since this was only sent this morning and due today. (N009)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
8. Less than 5 hours to review almost 400 pages of the DRAFT New Jersey Combined State Plan is a very limited time and therefore I have no other option, but to list the needs and concerns that affect my programs in Essex and Passaic Counties as well as the concerns of other adult education providers. (N012)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016

Lack of Time for Public Comment	*Disposition*
9. The draft plan is very a comprehensive document and it is an injustice to the overall work to develop the plan to only offer an 8 hour review period. I have briefly looked at the SCSEP section which runs from page 292 to 316. I would like the opportunity to review this section in greater detail. SCSEP is an important support for NJ's seniors that struggle with meeting their monthly expenses. (N014)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
10. In my opinion given the size of the document that you have released for review today, the comment period that you provide is unreasonable. It flouts the intent of the aforesaid statute's public comment process that was meant to provide meaningful and timely feedback before submission of the plan to USDOL. (N016)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
11. On behalf of the members of the NJ Library Association, I wish to express our dismay that we were given so limited a time to respond to a document of this length (375 pages). As advocates we worked with members of Congress on the authorization of WIOA. This is a critical piece of legislation for all residents of New Jersey. It is extremely unfair to all those who are involved with these issues on a local level to have been given such a short period of time to respond. (N017)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016

Lack of Time for Public Comment	*Disposition*
1. Not providing reasonably sufficient time for public comment, New Jersey violates the spirit of WIOA. Because the Final Plan will drive New Jersey Regional and Local Plans later this year, we want our voices to be heard at the outset of the Plan's existence - before it begins to take on a life of its own. We respectfully request the SETC provide a more transparent and thorough process of receiving and reviewing public comment for the State Plan to implement WIOA, a potentially beneficial Act to New Jersey work force and those facing barriers to employment. (N003)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
2. On behalf of the Middlesex County Workforce Development Board, I have to express both dismay, and disappointment that the above referenced plan was sent to the local areas early this morning with requested comments due back at 4 PM today. Since the document is 375 pages, it will take some time to review and digest what has been presented. In order to provide useful comments, much more time is needed. Additionally, while I would like to seek the input of our board members, I cannot impose such an unrealistic time constraint on them. While Middlesex County would like to provide input to this important plan, it is very difficult to do so, on such short notice. I will do my best to review and provide comments in the few hours that have been allotted to do so. (N004)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
3. Couldn't at least 3 days be allowed for review and comment of this critical plan? (N005)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016

Lack of Time for Public Comment	*Disposition*
4. We respectfully request more time to read, and comment on, this important document. (N006)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
5. There should be more notice for public comment for something this important. (N007)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
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9. The draft plan is very a comprehensive document and it is an injustice to the overall work to develop the plan to only offer an 8 hour review period. I have briefly looked at the SCSEP section which runs from page 292 to 316. I would like the opportunity to review this section in greater detail. SCSEP is an important support for NJ's seniors that struggle with meeting their monthly expenses. (N014)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
10. In my opinion given the size of the document that you have released for review today, the comment period that you provide is unreasonable. It flouts the intent of the aforesaid statute's public comment process that was meant to provide meaningful and timely feedback before submission of the plan to USDOL. (N016)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016
11. On behalf of the members of the NJ Library Association, I wish to express our dismay that we were given so limited a time to respond to a document of this length (375 pages). As advocates we worked with members of Congress on the authorization of WIOA. This is a critical piece of legislation for all residents of New Jersey. It is extremely unfair to all those who are involved with these issues on a local level to have been given such a short period of time to respond. (N017)	Extended comment period was provided through 5/31/2016

APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY - 2018

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. Individuals with Barriers to Employment	DISPOSITION

.	Individuals with Barriers to Employment	DISPOSITION
1	1. On behalf of the board of NJ APSE (Association of People Supporting EmploymentFirst), I am submitting our comment on the occasion of 3/15/18 Modification to the Combined State Plan for WIOA. We appreciate this and ongoing opportunity to communicate with the SETC in our effort to improve competitive integrated employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities. New Jersey APSE is a membership organization dedicated to advancing equal employment for people living with disabilities. New Jersey APSE is the state chapter of the APSE (Association of People Supporting Employment First), a national advocacy organization with over 3,000 members. We are the only professional network in New Jersey with a primary focus on increasing the number of people with disabilities who are fully integrated in the general workforce, in competitive integrated paid jobs. Our members are comprised of supported-employment professionals, people with disabilities, their family members, educators, staff members from state agencies, employers, and advocates. New Jersey APSE appreciates the opportunity to provide our comment prior to the submission of Modifications to the New Jersey Combined State Plan to Implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), scheduled for March 15, 2018. We are pleased to offer the following comments: (separate attachment). (M18-002)	These comments will be referred to DVRS for consideration and consultation with the SRC, as appropriate.
2	I am vision impaired so it is hard to read all of the plan in time to respond by today. From what I have read it sound very positive but my experience has not gone well. Transportation is an issue for me. I have used Access Link that will only pickup people at bus stops or 3/4 of a mile from the bus stop. You need to have them increase the distances to 5 miles to help more people. I do not mind paying more and waiting more time. Sometime I feel just getting to a job and back is the hardest part or the job. So if this service can be improved it would be wonderful. The jobs tend to be low level jobs. I don't feel I need to go through CBVI to get a job at ShopRite. I would like to see real training programs that I will be transported to. So my [main concerns are] having an opportunity to get trained for a good quality job with transportation from my home. Or maybe work from home. (M18-008)	These comments will be referred CBVI for consideration and consultation with the SRC, as appropriate.
.	**Jobs for Veterans State Grants**	**DISPOSITION**

.	Individuals with Barriers to Employment	DISPOSITION
1	I was looking at the Combined Plan draft and found this…I don't think it should include DVOPs in the narrative. The Business Relations staff at each One-Stop may include state LWD staff funded through WIOA Title I, staff of the local One-Stop Operator, staff funded through Wagner-Peyser 10% funding, Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVERs) ~~andDisabled Veterans' Outreach Placement Specialists (DVOPs)~~, Rapid Response staff and Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) funded staff. All work in coordination under the guidance of the WDB Director and One-Stop Operator management, and share efforts across their site, as well as participating across the industry specialization mentioned above. (M18-003)	Updated Section VII: Program Specific Requirements for Combined State Plan Partner Programs - Jobs for Veterans State Grants
2	Page 338 of the draft plan talks about the 1% JVSG incentive award. LWD policy had been to not accept the award due to issues with how to spend it within civil service guidelines and union agreements. LWD believes that accepting the award and using it to send selected DVOPs and LVERs to USDOL approved training (National Veterans Training Institute and NASWA for example) would be an appropriate use and would conform to civil service and union rules. This comment is a recommendation to change the language on page 338 from: (d) The Incentive Award program implemented using the 1% grant allocation set aside for this purpose, as applicable; Due to civil service restrictions, LWD will not be requesting 1% funding for performance incentive awards. to: (d) The Incentive Award program implemented using the 1% grant allocation set aside for this purpose, as applicable; LWD plans to use the award to send selected DVOPs and LVERs to job-related professional development that could include National Veterans Training Institute sponsored training or other appropriate training as determined by LWD management. (M18-005)	Updated Section VII: Program Specific Requirements for Combined State Plan Partner Programs - Jobs for Veterans State Grants
.	**Partner Considerations**	**DISPOSITION**
1	Congratulations on getting the 2018 WIOA State Plan out for public comment, looks great! One thing I might suggest is updating the NJEEDS section on pp. 114-115 a little bit, maybe something like the attached. (separate attachment) (M18-004)	Updated Section III: Operational Planning Elements

.	Individuals with Barriers to Employment	DISPOSITION
2	Attached for your review and consideration are recommended changes to the NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA. Please contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments. • Revise "Carl T. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act" to "Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006" (Rationale: Incorrect middle initial for the Perkins Act.) (Page Referenced: 40) • Add the following: Career Pathways for Secondary Education Students: The NJDOE issued a grant in November 2015, with state funding of $800,000/year for each of five years and has granted awards to eight diverse high schools. This five-year grant, Building Capacity for Career Pathways: A Pilot Program for Comprehensive High Schools is designed to increase access and opportunities for New Jersey secondary students to participate in high-quality career and technical education programs (CTE) in comprehensive high schools, delivered through career pathways leading to careers with high labor market demand and family-sustaining wages aligned to New Jersey's key industry clusters. The eight districts are developing CTE programs in life sciences; technology; leisure, hospitality and retail; health care; financial services and advanced manufacturing. Over the past two years, the eight districts that were awarded with the grant opportunity built partnerships with business and industry, Talent Networks, and postsecondary partners. They created a career pathways vision and action plan, assembled an advisory team, attended targeted professional development, and implemented their first career pathway program in September 2017. Curriculum for the career pathway programs is based on the student-centered and interdisciplinary instruction using approaches such as project based learning (PBL), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), technology integration, Career Ready Practices and individualized career exploration and planning. (Rationale: Career Pathways are one of the five key themes addressed in the Combined State Plan as part of their strategic talent development strategy, and the NJDOE has initiated efforts to develop career pathways at the secondary level.) (Pages Referenced: 45) • Revise "NJDOE Office of Career and Technical Education" to read: "NJDOE Office of Career Readiness" (Rationale: Office has since been renamed.) (Pages Referenced: 211) • Revise "DOE Office of Special Education" to read: "Offices of Special Education" (Rationale: Office has since been renamed.) (Pages Referenced: 92, 208, 211, 213, 228, 229, 238, 264, 268, 271, 297) (M18-006)	Updated Section II: Strategic Planning Elements And Updated Section VI: Program Specific Requirements for Core Programs - Vocational Rehabilitation And Updated Multiple Sections
3	On p.94 paragraph added under B., dislocated workers do not successfully receive and manage UI benefits through an on-line system. The system does not provide the needed assistance. Since there is no longer UI representation at the One-Stop Centers, dislocated workers drive to the One Stop Career Centers for assistance from non-UI staff. Staff are the UI representatives by default and the only option for UI recipients is a bank of phones to call for the same UI support that did not help them successfully when they called for support from home. Recommendation: LWD needs to review the effectiveness of the on-line system and make modifications to their operational activities to provide the needed UI support. (M18-007)	These comments will be referred to LWD and its the Division of Income Security for consideration and consultation, as appropriate.

.	Individuals with Barriers to Employment	DISPOSITION
4	On behalf of the NJ Department of Corrections, and in response to the email (dated 3/15/18) requesting comments on the Combined State Plan 2018 Modification, please note the following: • The document should list all of the participants of the Vocational Planning Board (on pg. 374): o NJ Department of Corrections o NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, or a designee, ex officio o NJ Dept. of Education o The New Jersey Business & Industry Association o The New Jersey State Building and Construction Trades Council o The New Jersey Council of County Vocational-Technical Schools o Three public members, one appointed by the Governor, one appointed by the Assembly and one appointed by the Senate • The goals of the planning board are more than what is listed in the document (on pg. 375): o The objectives of the planning board are to improve upon the facility's most successful vocational programming offerings; introduce new vocational programming offerings to inmates of the facility; and provide vocational programming which is consistent with actual post-release employment opportunities and reflects the State's emerging industry and business workforce needs. (M18-009)	Updated Section VII: Program Specific Requirements for Combined State Plan Partner Programs - Reentry Employment Opportunities Program
.	**General**	***Disposition***
1	Thanks. Good progress! (M18-001)	NA

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APPENDIX 3: USDOE WIOA MEASURABLE SKILLS GAINS TARGET WORKSHEETS

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Measurable Skills Gains Target Worksheet - 2016

Program Type	2014-2015 State Enrollment	2014-2015 % of State Total Enrollment
Adult Basic Education (ABE + ASE)	9,304	43%
English as a Second Language (ESL)	12,061	56%
Total	21,694	100%

.	NJ 2014-2015 Performance Outcomes	.	.	.	Target Worksheet	.

.	NJ 2014-2015 Performance Outcomes	.	.	.	Target Worksheet	.
Entering Educational Functioning Level	Total Number Enrolled	Number Completed Level	% Completing Level	2014-2015 National Median	2016-2017 Proposed Individual Targets	2017-2018 Proposed Individual Targets
ABE Beginning Literacy	741	358	48%	43%	48%	48%
ABE Beginning Basic Education	1,920	800	42%	42%	45%	46%
ABE Intermediate Low	3,138	1,323	42%	39%	43%	44%
ABE Intermediate High	2,708	912	34%	33%	37%	38%
ASE Low	797	270	34%	39%	39%	39%
ESL Beginning Literacy	5,078	2,337	46%	42%	48%	49%
ESL Beginning Low	2,208	1,083	49%	51%	53%	54%
ESL Beginning High	1,538	767	50%	50%	52%	53%
ESL Intermediate Low	1,423	742	52%	44%	52%	53%
ESL Intermediate High	1,198	425	35%	41%	42%	43%
ESL Advanced	616	219	36%	24%	36%	36%
Total	21,694	9,379	43%	40%	------	------

Program Type.	.	2014-2015 State EFL Completion	2014-2015 National Median	2016-2017	.	.	2017-2018	.	.
.	.	.	.	GPRA Target	MSG Target %	MSG Target	GPRA Target	MSG Target %	MSG Target
.	Adult Basic Education (ABE + ASEL)	39%	43%	46%	42%	3882	47%	43%	3959
.	English as a Second Language (ESL)	46%	47%	49%	49%	5872	50%	50%	5987
.	OVERALL MSG	43%	46%	N/A	46%	9754	N/A	47%	9946

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Measurable Skills Gains Target Worksheet - 2018 Modification

New Jersey	PY 2018 and 2019	.	.	.	.	.	.
NJ 2016 - 2017 MSG Performance Outcomes	.	.	.	.	.	**Target Worksheet**	.
Entering Educational Function Level	**Total Number Enrolled (Unique)**	**Total Periods of Participation**	**Measurable Skills Gains (POP)**	**% Achieving MSG (POP)**	**2016-2017 National Median MSG (POP)**	**2018-19 Proposed Individual Targets**	**2019-2020 Proposed Individual Targets**
ABE Level 1	610	616	324	53%	48%	50%	51%
ABE Level 2	1,713	1,733	852	49%	45%	48%	49%
ABE Level 3	2,750	2,794	1,234	44%	42%	45%	46%
ABE Level 4	2,413	2,439	1,035	42%	42%	42%	43%

New Jersey	PY 2018 and 2019	.	.	.	.	.	.
ABE Level 5	603	606	346	57%	52%	55%	56%
ABE Level 6	275	275	120	44%	42%	44%	45%
ESL Level 1	3,992	4,041	2,219	55%	44%	56%	57%
ESL Level 2	2,691	2,725	1,424	52%	50%	55%	56%
ESL Level 3	1,566	1,578	951	60%	50%	57%	59%
ESL Level 4	1,191	1,203	655	54%	45%	56%	57%
ESL Level 5	973	977	432	44%	39%	44%	45%
ESL Level 6	342	345	138	40%	24%	37%	38%
Total	**19,119**	**19,332**	**9,730**	**50.33%**	**43%**	**------**	**------**

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Performance Summary: Grantee - New Jersey

2014-2015 EFL Gain Rate	2015-2016 EFL Gain Rate	2016-17 MSG by EFL (POP)	2016-17 MSG by Secondary Credential (POP)	2016-17 Measurable Skills Gain Rate (POP)	2016-2017 MSG Target	2016-2017 MSG Outcome vs. Target	90% Threshold	90% Met?
43.00%	47.20%	8,796	934	50.33%	46%	4.33%	41.40%	YES

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.	.	.	MSG Expected Level of Performance 2018-2019	.	.	MSG Expected Level of Performance 2019-2020	.	.

.	.	.	MSG Expected Level of Performance 2018-2019	.	.	MSG Expected Level of Performance 2019-2020	.	.
Program Type	**2016-2017 State MSG (POP)**	**2016-2017 National Median MSG (POP)**	**GPRA Target**	**MSG Target %**	**MSG Target**	**GPRA Target**	**MSG Target %**	**MSG Target Number**
ESL	54%	43%	45%	54%	5,892	-----	55%	6,017

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2018-2019 Final Negotiated Level of Performance	51%	9,859	2019-2020 Final Negotiated Level of Performance	52%	10,053

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