

## WIOA STATE PLAN FOR THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA FY-2018

### 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.

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### 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.

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## HOW STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS ARE ORGANIZED

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

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State's workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.
- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State's efforts to support the State's strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:
  - State Strategy Implementation,
  - State Operating Systems and Policies,
  - Assurances, and
  - Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
  - Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce

and Innovation Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

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

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

## I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

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

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

**Combined State Plan.** This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below. No

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### COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

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

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) No

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) No

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

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

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.)) No

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

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

Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.)) No

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

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

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

## II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

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

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### 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.

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#### 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-

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##### I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

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

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##### II. EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATION

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

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##### 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.

South Carolina's Gross Domestic Product was \$207.7 billion in 2016 which is 26<sup>th</sup> in the nation. The growth of the GDP in real dollars from 2014 to 2016 was \$8.6 billion or 4.9 percent with Manufacturing, Professional and Business Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance showing notable gains. Most of the state's metropolitan areas have seen moderate growth in GDP over the past several years.

The state's personal income growth of 4.4 percent outpaced the nation's growth of 3.6 percent in 2016 and reached \$195.8 million dollars. South Carolina's per capita income in 2016 was \$39,465 or 80 percent of the U.S average.

South Carolina's labor force and employment rate have been increasing since the end of the Great Recession. The unemployment rate dropped to 4.2 percent by the end of 2017 with improving economic conditions attracting

more people into the labor force searching for work. In 2017, the state's labor force grew by 17,813 workers or about 0.7 percent.

South Carolina had over 1.98 million wage and salary employees in 2016 with an average hourly wage of \$19.97. The state's industry employment is projected to grow by 8.99 percent over the period 2014 to 2024.

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#### CURRENT NONFARM INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

Overall, South Carolina experienced a 1.8 percent employment growth across all industries in 2017. Sectors with the fastest growth included Education Services (6.3 percent), Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (3.9 percent), and Manufacturing (3.7 percent). While a number of industries are experiencing significant employment growth, South Carolina has identified Diversified Manufacturing, Construction, Health Care, Business and Information Technology Services, and Transportation, Logistics, and Wholesale Trade as the high-growth, high-demand industries.

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#### CURRENT OCCUPATIONS

The top 20 occupations in the state in terms of size of employment are: retail salespersons; cashiers; food preparation and serving workers; laborers and freight, stock, and material movers; customer service representatives; team assemblers; registered nurses; secretaries and administrative assistants; waiters and waitresses; general and operations managers; janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeepers; office clerks and order fillers; stock clerks and order fillers; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; maintenance and repair workers; general, first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers; first-line supervisors of retail sales workers; cooks, restaurant; elementary school teachers, except special education; and bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks.

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#### LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS EXISTING INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS

South Carolina's 12 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) have diverse economies. The LWDAs containing the state's primary urban areas have the highest percentage of employment with Midlands leading the way at 17 percent of the state total, followed by Trident with 16 percent, and Greenville with 13 percent. Santee-Lynches has the smallest total employment with 3 percent of the state total, followed by Upper Savannah and Lowcountry with 4 percent.

Manufacturing is the leading industry in several LWDAs including Upper Savannah with 29 percent of area employment, Upstate with 22 percent of the area's employment, and Worklink with 20 percent of the area's employment total. Accommodation and Food Service leads in Waccamaw with 22 percent of its employment, while Retail Trade is important in all LWDAs, ranging from 10 percent of the area total in Upper Savannah to 17 percent in Waccamaw.

Trident has the highest average hourly occupational wage at \$21.40, while Waccamaw has the lowest at \$17.09. Three of the LWDAs have average wages above the state average of \$19.97. They are Trident, followed by Greenville at \$20.96 and Midlands at \$20.92.

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#### EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

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##### INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS TO 2024

According to statewide industry employment projections over the period 2014-2024, employment is projected to grow by 8.9 percent or by 175,154 jobs. Health Care and Social Assistance; Administrative and Support and Waste Management; and Educational Services are each expected to experience an increase in employment by more than 15 percent. Government and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting employment are projected to decline.

By 2024 the Health Care and Social Assistance industry will have the state's largest share of employment overtaking the current leader, Retail Trade, due to its rapid expansion. Manufacturing and Accommodation and Food Services will remain the third and fourth largest sectors, respectively.

## OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS TO 2024

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The latest available statewide occupational projections largely align with the statewide industry projections for the period 2014-2024. Office and Administrative Support occupations are projected to have the highest number of employees in 2024 with 319,000, followed by Sales and Related occupations with 240,000, and Food Preparation and Serving Related occupations with 206,000. Production occupations are expected to employ 202,000 in 2024. Additionally, health-related and education occupation groups lead in anticipated occupational employment growth.

## FASTEST GROWING AND DECLINING OCCUPATIONS

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The fastest growing occupations statewide in percentage terms over the projection period 2014-2024 are in the health care industry, including occupations such as Home Health Aides and Personal Care Aides, while many of the declining occupations are being displaced by technological innovation, including several types of textile machine operators and postal service workers.

## LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS EMERGING INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS

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Trident leads the way in terms of projected industry employment growth over the 2012-2022 periods with 20 percent of the state's total growth, followed by Midlands with 17 percent of the total, and Greenville with 16 percent. Health Care and Social Assistance lead in area employment growth in all LWDAs except Upper Savannah, where Manufacturing garners the most growth at 29 percent of its total projected growth. Administrative and Support and Waste Management is projected to grow notably in Greenville with 20 percent of the area's gain as well as in Lower Savannah with 14 percent of the area's growth.

In terms of projected occupational job openings, Trident garners 16.9 percent of the state's 71,000 total annual openings from 2012 to 2022, followed by Midlands with 16.8 percent of the state total, and Greenville with 13.7 percent. Retail Salespersons, Cashiers, and Food Preparation and Serving Workers are the top three occupations with the largest number of projected job openings in six of the 12 LWDAs as well as in the state overall. Team Assemblers are among the top three occupational openings in Greenville, Upstate, and Upper Savannah. The Registered Nurse occupation is the largest occupation requiring more than a high school education in each of the 12 LWDAs.

## EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

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Understanding industry requirements for jobs is crucial to keep the state's economy moving ahead. The knowledge, skills, and abilities of today's jobs vary greatly by occupation. This section highlights the education level of the workforce that is currently demanded by employers, presents several comparisons of employer needs in educational terms, and gives an assessment of the state's workforce for knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as the top certifications and licenses requested by employers in recent job postings.

## EDUCATION LEVEL REQUIRED BY EMPLOYERS

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Education required by employers can be assessed by examining data collected by state and federal government partnerships. Workforce data series measuring labor demand of employers from multiple government sources, such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and US Census Bureau, can be summarized in four general categories of

educational requirement: Less than high school, High school diploma or equivalent, Some college or Associate's degree, and Bachelor's degree or higher. In South Carolina, 21 percent of jobs require a Bachelor's degree or higher, while 68 percent of jobs require only a high school diploma or less, depending on the data series being examined. Eleven percent of jobs require some college or Associate's degree.

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## ASSESSMENT OF THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES OF THE STATE'S WORKFORCE

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The BLS defines three worker characteristics for each of the over 800 detailed occupations for which it summarizes current employment. Those worker characteristics, from the Occupational Employment Survey (OES), represent the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the workforce in today's economy. Specifically, the education required to enter an occupation relates to the knowledge of the workforce; previous work experience required to enter an occupation relates to the abilities of the workforce; and the OJT needed to obtain job competency relates to job skills.

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## EMPLOYER-REQUESTED CERTIFICATIONS IN JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

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Analysis of online job postings in the state from November 2014 to October 2015 revealed that recommended, required, or suggested certifications were mentioned in 305,725 job advertisements from November 2014 to October 2015.

The top 10 certifications requested in job postings are: Driver's License, Commercial Driver's License, Certified Registered Nurse, Basic Life Support, HAZMAT, Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, Occupational Safety & Health Administration Certification, Continuing Education, Food safety programs, and Licensed Practical Nurse (The Conference Board, Help Wanted Online).

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## SOFT SKILLS

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Soft skills are those attributes not defined by technical accomplishments or certifications attained. They are interpersonal skills or character traits that define an individual. Job advertisements from the HWOL database identify hard and soft skills that employers seek. Analysis of data over the past three years indicates that many soft skills are listed as a part of the job postings, such as communication skills, integrity, team-orientation, detail-orientation, problem solving skills and self-motivation.

The top 10 soft skills requested in job postings are: oral and written communication; integrity; marketing; team-oriented, teamwork; Microsoft Office; detail-oriented; customer service-oriented; problem solving; organization skills; and self-starting or self-motivated (The Conference Board, Help Wanted Online).

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## THE MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE SURVEY

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In a survey conducted in 2017 by the SC Department of Commerce, manufacturers were given the opportunity to provide feedback on their workforce concerns. The survey found that companies are least concerned about filling their entry-level positions and positions that require a high school diploma, but are most concerned about positions that require 4-10 years of experience or special skills certifications, and management positions. Key takeaways from the survey reinforce the need for middle-level skills.

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## B. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

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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

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

## II. LABOR MARKET TRENDS

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

## III. EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

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

## IV. SKILL GAPS

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Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

### Groups with Barriers to Employment

South Carolina's workforce is diverse. Different population groups often face varying challenges and barriers and may need more specific or dedicated services to meet their employment and training needs. There are a number of highly successful programs and services described in the Workforce, Education and Training Analysis in section (II)(a)(1) that address the needs of individuals with barriers to employment. Where there are gaps, strategy 1.2 and related activities aim to fill them by increasing participation of individuals with barriers to employment in the workforce system and improving employment outcomes through the development and issuance of policy and overall support of activities and initiatives that also achieve this goal.

In 2016, the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) handled 15,429 cases, 1.7 percent less than in 2015 (SC Department of Juvenile Justice, Annual Report Card, 2016.). In these cases, 2,948 were paroled or on probation, and the average offender population at a facility was 373. The average age of a youth at DJJ was 15 years old. The top five offenses putting a person into DJJ custody are assault and battery, disturbing school, shoplifting, public disorderly conduct, and simple marijuana possession.

## 2. HOMELESS

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In January 2016, there were an estimated 5,050 homeless individuals in South Carolina, including approximately 606 veterans. The state has seen a decrease of homeless individuals of 5.6 percent from 2015 to 2016 ("2016 Point-in-Time Report" South Carolina Coalition for the Homeless, June 2016.).

## 3. VETERANS

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According to the US Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey (ACS), South Carolina had 370,000 civilian veterans aged 18 or older. Veterans made up 10.1 percent of the state's total population, compared to 8.0 percent



of the nation's population. From 2015 to 2016, the veteran unemployment rate in South Carolina increased slightly from 4.4 percent to 5.0 percent.

#### 4. EX-OFFENDERS

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As of June 2017, South Carolina had an inmate population of 19,989 with 9,305 inmates being released in Fiscal Year 2017 (October 1, 2016 - September 30, 2017). The average age of an inmate was 38 years old. The average sentence length is approximately 14 years with the average time actually served being about two years and five months (this average does not include inmates with life, death, or youth sentenced under the Youthful Offender Act (YOA)). Fifty percent of inmates do not have a high school diploma or GED (SC Department of Corrections, Profile of Inmates in Institutional Count, 2015).

#### 5. LOW-INCOME

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According to estimates from the American Community Survey (2016 5-Year estimates), 17.2 percent of South Carolinians live below the federal poverty line, a small decline since the 2012 estimates (17.6 percent).

Poverty tends to vary significantly depending on race/ethnicity and education levels with Hispanic and those with less than a high school education having the highest likelihood of living below the poverty line.

Poverty among youth is generally higher than among working age or older individuals. According to the 2016 ACS estimates, over 270,000 (25.3 percent) children under the age of 18 were living below the poverty line compared to almost 71,000 (9.5 percent) of those over the age of 65.

#### 6. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

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Although many innovative programs and collaborative efforts are in place in South Carolina to expand competitive, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, data shows that a continued focus on increasing rates of employment and labor force participation is necessary.

South Carolina Data at a Glance:

- 74.3 percent of persons without disabilities aged 18 to 64 are employed (Annual Disability Statistics 2016 and Disability Statistics Annual Report).
- 28.7 percent of persons with disabilities aged 18 to 64 are employed (Annual Disability Statistics 2016 and Disability Statistics Annual Report).
- The employment gap between people with disabilities and people without disabilities is 45.6 percent (Annual Disability Statistics 2016 and Disability Statistics Annual Report) .
- 712,739 people in South Carolina have a disability (14.8 percent of population) (Annual Disability Statistics 2016 and Disability Statistics Annual Report).
- 23,100 persons aged 16 to 20 have a disability (Annual Disability Statistics 2016 and Disability Statistics Annual Report).
- 358,700 persons aged 21 to 64 have a disability (Disability Status Report, 2015).
- In 2015, the percentage of working-age people (age 21 to 64) with disabilities receiving Supplemental Security Income payments in South Carolina was 17.1 percent (Disability Status Report, 2015).
- 14,490 individuals were eligible for SCVRD services at the end of FFY 2014 (Fiscal Year 2014 State Vocational Rehabilitation Performance, Rehabilitation Services Administration).

- Of the total number of individuals who received SCVRD services in FFY 2014, 33.7 percent were age 14 to 24 at application (Fiscal Year 2014 State Vocational Rehabilitation Performance, Rehabilitation Services Administration).
- 765 individuals were eligible for SCCB services at end of FFY 2017.
- Of the total number of individuals who received SCCB services in FFY 2017, 15.8 percent were age 14 to 24 at application.

Additional data and analysis on employment for individuals with disabilities can be found in the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Portion of the Unified State Plan.

## EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

### LABOR FORCE

An important component of the economy is the labor force in South Carolina. By definition, the labor force measures people at their resident location and equals the sum of the employed and the unemployed.

Over the period 2013-2017, the labor market has improved drastically. The labor force has grown by over 124,000 people over that time, reaching more than 2.3 million in December 2017.

### UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment has fallen by more than 87,000 people over a four-year period from over 183,000 in January 2013 to 97,879 in December 2017, a decline of 47.1 percent.

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

The unemployment rate is the percent of the labor force that is unemployed. In South Carolina, the unemployment rate has fallen dramatically over the period. In January 2013, the rate stood at 8.4 percent, and by the end of 2017, the figure had dropped to 4.2 percent. Likewise, the US unemployment rate fell from 8.0 percent to 4.1 percent over the same period. As a comparison, in January 2010 at the height of the Great Recession, South Carolina's unemployment rate reached 11.7 percent.

### EMPLOYMENT

Employment has risen steadily over the period, climbing by over 211,500 people to 2,220,845 in December 2017, a 10.5 percent increase from January 2013.

### LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE

The Labor Force Participation Rate is defined as the labor force divided by the civilian noninstitutionalized population aged 16 and older, expressed as a percent. Labor force participation has been on a downward trend in South Carolina for a number of years. Although there was an uptick in the rate in the early 2000s during the housing construction boom and in 2015, the overall trend is unmistakable. The rate slid from nearly 66 percent in 2005 to 59 percent in 2015.

### EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS

Employment Outcomes for South Carolina Post-Secondary Graduates Report (Employment Outcomes for South Carolina Post-Secondary Graduates. (2017). Erica M. Von Nessen, Ph.D.)

A recent 2017 study analyzed the effects of rising postsecondary education costs in comparison to the levels of debt that South Carolinians are taking on and determined the employment outcomes of recent college graduates. Two cohorts of South Carolina college graduates were part of the study to determine the following: (1) the percentage of students found working in the state one and five years post-graduation, (2) their annual earnings, (3) median earnings one and five years post-graduation, and (4) and their industry of employment one and five years post-graduation.

Major findings showed that:

- 64.9 percent of South Carolina college graduates (FY2009-2010) were employed one-year post graduation, and 50.0 percent were employed five years post-graduation (this is based on South Carolina's wage records).
- Women, African-Americans, in-state students, and those pursuing less than a bachelor's degree were more likely to be found in wage records one and five years post-graduation. Students with Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) education were least likely to be found in wage records one and five years post-graduation
- Retention rates are higher for students that are native to South Carolina (78.6 percent) than those from out-of-state (50.2 percent)
- STEM graduates have the fastest median annual wage growth (9.6 percent) one to five years post-graduation; Trades come in second (8.2 percent); and third is Business and Communication (8.1 percent)
- The college majors associated with South Carolina's Talent Pipeline Initiative (the five high-demand, high growth sectors of the Talent Pipeline Initiative are Construction, Diversified Manufacturing, Business and Information Technology, Health Care, and Transportation and Logistics) showed either above average wages (\$35,238) one-year post-graduation or higher than average wage growth (6.3 percent per year) between the first and fifth years. Many of the fields of study funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) will likely have similar wage outcomes.

## COMPARISON OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND

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Comparing various measures of labor supply and demand yields an understanding of whether or not supply can or will meet projected demand. An analysis completed in 2017 compared regional staffing patterns, educational attainment data from postsecondary institutions, and employment projections from the Department of Employment and Workforce to determine whether there appeared to be an over or under supply of workers in five sectors of interest for the state: Business and IT Services; Construction; Diversified Manufacturing; Healthcare; and Transportation, Logistics, and Warehousing.

The table below presents a selection of the occupations in each sector that showed the largest potential imbalances between projected worker demand and projected worker supply. Next steps include vetting these findings with industry leaders and crafting policies to address any imbalances.

## Projected Worker Supply and Demand in Selected Occupations

### Business and IT Services

SOC	Description	Projected Gap
<b>11-3021</b>	Computer and Information Systems Managers	135
<b>15-1152</b>	Computer Network Support Specialists	71
<b>15-1133</b>	Software Developers, Systems Software	70
<b>49-9071</b>	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	(253)
<b>51-2092</b>	Team Assemblers	(395)
<b>53-7062</b>	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	(602)

### Construction

<b>26-1198</b>	<b>Construction Managers</b>	<b>3,460</b>
<b>51-4121</b>	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	244
<b>49-9021</b>	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	177
<b>47-2073</b>	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	(105)
<b>47-2031</b>	Carpenters	(130)
<b>47-2061</b>	Construction Laborers	(398)

### Diversified Manufacturing

<b>51-4121</b>	<b>Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>51-4081</b>	Multiple Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	76
<b>51-4031</b>	Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	75
<b>49-9071</b>	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	(401)

<b>51-2092</b>	Team Assemblers	(627)
<b>53-7062</b>	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	(955)

#### Healthcare

<b>31-9092</b>	<b>Medical Assistants</b>	<b>1,301</b>
<b>29-2061</b>	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	547
<b>39-9021</b>	Personal Care Aides	(472)
<b>31-1011</b>	Home Health Aides	(554)
<b>31-1014</b>	Nursing Assistants	(578)

#### Transportation, Logistics, and Warehousing

<b>49-3011</b>	<b>Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>53-3041</b>	Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs	1
<b>49-9071</b>	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	(235)
<b>51-2092</b>	Team Assemblers	(368)
<b>53-7062</b>	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	(560)

A broader analysis of the supply and demand gap statewide is shown below from an analysis completed with SC Commission on Higher Education (CHE) data. This analysis compared postsecondary completions to the latest available statewide analysis on the average annual job openings from SCDEW's Occupational Employment Projections (OEP) program, 2012-2022, which shows the projected job openings for an average year over the 10-year period. The listed openings are projected to be available for each of the ten years. The CHE completer database covers the most recently available school year 2012-2013 (July 1 to June 30) and includes the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code, the institution name, and number of graduates in each of 10 degree classifications. Each CIP code is matched to one of 16 career clusters for comparison to the OEP data. The OEP data details the expected job openings for an average year over the period 2012 to 2022 and includes the occupational code, which is matched to a career cluster, to the educational job requirements to enter the occupation, to the typical work experience needed for the job, and to the OJT needed for the position.

The CHE databases were summarized by career cluster and degree awarded. The employment projections were summarized by career cluster and education level required for the job for those categories matching the CHE

degree program summaries. A comparison was made for the two primary data sets in terms of the number of graduates to the number of projected job openings for each of the two variables. The tables that follow present the results of this analysis.

**South Carolina Postsecondary Completers by Career Cluster, 2015-2016 (Labor Supply)**

Career Clusters	Statewide Total
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	736
Architecture & Construction	911
Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications	2,564
Business Management & Administration	5,718
Education & Training	10,357
Finance	1,825
Government & Public Administration	838
Health Science	8,491
Hospitality & Tourism	689
Human Services	3,871
Information Technology	1,680
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	1578
Manufacturing	2,009
Marketing	1,248
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics	7,981
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	864
Grand Total	51,360

**South Carolina Projected Average Annual Job Openings Requiring Postsecondary Education (Labor Demand)**

Career Cluster	Statewide Total
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	736
Architecture & Construction	911
Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications	397
Business, Management and Administration	959
Education & Training	4,054
Finance	1,457
Government & Public Administration	397
Health Science	5,449
Hospitality & Tourism	1,134
Human Service	587
Information Technology	1,019
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	635
Manufacturing	392
Marketing	709
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics	1,289
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	1118
Grand Total	<b>20,542</b>

**South Carolina Postsecondary Education Gap by Career Cluster, 2015-2016**

Career Cluster	Statewide Total
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	110

<b>Architecture &amp; Construction</b>	591
<b>Arts, Audio/Video Technology &amp; Communications</b>	2,167
<b>Business, Management and Administration</b>	4,759
<b>Education &amp; Training</b>	6,303
<b>Finance</b>	368
<b>Government &amp; Public Administration</b>	441
<b>Health Science</b>	3,042
<b>Hospitality &amp; Tourism</b>	-445
<b>Human Service</b>	3,284
<b>Information Technology</b>	661
<b>Law, Public Safety, Corrections &amp; Security</b>	943
<b>Manufacturing</b>	1,617
<b>Marketing</b>	539
<b>Science, Technology, Engineering &amp; Mathematics</b>	6,692
<b>Transportation, Distribution &amp; Logistics</b>	-254
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>30,818</b>

#### POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION GAP SUMMARY

In the overwhelming number of cases, the number of graduates is greater than the number of openings for each of the cluster/degree combinations. A few notable exceptions are:

- More graduates with Bachelor's degrees are required in Architecture and Construction;
- More graduates with Doctoral degrees are required in Education and Training;
- More graduates with Bachelor's degrees are required in Finance;
- Health Science is short of graduates at the Associate's and Doctorate levels;
- Information Technology is short of Bachelor's degree-holders by more than 400 graduates;
- More graduates with postsecondary certificates are required in Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security; and
- More graduates with Bachelor's degrees and non-degree awards are required in Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics.



## CONCLUSION

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The data and information presented in this section is critical to understanding the context of workforce development efforts within South Carolina and no plan for future action can be fully created without incorporating data-driven decision making and planning. This data set the stage for the State Workforce Development Board's strategic planning process (2017-2020 South Carolina State Workforce Development Board Strategic Plan, Strategies to Build a Competitive Workforce) that took place in 2017 and resulted in the identification of four strategic objectives.

**Objective 1:** Identify, invest in and support educational and developmental strategies to better prepare a skilled workforce for current and emerging jobs

**Objective 2:** Align resources, policies and strategies between state, local and regional systems to continuously improve outcomes for businesses, individuals and partners

**Objective 3:** Identify current and future workforce needs of South Carolina business and industry to support career pathways in growth sectors

**Objective 4:** Engage job seekers, employers and other workforce partners through marketing and outreach and articulate a value proposition specific to each.

The State has further articulated these objectives and identified related strategies in the State Strategic Vision and Goals section of this plan. The system-wide implementation of these strategies will bring us closer to achieving our vision for South Carolina - to cultivate the development of a skilled workforce and a responsive workforce system that meets the needs of business and industry leading to sustainable growth, economic prosperity, and global competitiveness.

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## 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

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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.

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## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

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The following Workforce Development, Education, and Training Activities are organized to demonstrate alignment and responsiveness to the objectives established by the State Workforce Development Board.

## TALENT PIPELINE, EDUCATION, TRAINING AND CAREER PATHWAYS

### Talent Pipeline Initiative

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#### OBJECTIVES 1, 2, 3, 4 | STRATEGIES ALL

Efforts to develop a skilled talent pipeline began in 2015 and are well underway. A sector strategies framework is being used to align public partners and their strategies and investments to regional talent development needs, as defined by employers in critical industries.

Phase I efforts included the formation of a State Leadership Team in 2015 that is comprised of key executives and staff of the agencies involved in the state workforce development system; other public and education stakeholder representatives from the state, regional, and local levels; and business and industry representatives. Their role is to contribute social, political, and intellectual power as leaders and stakeholders in the state's broader talent development system. A collaborative data subcommittee was also formed to collect and evaluate data pertinent to the identification of planning regions and state-level target industries. The State Leadership Team identified five high-demand, high-growth sectors and corresponding occupations (demand analysis). The sectors are listed below:

- Construction
- Diversified Manufacturing
- Business and Information Technology Services
- Healthcare
- Transportation and Logistics

Regional Workforce Planning and Implementation Teams were also organized in each region. Regional Planning Teams completed several activities, including a regional self-assessment, asset identification exercises, and a SWOT analysis. A thorough data analysis was conducted for each region. The regional teams used the data to select target industries in which to focus their initial development and implementation efforts.

Phase II, which concluded in 2016, produced state and regional workforce supply gap analyses, a draft asset map of federal and state resources for employment and training services, and a draft framework for state and regional roles in business engagement. Partnerships were forged with business and industry leaders as well as state education leaders, including the SC Commission on Higher Education. A Sector Strategies Coordinator was hired to facilitate the state's talent pipeline efforts.

Regional teams received individual guidance and assistance with the continuation of activities and strategies identified in Phase I. Each region was also awarded a \$25,000 grant to financially assist with implementation activities.

The work done in Phase II generated the platform for the next critical component of the talent pipeline, which is the development of career pathways that are aligned to the high-demand, high-growth sectors and occupations.

Phase III will support the integration of sector strategies and career pathways at the operational level with a focus on: expanding sector strategies into a system-wide model, as the vehicle to achieve a skilled talent pipeline; utilizing state and regional workforce gap analyses; supporting regional operational needs through technical assistance and state guidance; and developing career pathway programs that support the talent pipeline.

## SC Profile of a Graduate and TransformSC

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### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.3

In 2015, the SC Department of Education adopted the Profile of the SC Graduate. The profile was developed by a coalition of education and business leaders organized as TransformSC, and represents a shared vision of the knowledge, skills, and characteristics needed for students to succeed in higher learning and careers. It also provides a common goal to which all efforts to transform South Carolina's public education system can be aligned.

TransformSC has identified four innovative practices that help students achieve the knowledge, skills, and characteristics outlined in the profile. Schools and districts that participate in TransformSC implement some or all of these practices in a new model of learning designed to meet the needs of the students in their communities. TransformSC was officially launched in May 2013 and continues to gain momentum and national recognition with promising results. As of 2016, there were 37 schools from 19 districts in the TransformSC network.

## College and Career Ready Standards

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### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

More recently, the SC Department of Education implemented new College and Career Ready Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA). The development and implementation of these standards was in direct response to Act 200, ratified on June 6, 2014, which required the Department to facilitate the process of developing new high-quality, college- and career-ready standards for implementation during the 2015-2016 school year. The new math and ELA standards are closely aligned with the knowledge, skills and characteristics outlined in the Profile of the SC Graduate.

## Dual Enrollment

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### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1

South Carolina high school juniors and seniors have the opportunity to earn college credit toward an Associate's or Bachelor's degree while simultaneously completing their high school graduation requirements. College courses are provided by an accredited institution of higher education either at the high school or on the college/university campus. The courses offered through dual enrollment vary by institution, but often include general education and career and technology courses. Dual enrollment helps put students on a college and/or career track before graduating from high school and, as a result, helps build the talent pipeline South Carolina needs to support new and expanding businesses.

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The SC Technical College System provides the majority of the state's dual enrollment programs. Overall, the system had 10,769 high school students participate in dual enrollment during the 2015-2016 academic year. This number

represents an approximate 16 percent increase from the previous year. In 2015-2016, the Technical College System offered 6,276 course sections - 1,962 more than the previous year (SC Technical College System).

South Carolina is conducting additional research to further assess the benefits of dual enrollment for high school students.

### Career and Technical Education

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#### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1

There are 42 career and technical education centers in South Carolina offering a variety of programs that correspond with SC Department of Education career clusters and provide a pathway for students to continue their education and/or transition to postsecondary employment. A list of career clusters and programs can be found on the SC Department of Education's website.

### Career Readiness Assessment

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#### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2

South Carolina legislation passed in 2014 requires that all students entering the 11<sup>th</sup> grade must be administered a career readiness assessment for evaluation of career readiness and to measure a range of essential work skills in applied mathematics, locating information, and reading for information. The assessment results will be used to (1) assist students, parents, teachers, and guidance counselors in developing individual graduation plans and in selecting courses aligned with each student's future ambitions; (2) promote South Carolina's Work Ready Communities initiative; and (3) meet Federal and state accountability requirements.

WorkKeys® was administered to all 11<sup>th</sup> graders for the first time in spring 2015. Of the 48,613 students with valid scores on all three tests, 87.9 percent earned a National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)™, which measures and certifies essential work skills needed for success in jobs across industries and occupations. Eighty-seven percent earned a certificate in 2016 and 84 percent in 2017 (SC Department of Education).

The SC Department of Education recently procured a new vendor, Worldwide Interactive Network, Inc. (WIN), for the career readiness assessment required for all 11<sup>th</sup> graders. Eleventh graders will use this assessment starting spring 2018.

### Integrated English and Literacy

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#### OBJECTIVE 1, 4 | 1.2, 1.3, 4.2

The Integrated English Literacy/Civics Education (IEL/CE) program is authorized by Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA). The purpose of the IEL/CE program is to assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners to improve their reading, writing, and comprehension skills in English and mathematics, as well as understanding the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship. In addition to requiring that the program of instruction be designed to help English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language, it also requires that the program of instruction must lead to attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training or employment.

### Integrated Education and Training

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#### Objectives 1, 3 | 1.1, 1.3, 3.2

The SC Department of Education (SCDE) Office of Adult Education (OAE) has worked with local adult education providers in Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee Counties located in the Worklink Workforce Development Area, to develop an Integrated Education and Training (IET) or IBEST career pathway with Tri-County Technical College. IET is a process that combines student academic preparation, workforce preparation, and occupational training concurrently in the same classroom. The Worklink Area has developed a Manufacturing career pathway. Two cohorts of students have successfully completed the training process. The technical college and adult education providers are currently working to develop a Healthcare career pathway. OAE plans to work with two additional workforce areas to develop IET processes prior to the end of the 2017-18 school year and has a goal to have an IET process in all 12 Workforce Areas by the end of the 2018-19 school year.

### Adult Education Young Adult Population Pilot

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#### *Objectives 1, 3, 4 | 1.3, 3.2, 4.2*

More than 10,000 students who are 17 to 21 years of age enroll into adult education classes across the state each school year. To increase adult education provider success with this age group, the Office of Adult Education developed a pilot process. The pilot includes four adult education providers located in Dorchester, Darlington, Pickens, and Richland Counties. The purpose of this pilot is to help students in this age range see the “light at the end of the tunnel” sooner. Each program has assigned a dedicated teacher to work with this age group only. A career navigator or career counselor monitors student interest and gathers college and employment information to share with students so that they are aware of all opportunities that are in their communities. Job shadowing and college tours are also made available for interested students.

Outcome information covers the timeframe from July 1, 2017 to February 28, 2018. There were 610 students enrolled in the four YAP Pilot Programs: 73 percent of students enrolled in the YAP Pilot Programs entered the programs at the Adult Basic Education Level 4 or below; 343 of the enrolled students have been post-tested (56 percent); 266 have achieved one or more level gains (78 percent of those post-tested); 98 students have earned a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma; and 37 percent of the YAP Pilot Programs’ total graduates entered the programs at Level 4 or below.

### Two- and Four-Year Educational Opportunities

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#### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.3

South Carolina has a robust network of two- and four-year colleges and universities offering a wide range of training and academic programs. The SC Technical College System, consisting of 16 colleges, is the state’s largest higher education provider, educating more undergraduates than all other public colleges and universities combined. The Colleges offer credit and non-credit certificates, diplomas and degree programs, and short-term training programs that allow individuals the opportunity to efficiently train for a specific occupation or industry. Additionally, technical colleges deliver high-quality, cost-effective continuing education training either on-site or on-campus. This training can be customized to meet the specific needs of business and industry.

Strategically located across the state, nearly every South Carolinian lives within a 30-minute drive to a main or satellite campus. With the majority of future jobs requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree, the technical college system is well-positioned to prepare a work-ready, high-skilled workforce by providing learning opportunities that promote the economic and workforce development of the state.

In addition to the technical college system, South Carolina has three research institutions, 10 comprehensive four-year colleges/universities, and four two-year regional University of South Carolina campuses. There are also 22 private senior and two-year institutions, and two professional schools (SC Commission on Higher Education, About

CHE and SC Higher Education Quick Facts, 2016). There are a growing number of transfer and articulation agreements between the SC Technical College System and South Carolina's four-year senior institutions, allowing students to continue their education and ultimately earn a baccalaureate degree.

## STEM Premier

### Objective 1 | Strategies 1.1, 1.3

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STEM Premier is a cradle-to-career online system that assists students in designing a career pathway, and serves as a recruiting tool for both educators and employers. This online platform allows students ages 13 and up to build personal profiles showcasing their skills and talents. Colleges and companies can view profiles and connect directly with students to share opportunities such as internships, scholarships and job openings in STEM fields and beyond. In addition to the SC Department of Commerce, a number of South Carolina businesses and educational institutions are utilizing STEM Premier as a tool to promote economic growth and access for students and businesses to match skills to job opportunities.

## SC JobReadyU Soft Skills Training Curriculum

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### Objective 1 | Strategies 1.1, 1.3

SC JobReadyU features 11 Modules that cover Reading Comprehension, Locating Information, Critical Thinking/Analytic Skills, Basic Math, Mathematical Applications, Introduction to Computing, Computer Skills: Word, Computer Skills: PowerPoint, Computer Skills: Excel, Basic Employability, and Professional Work Ethic. In addition to those modules covering basic technical skills, the Basic Employability and Professional Work Ethic modules provide instruction on communication skills, time management, and problem-solving skills.

## Regional Workforce Advisors (RWA)

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### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.3

The SC Department of Commerce employs 12 Regional Workforce Advisors (RWAs) who bridge the gap between the business and education communities and facilitate collaboration on how best to prepare a workforce that meets industry demands. One RWA is assigned to each LWDA and is a resource for business and industry, teachers, administrators, school counselors, career specialists, students, and parents. RWAs play an integral role in South Carolina's goal to develop and maintain a skilled pipeline of the job seekers who are prepared to fill high-growth, high-demand positions.

## Certified Work Ready Communities

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### OBJECTIVES 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 3.2, 4.1

South Carolina implemented Work Ready Communities (SCWRC) in 2013, a multi-agency, public-private collaborative initiative. A state leadership team was formed to lead the effort. The team consisted of representatives from the SC Departments of Employment and Workforce, Commerce, and Education, the SC Technical College System, the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department, the SC Manufacturers Alliance, and the Governor's Office.

To become a South Carolina Work Ready Community, counties were required to meet or exceed goals in earning the National Career Readiness Credential (NCRC™), achieved through Workkeys® testing, meet or exceed the three-year graduation rate average or improvement percentage, and engage business support. All 46 counties are now certified as Work Ready Communities.

South Carolina recently selected a new career readiness assessment that will be provided by Worldwide Interactive Network, Inc. (WIN). Although this is a departure from the ACT WorkKeys® product that is the foundation for Certified Work Ready Communities, the state remains committed to ensuring that communities have the tools and resources needed, through education and training, to build and sustain skilled talent pipelines that are ready to meet the needs of business and industry.

## PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES THAT IMPACT BUSINESS/EMPLOYER SERVICES

### EvolveSC

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#### OBJECTIVES 1, 2, 4 | 1.3, 2.2, 4.1

In PY 2015, the SC Workforce Development Board approved \$741,235 in funding to pilot EvolveSC, a customized training program. Through EvolveSC, businesses applied for training grants to upskill their existing workforce. Twenty-five Evolve SC grants were awarded to fund training in the areas of manufacturing, healthcare, construction, transportation, logistics, and distribution. Based on the outcomes reported by participating technical colleges, approximately 554 individuals were trained through this special pilot program. The majority of participants (384 or 69 percent) were incumbent workers, nearly 23 percent of which received a pay increase or promotion after the completion of training.

### readySC™

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#### OBJECTIVES 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 3.1, 4.2

readySC™ is a division of the SC Technical College system and is a key contributor to the state's economic development efforts. Recognized nationally as a premier program of its kind, readySC™ works with the state's 16 technical colleges and focuses on the recruiting and initial training needs of new and expanding organizations for little or no cost.

readySC™ continues to be a top incentive for our state with more than 85 percent of relocating companies ranking readySC™'s services as playing a significant role in their ultimate decision to move to South Carolina. Since 1961, more than 289,000 individuals have been trained through readySC™. In Fiscal Year 2015-2016 alone, nearly 4,000 individuals were trained and 78 companies were served (SC Technical College System).

### E-Zone

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#### OBJECTIVES 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 3.1, 4.2

The E-Zone program incentivizes education and training by allowing South Carolina manufacturing companies to utilize the Job Retraining Tax Credit (E-Zone) program, which reimburses training and education related expenses. Subsequent to approval by the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, companies may claim a credit of \$1,000 per employee against withholding taxes.

### Apprenticeship Carolina™

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#### OBJECTIVES 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 3.1, 3.2, 4.2

The SC Technical College System established Apprenticeship Carolina™ in 2007. This program works to increase awareness and use of Registered Apprenticeships. The growth of Registered Apprenticeship programs has been phenomenal. Since 2007, the number of programs has increased tenfold from 90 to 918 and the number of active apprentices is more than 14,000 from a mere 777 in 2007 (SC Technical College System). Because of its innovative approach and fast growth, Apprenticeship Carolina™ is held as a model for the nation.

Apprenticeship Carolina™ has a youth apprenticeship program that is growing in popularity. Designed to create crucial recruitment pipelines of young, skilled workers, this program works to decrease costly turnover and allows companies to influence, mold and shape potential future employees.

The SC Technical College System received a grant in 2015 that will allow the Apprenticeship Carolina™ program to increase the number of manufacturing apprenticeships and lay the foundation for future development and growth of new programs in professional and informative services. The initiative will expand current innovations used to inform companies about apprenticeship programs, expand technical services in design and administration, and fund postsecondary education and training for apprentices. Companies across the state will be able to apply for grants to offset training costs associated with their respective apprenticeship program and the System's 16 technical colleges will serve as the providers of job-related education for the programs connected with the grant.

To further expand use of the apprenticeship model, the SWDB approved two rounds of funding for the development and implementation of innovative employment and training programs, using the apprenticeship model, to serve individuals with barriers to employment. The first round of funding totaled \$267,000 and was awarded to two organizations. The period of performance for the first round of funding ended on October 31, 2017.

135 participants, comprised of youth and ex-offenders, were served during this first round. All participants were enrolled in classroom training and 63 participated in work-based learning. 84 participants completed classroom training, work-based learning, or both. 41 participants were employed on completion, and 10 participants continued on to postsecondary education. 39 participants were unable to complete the full program during the period of performance because they were still enrolled in high school. Instead, they completed the first year of the two-year program, and are working on completing their second year now through funding from other sources.

The second round of funding totaled \$398,564. Activities for this round are still ongoing, with 85 individuals participating in training as of January 2018. The period of performance for the second round of funding will end later this year.

#### Integrated Business Services Teams

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##### OBJECTIVES 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2

Each LWDA has a business services team with representatives from multiple partner agencies that work together to deliver coordinated and efficient services to employers. These teams meet regularly to organize employer contacts, job fairs, and hiring events. Business services staff focus on building relationships with employers, trade associations, community, civic, and non-profit organizations, and use these relationships to better understand the needs of employers and to provide awareness of the available employer services and resources.

#### On-The-Job and Incumbent Worker Training Programs

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##### OBJECTIVES 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 3.1, 4.1, 4.2

LWDAs use work-based training models, such as on-the-job training (OJT) and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), to provide opportunities for participants and employers in both finding high-quality work and in developing a high-quality workforce. OJT is primarily designed to provide a participant with the knowledge and skills necessary for full performance of the job, whereas IWT is designed to ensure that current employees are able to gain the skills necessary to retain employment and advance within the company. For PY 2015 and 2016, approximately 716 individuals received OJT; 299 individuals received locally-funded IWT and 1,590 received state-funded IWT (this number does not include Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion IWT participants).



The South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD) offers a range of training services that include OJT, job try-out, and registered apprenticeships. For OJT, in partnership with SCVRD, a company hires and trains a client for a specific position. The training progresses according to training milestones in an established training outline. Job try-outs are a stipend-funded training service coordinated between SCVRD, the client, and a business partner. During a job try-out, a career ready client learns specific, basic skills for a job at a company's worksite(s).

The South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) connects low income individuals with community businesses and offers incentives to employers when TANF recipients are hired. When these work-ready job seekers are hired, they are trained at the employer's worksite while the employer receives a reimbursement of 50 percent of the trainee's gross wages for an established period of time. Additionally, this employer could also be eligible for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and the South Carolina Family Independence Tax Credit.

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### Layoff Aversion Strategies

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#### OBJECTIVES 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 3.1, 4.1, 4.2

State level business services staff partner with LWDA's to provide effective rapid response services focused primarily on promptly delivering comprehensive solutions to businesses and workers in transition. Rapid Response IWT is routinely used as a layoff aversion strategy to provide current employees with the skills needed to avert a layoff.

In situations where a layoff or closure cannot be averted, basic career services are delivered to dislocated workers enabling them to transition quickly into new employment. Eligible dislocated workers may also receive training and/or education through the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs or the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program.

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### Defense Diversification Grant

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#### OBJECTIVES 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 3.1, 4.2

Since 2014, South Carolina has received two rounds of funding from the Department of Defense (DoD), Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA), to develop and implement a community adjustment and economic diversification plan in response to workforce reductions and contract disruptions in the defense sector.

Fluctuations in the DoD budget over the years show a pattern that poses a significant risk to the short-term and long-term sustainability of defense firms who have not diversified into commercial markets. The intent of the Defense Diversification Program is to assist these firms in diversifying into other markets, reducing their dependency on defense contracts and ensuring the long-term survival of their business.

In both rounds of funding, defense firms were provided planning and market exploration assistance. With the assistance of the University of South Carolina, a thorough supply chain analysis was conducted on South Carolina's defense industry to identify the Tier I, II, III and IV suppliers and the potential economic impact the state and regions are facing with pending defense budget cuts. As a result of the supply chain analysis, emphasis has been placed on diversification into the Aerospace and Automotive industries.

The first round of the program was very successful and provided a strong foundation for the development of the program through the second round of funding. Twenty firms were served, with anticipated totals of \$421,849,000 in retained sales, \$169,000,000 in new sales, 1,080 retained jobs, and 415 new jobs created as a result of the program. The second round of funding will end in March of 2018. So far, 37 firms have received training through the program.

## LOCAL INITIATIVES THAT DEMONSTRATE PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

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These collaborative efforts demonstrate measures taken to provide supports and opportunities for a wide range of individuals. The system is implementing local activities that serve as best practices to support the state strategies through the initiatives detailed below.

### GREENVILLE: REENTRY COALITION

*Objectives 1, 4 | Strategies 1.2, 4.2*

The Greenville County Workforce Development Board has staff that are very involved with re-entry initiatives in Greenville. One such initiative is the Greenville Reentry Coalition, which has a breakout of several subcommittees to better serve the needs of returning citizens and those with criminal backgrounds: housing, advocacy, education, mentoring, support group, and the Work Ready Certification Board (which now has the full support of Greenville's Chamber of Commerce). The Work Ready Certification Board was recognized by Greenville City and selected to apply for the 2017 Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayor's Challenge.

GCWDB staff also has a strong working relationship with Probation, Pardon, and Parole to connect with individuals that need multiple services. Additionally, they have built a strong working relationship with the Solicitor's Office in helping with expungement and guidance in assisting this population.

### PEE DEE: HEALTHCARE INITIATIVE

*Objectives 1, 3, 4 | Strategies 1.1, 3.2, 4.1*

In May of 2017, the Pee Dee Workforce Development Board (PDWDB) partnered with McLeod Health and Carolinas Hospital Systems, two of the largest employers in the region, to address the need for skilled workers in the healthcare profession. Through these two initiatives, up to 90 WIOA-eligible individuals will attain necessary credentials and employment with these reputable employers, both of which offer opportunities for skills development and movement along a career pathway. The CNA training program developed by Carolinas Hospital System has been registered with the US Department of Labor as an apprenticeship program.

### Pee Dee: IMPACT Marion County

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#### OBJECTIVES 2, 4 | STRATEGIES 2.2, 4.2

IMPACT is a partnership of workforce, economic development, elected officials, education, faith-based community, and business partners aimed at promoting and supporting economic growth in Marion County. In 2014, IMPACT hosted a Career Fair and Small Business Expo designed to expose job seekers to career and educational opportunities and information about how to prepare for jobs based on the demands and requirements of local employers. Resources for small business success were also available. Approximately 1,000 job seekers and small business owners attended the event.

### WORKLINK: BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY SHOWCASE

*Objectives 1, 4 | Strategies 1.2, 1.3, 4.1*

Since 2010 the WorkLink WDB has partnered with the Anderson - Oconee - Pickens Business and Industry Showcase Board in support of their annual Business and Industry Showcase event. The Showcase allows the approximately 5,000 8<sup>th</sup> graders in all three counties to learn more about the future career opportunities in their own backyard by visiting with nearly 50 employers each year. The tradeshow style format of the event allows the students to interact directly with company representatives, ask questions and learn more about the products

produced at local facilities. The WDB helps to provide funding for transportation costs, solicit business participation, and assist with the overall planning and coordination of the event.

#### Worklink: PARTNERSHIP WITH CLEMSONLIFE

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##### OBJECTIVES 1, 3 | STRATEGIES 1.3, 3.2

The ClemsonLIFE Program offers a two-year basic program that incorporates functional academics, independent living, employment, social/leisure skills, and health/wellness skills in a public university setting with the goal of producing self-sufficient young adults. An advanced program is available for students who have demonstrated the ability to live safely and independently, sustain employment, and integrate socially during the basic program. The advanced program emphasizes workplace experience, community integration and independent living with transitionally reduced supports. Students who complete the basic or advanced programs receive corresponding certificates of postsecondary education.

The Worklink Workforce Development Area partners with the ClemsonLIFE program to arrange and host visits to the Clemson SC Works Comprehensive Center. Local restaurants provide food and refreshments, and students learn about services provided by SC Works partners, including Vocational Rehabilitation, Wagner-Peyser, and WIOA.

In addition to ClemsonLIFE, there are similar postsecondary programs at the University of South Carolina, the College of Charleston, Coastal Carolina University, and Winthrop University. SCVRD has had a liaison assigned to each since its inception to assist with vocational skills incorporated into the program.

#### SANTEE LYNCHES: THE DREAM TEAM

##### *Objectives 1, 4 | Strategies 1.2, 4.1*

The Dream Team is a partnership with business and community leaders that want to lend a helping hand to the less fortunate in Sumter County and offer assistance to help get them employed. Dream Team members include The Hastie Law Firm, Thompson Construction Group, Ameriprise Financial, and SC Works Santee-Lynches, among others.

The group has been meeting since April 2016 and serves as a resource to help unemployed residents with barriers get back on their feet. The team is a forum for advertising free, local job-hunting resources available to job seekers and to personally motivate and inspire people to keep moving forward.

#### Trident: Partnership to Overcome Hunger

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##### OBJECTIVE 4 | STRATEGIES 4.2

Palmetto Youth Connections (PYC) is a WIOA youth program provider in the Trident Workforce Development Area. Noticing a decline in participation levels, staff surveyed the participants to determine if there were barriers preventing youth from attending GED classes and workshops on a regular basis. Staff found that hunger was a trend across the surveys.

Through an ongoing partnership with Midland Park Community Ministries, PYC is now able to provide participants with breakfast and snacks on a daily basis, and attendance and test scores have improved. PYC and Midland Park Community Ministries will continue partnering to provide meals for WIOA youth participants, leverage resources, and implement new and effective ways to provide continuous community support.

#### Lower Savannah: Within Reach Initiative

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### *Objective 1 | Strategies 1.2, 1.3*

Within Reach is a partnership between Aiken Technical College and Aiken County Public School District that is designed to increase the number of Aiken County citizens who possess a higher education credential. This initiative was birthed out of sessions held in the fall of 2014 with district and college leaders to brainstorm ways to achieve that goal. Three primary action items were developed: identify high school students who do not have a postsecondary plan; provide students and their families with information to financially plan for college; and help ease the financial burden for Aiken County families. For the latter, the Aiken Technical College Foundation created the Within Reach Scholarship and has received funding from many community partners and supporters. For the 2016-17 school year, 50 \$1,000 scholarships were awarded to those graduating from high school in June 2016. The College also provides financial aid workshops, offers dual enrollment courses, and places a representative at area high schools that is available to assist students with their transition from high school to college.

### **Fatherhood Initiative**

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#### **OBJECTIVE 4 | STRATEGIES 4.2**

The South Carolina Department of Social Services has entered into a statewide contract with the South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families to provide fatherhood services. Through the Center's six affiliate programs, services rely heavily on partnerships with local workforce development agencies, but also include structured curricula covering parenting, relationship skills, and financial stability. Services are in place and operational in thirty-five counties on a fixed basis, and in the remaining eleven counties on a quarterly basis.

### **PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES THAT ENHANCE SERVICES TO PRIORITY POPULATIONS**

#### **Youth with Barriers**

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##### **Jobs for America's Graduates-SC**

#### **OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3**

Jobs for America's Graduates-SC (JAG-SC) is a dropout prevention program dedicated to high school and postsecondary academic success. Coupled with the development of career readiness skills in young people, JAG-SC strives to aid youth in securing quality jobs and pursuing a career. JAG-SC serves an in-school, at-risk youth population of approximately 1,100 participants per year, while concurrently providing follow-up counseling and placement services to the previous year's seniors in 25 high schools across the state.

A committed Career Specialist in each affiliated school functions as a teacher, coach, counselor, and advocate for students with documented barriers to success. Over the course of their enrollment, students master 81 competencies identified by business as essential to successful employment, while developing skills in the areas of academics, career development, leadership, civic-mindedness, social awareness, and community service. This is accomplished through competency instruction and the hands-on involvement of school and community partners.

Since its inception in 2005, JAG-SC has served over 11,000 youth, with an average of 7 barriers to success, in 19 school districts across the state, launching 2,585 seniors on a path to productive citizenry. The program has consistently maintained an average 96.6 percent graduation rate and a return to school rate greater than 97 percent since 2006. For seven consecutive years, the program has been awarded the National JAG "5-of-5" Award for exceeding all five of the national standards for graduation rate, school placement rates, total positive outcomes rates, job placement rates, and full-time jobs rates.

Given the success of the Multi-Year JAG Model in South Carolina, the State Workforce Development Board set aside \$400,000 to pilot the JAG Out-of-School Model. The Model targets youth, ages 16-24, who are no longer enrolled in a secondary school through drop-out recovery activities. Through the Out-of-School Model, participants complete the requirements for a high school diploma or GED certificate while attaining JAG's basic employability skills and participating in work-based learning experiences. Additionally, the program emphasizes the importance of community service and professionalism through the use of a participant-lead association that focuses on refining personal and leadership skills.

Two grant recipients have been selected. The out-of-school pilots will begin March 2018 with a 24-month grant period.

#### Education 2 Employment (E2E)

##### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

South Carolina was awarded a \$1.6 million youth demonstration grant in June 2015 to improve access to high-quality job training and employment services for youth and young adults in North Charleston, an area that has experienced high youth unemployment rates, high crime rates, and low graduation rates. The Trident Workforce Development Area collaborated with the City of North Charleston, Adult Education, and other stakeholders to develop two satellite youth specific one-stop centers. These centers, which are located in impoverished communities, offer six-week pre-employment programs that combine both classroom instruction and work-based training opportunities.

The grant served individuals between the ages of 16 and 29 who had been disconnected from the labor force, meaning they were neither enrolled in school nor working. The program prepared participants for careers through short-term occupational skills training and paid work experience in high-growth industries including manufacturing, information technology, transportation/logistics, health care, specialty trades, and hospitality. Additionally, the unique program model provided holistic supports such as parenting classes, drug and alcohol counseling, transportation, and childcare assistance to address the many barriers to employment that the participants possessed. Through strong community partnerships and the leadership of the Trident Board Youth Committee this project tested new strategies built on best practices for preparing disadvantaged youth to successfully achieve sustaining employment.

The E2E grant ended June 30, 2017. In addition to new best practices for collaboration and operation developed and shared across the state, final outcomes include: 78 participants have been placed in employment with an average hourly wage of \$10.11; 300 prospective participants have attended orientation and 237 were enrolled; 155 participants entered training; 95 participants earned an industry recognized credential; 12 participants earned a High School credential; 78 participants have been placed in unsubsidized employment; 70 have entered postsecondary training; 42 retained employment for 60 days; 65 have earned a WorkKeys® credential; 100 have completed Career Smart (employability skills training); 68 have earned a National Retail Federation Customer Service credential; and 25 participants have been placed in work experiences or OJT opportunities.

#### Job Corps

##### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.2, 1.3

The Bamberg Job Corps Center is federally funded by the US Department of Labor (USDOL) and has been in operation since 1979. It is a residential training center for youth, providing a variety of workforce development and educational activities, including: GED preparation and testing, academic coursework and support, WorkKeys® testing, career readiness training, and job placement services, among other activities.

The Bamberg Job Corps Center has a number of partnerships with local WIOA programs, adult education providers, technical colleges, and SCVRD. Participants are referred to Job Corps through these partnerships.

#### National Guard Youth Challenge (SCNGYC)

##### *Objective 1 | Strategies 1.1, 1.2, 1.3*

The SCNGYC is a two-phase program consisting of a two-week residential phase that allows cadets a short opportunity to adjust to the rigors and discipline of the program, followed by a 20-week program where cadets receive military-based training, engage in supervised work experience and complete eight core program components. These include: academic excellence, health and hygiene, job skills, leadership/followership, life-coping skills, physical fitness, responsible citizenship and service to community. Cadets are also matched with a mentor who will provide one-on-one support to graduates during the 12-week post-residential phase. South Carolina is one of three states in the country to receive a grant from USDOL to implement a Job Challenge program meant to enhance and expand the SCNGYC job-skills component. By expanding the services available to cadets who complete the SCNGYC program, USDOL is seeking to improve employment outcomes for at-risk youth.

After graduation or completion of the residential phase of the SCNGYC program, eligible cadets can enroll in the five-month residential Job Challenge in which they will participate in one of the following programs at Aiken Technical College (ATC): Basic Production Operator, Basic Welding, Computer Networking, Electronic Health Records, Patient Care Assistance, or Tower Technician. Cadets who successfully complete one of these programs can earn 16-24 credit hours toward an industry recognized certificate. The first Job Challenge session started in January of 2016 with 50 SCYC graduates.

#### Juvenile and Adult Offenders

##### Birchwood High School

##### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2

Located at DJJ's BRRC in Columbia, South Carolina, this is a comprehensive high school offering male and female students in grades 9 through 12 a variety of Career and Technical Education (CATE) and academic courses. Students at Birchwood may also earn dual credit through the SC Technical College System. In addition to academic subjects such as English, math, science and social studies, Birchwood School offers the following vocational training classes: automotive collision repair technology, automotive technology, carpentry, graphic communications, digital desktop publishing, horticulture for the workplace, integrated business applications, culinary arts, and welding. Work related transitional courses, such as woodworking and upholstery, are also available to BRRC youth. A SCVRD counselor is located at the Broad River Complex to assist eligible students with school-to-work transition and the full range of SCVRD services, including connecting them with local SCVRD staff as they approach release.

#### Job Readiness Training Center (JRTC)

##### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2

In October of 2013, DJJ opened its innovative Job Readiness Training Center (JRTC) in Columbia, South Carolina. Developed in collaboration with community partners, the JRTC provides life and job skills classes (in addition to job readiness training, the JRTC also offers a range of "soft" skills courses designed to enhance a youth's chance of being successful in finding and keeping a job. Course curriculum includes: Tackling the Tough Skills - Attitude, Responsibility, Communication, Problem Solving, and Preparing for the Workplace; Resume and Cover Letter Writing, Interviewing Skills, Social Networking...Face-to-Face; Dressing for Success, Personal Grooming for Young Men & Women; Planning for a Future of Financial Success; Setting Priorities for Life; Time Management &

Organization; Business Entrepreneurship; Kids Law; ServSafe™ and Healthy Eating; Becoming Job Smart; and Trades Exposure - Carpentry, Plumbing, Electrical, Welding, and Office and Industrial Environments) to DJJ youth on probation, parole, or in committed status ranging primarily from ages 12 to 18, and other youth as part of the agency's prevention and intervention efforts. This facility is equipped with video conferencing and projection capabilities and, while centrally located on BRR in Columbia, the JRTC is accessible to remote sites across the state in county offices and wilderness programs. Instruction is provided by DJJ staff as well as community partners from different disciplines. The class sessions are taught in complete one-to-two-hour blocks, with certificates provided to participants upon completion. During FY 14-15, the JRTC expanded its mission to include a job development component. Four regional job developers are now working across the state to connect DJJ involved youth with employment, vocational training, and postsecondary education. Almost 2,000 youth were served through the JRTC in FY 14-15.

#### Job Readiness Training (JRT) Program for At-Risk Youth

##### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

DJJ's JRT Program is an employability training program designed for at-risk high school students ages 14-17. The program provides job skills training, career exposure, and community internship/work experience for participants at eight sites across the state. Each site is designed to serve 60 students per year through a 10-week program during after school hours in spring, fall, and summer cycles, with up to 20 students attending each cycle. JRT students receive 15 hours of job readiness skills training using the Tackling the Tough Skills curriculum, earning a stipend of \$7.25 for each hour of successful participation. After successfully completing the first four weeks, students begin working their 40-hour community internships where they also earn \$7.25 for each hour worked. In FY 14-15, DJJ's eight JRT sites served 474 at-risk students that successfully completed job skills training and paid internships/work experiences. DJJ plans to add eight additional JRT sites in 2016, bringing the total to 16 JRT sites across the state that will provide job training and employment services to 960 at-risk high school students each year.

SCVRD has agreements in place with DJJ that include a full-time VR counselor located at the BRR for provision of services for students and youth while at the facility and at Camp Aspen.

#### Youthful Offender Parole and Reentry Services (YOPRS)

##### OBJECTIVES 1, 3 | STRATEGIES 1.2, 1.3, 3.2

The SC Department of Corrections (SCDC) Division of YOPRS provides both institutional and community-based services for male and female offenders sentenced under the Youthful Offender Act (YOA). Eligible individuals must be between 17 and 25 years of age at the time of conviction and have no previous YOA convictions. The mission of this division is to reduce the recidivism of youthful offenders by utilizing evidence-based principles and practices that teach accountability, promote public safety, and enhance skill development with a focus on employability.

While incarcerated, SCDC's institutional staff provides youthful offenders with job and career development. Upon reentry into the community, the officers guide the offenders in locating resources within the community that can assist with employment and other reentry needs. Additionally, SCDC's intensive supervision officers provide parole supervision while assisting these young adults with seeking and maintaining employment.

#### Self-Paced In-Classroom Education Program (SPICE)

##### OBJECTIVES 1, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 4.2



The SPICE program is a voluntary inmate education and employment initiative that provides meaningful educational opportunities, such as vocational skills training, career readiness training, life skills training, and spiritual awareness. This initiative is a faith-based community partnership between SCDC, SC Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services (SCDPPPS), SCVRD, and the SC Technical College System. The SPICE program consists of two components: an institutional component and a community-based supervision component.

The Institutional Component is operated by SCDC at designated facilities throughout the state where inmates participate in a SPICE program curriculum consisting of educational, spiritual, social/life skills, vocational, health education, and wellness training.

SCDPPPS operates the community-based supervision component during which individuals on probation participate in vocational skills training or HSED preparation, attend spiritual events (e.g. Church), and are assigned community/church sponsors and mentors to assist in their transition. Offenders who choose not to participate in spiritual events may opt to participate in approved public works programs or community events with assistance from their sponsor or mentor.

Upon completion of the vocational/educational training element, SCDPPPS agents coordinate with community sponsors and mentors and other service agencies to facilitate offender employment.

Manning and Camille Graham One-Stops

#### OBJECTIVES 1, 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.2, 3.2, 4.2

DEW and SCDC are partnering to help offenders find jobs through a work ready initiative that launched in November 2014. With onsite support from SC Works at the Manning Correctional Institution, this venture allows inmates to apply to participate in a series of workshops that develop important capabilities including computer skills, interview techniques, resume writing, and work assessments testing. After completing the required workshops and intensive services, job-ready participants are referred to a recruiter or career development specialist for additional training and services. DEW also assists in getting each inmate that successfully completes the program bonded through the Federal Bonding Program.

One hundred-fifty employers across the state have been identified as willing to hire ex-offenders making it easier for staff to place newly released individuals or ex-offenders. As an additional incentive, DEW assists in guiding participating employers through the process of utilizing the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) which can reduce an employer's federal tax liability up to \$2,400 for each qualifying ex-offender hired.

Through June of 2017, 875 individuals have completed the program. Of those, over 67 percent have returned to work after their release.

The success of the Manning program led SCDEW and SCDC to expand the program into Camille Graham Correctional Institute, an all-female facility, in the summer of 2017.

SWDB Reentry Employment and Training Grant

#### OBJECTIVES 1, 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2

The State Workforce Development Board awarded two Reentry Employment and Training grants totaling \$420,000 to Trident Technical College and the Upstate Workforce Development Board. These grants are currently developing and implementing comprehensive employment and training services for pre-release inmates in county and state correctional facilities. Multiple cohorts of students have successfully completed the programs, with participants receiving occupational skills training and certifications in the construction industry.



## Operation Educate

### OBJECTIVES 1, 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2

Operation Educate is currently receiving funding through the Upstate Workforce Development Board and the Reentry, Employment and Training grant. A voluntary program, Operation Educate is a training and workforce development program serving the offender population housed at the Spartanburg County Detention Center. Spartanburg County Adult Education provides WorkKeys preparation and testing. Spartanburg Community College provides construction and soft skills training. The Fatherhood Coalition provides Economic Stability training. Operation Educate has partnered with the local judicial system, resulting in individuals participating in Operation Educate as part of their sentence. This is a significant best practice that demonstrates the partnership between the judicial system, detention facilities, and workforce development partners working towards the shared goal of improving offenders' ability to secure sustainable employment while filling South Carolina's need for a skilled workforce. Operation Educate has successfully completed three semesters, or cohorts, of students with total participation of 29 students with the funding from the State Workforce Development Board. Of these 29 students, 79 percent scored silver or higher on Workkeys, 71 percent are currently employed (15 out of 21 released, 8 remain incarcerated with released dates approaching quickly. Of the 8 remaining, 3 have job offers) and 93 percent have received occupational training and certifications from the National Center for Construction Education and Research. In partnership with the Upstate Workforce Board, SC Works Upstate, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Department, Spartanburg Community College, Spartanburg County Adult Education, and the Fatherhood Coalition will continue to provide job skills and vocational skills training to detainees. This effort is proving to have a significant impact on the individuals who participate in training, their families and the local community.

## Bounce Back

### *Objectives 1, 3 | Strategies 1.2, 1.3, 3.2*

Bounce Back is a multi-disciplinary program designed to help address many of the challenges faced by individuals with a criminal background. The program is designed to help prepare those with criminal backgrounds to enter or re-enter the workforce. Two of the greatest challenges facing individuals with a criminal background are finding and maintaining employment. The program brings together community partners for a common purpose and goal. Coordinated and offered by the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department, the program invites agencies and service providers to share information that will help participants learn greater skills for a life without crime. The day-long program introduces participants to many of the resources available in their community.

In 2016-2017, eighteen VR area offices offered the Bounce Back Program with attendance ranging from 12 to 70, with over 600 participants in all. Each office designed and offered a program they felt best addressed the needs of their clients with a criminal background. Common topics that all offices addressed included working with the client's Probation Counselor, gaining insight into remaining in compliance with SCDPPPS, as well as how to apply for a pardon and the expungement process. Additional topics included:

- The Value of Work
- Attitude for Success
- Finding Employment and Maintaining Employment
- Services found at the Library
- Quick Jobs (Technical Colleges)
- Alcohol & Drug Treatment and Awareness
- Client Success Story

- Addressing Transportation Challenges
- Employer Presentation (What they look for in an employee)
- Goal Setting
- Social Media: The Good and the Bad
- Time Management

The following partners have participated in the Bounce Back program: SC Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon, Technical Colleges, SC Department of Motor Vehicles, County Libraries, SC Works, the State Solicitors Office, SC Legal Services, Austin Wilkes Society, Goodwill Services and local nonprofits who provide resources.

Future plans for the Bounce Back program include having every SCVRD office offer a Bounce Back session. Each office has been asked to develop a similar program for clients who may be involved or have been involved with the Department of Juvenile Justice. The first office to conduct such a program was the Florence Office and it drew 25 participants from a four-county area, including Williamsburg County. Using the format for Bounce Back, presentations were offered focusing on the following topic areas: decision making, career interest, interviewing skills, and further opportunities in educational programs. This model is being shared with other offices, and scheduling has begun for the Youthful Offender Bounce Back program.

## Veterans and Eligible Spouses

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### Veterans Programs and Services

#### OBJECTIVES 1, 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2

SC Works representatives are available in centers throughout the state to help veterans transition into the workforce. Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff conduct employer outreach and job development in the local community to assist veterans in gaining employment, including conducting seminars for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops and establishing job search groups. Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists are trained to provide intensive case management services to veterans and eligible spouses with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE), and age priority veterans ages 18 to 24, including individual career coaching, job referral, resume preparation assistance, career fairs and job search workshops, jobs training programs, and referrals to supporting or training services.

SCVRD has an ongoing partnership with DEW's LVERs and DVOPs to coordinate outreach efforts with federal contractors. Federal contractors are required to establish an annual hiring benchmark for protected veterans and individuals with disabilities, or adopt the national benchmark provided by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP). Through this informal partnership, SCVRD and DEW LVERs and DVOPs identify work ready individuals and coordinate employment opportunities with federal contractors.

### Operation Palmetto Employment

#### OBJECTIVES 1, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.2, 4.1, 4.2

## Individuals with Disabilities

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### Pre-Employment Transition Services for Students with Disabilities

#### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

Based on FY 2017 school district report card data, the statewide total for high school students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) has reached 27,306 (SC Dept. of Education). Comparatively, in FY 2017 SCVRD opened 2,493

new cases for students referred through the school system, which represents 15 percent of the agency's total new referrals. Successful employment outcomes for clients referred by the school system increased to 1,052, representing 15 percent of all agency closures. Although SCVRD has made significant inroads in transition services in recent years by ramping up partnerships in schools and dedicating more staffing to school-to-work transition, to meet the new WIOA requirements and the need indicated by the total number of students receiving Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) services, additional resources and continued focus on this population will be required.

#### Job Driven Vocational Training Programs

##### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

SCVRD continues to develop job driven skills training based on specific business needs in local communities. Skills training is delivered through the department's local area offices in partnership with community entities including technical colleges to grow skilled talent pools from which local business partners can recruit and hire. Used in conjunction with other statewide workforce development efforts, this individualized training assists individuals with disabilities to access training that is customized to meet their needs and the needs of businesses. This initiative is coordinated through SCVRD's Business Services Team, whose members also collaborate at the local and regional level on interagency business services teams including all WIOA core partners.

An example of this customized training approach is the partnership with Ruiz Foods. Over the past two years, Ruiz Foods has become a valuable VR partner that provides employment opportunities for VR clients. They have hired more than fifty VR clients who successfully completed the Manufacturing Certification Program provided by the Southeastern Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SiMT) at Florence Darlington Technical College. Classes at SiMT are tailored to a business's specific needs. The duration, content, and frequency that a class is offered can be scaled based on business requirements and the number of VR clients available for the training. Clients who complete the class receive OSHA 10, Six Sigma and forklift training certification. VR clients are pre-screened to determine if they will be a good match for Ruiz, and the customized training provides the clients with the exact skills they require.

#### Job Readiness Training Centers

##### OBJECTIVES 1, 3 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 3.2

Local SCVRD job readiness training centers are working within their communities to identify demand-driven training opportunities and needs. The SCVRD training centers utilize customized job readiness training contracts to build foundational skills and refer qualified clients to business partners for employment opportunities.

#### Able South Carolina (SC)

##### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2

Able SC is a Center for Independent Living (CIL) that is designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities and provides an array of independent living services, including one-on-one and group training on topics such as employment soft skills, transportation utilization, accommodation requests, and transition from high school to post-secondary life.

Through funding from the SC Department of Education, SC Commission for the Blind, and local United Ways, Able SC provides independent living skills and pre-employment transition services to current middle and high school students with disabilities in the classroom.

Able SC is approved by the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) to serve ticket beneficiaries as an Employment Network (EN) under SSA's Ticket to Work program (discussed in more detail below), and also serves as the host and facilitator for the SC Disability Employment Coalition and the SC Employment First Initiative, two collaborative efforts that addresses employment barriers for individuals with disabilities.

Able SC hosts EQUIP, which is a self-advocacy and peer support group for young adults with disabilities run by young adults with disabilities. The goals of EQUIP are to promote self-advocacy and disability rights for young adults, while also educating the community on the importance of including input from youth with disabilities. While EQUIP does not solely focus on employment, it does assist young adults with disabilities in obtaining and building necessary skills to be successful in a job.

Able Access is a fee for service program offered by Able SC to promote accessible and inclusive environments within businesses and government agencies. Staff provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) trainings and consultations. These services include but are not limited to policy and procedure review, onsite accessibility survey, testing on online property for screen reader/magnifier accessibility, and tailored staff trainings in a wide variety of disability topics.

Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council)

OBJECTIVES 1, 3 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 3.2

The DD Council is federally funded by the Developmental Disabilities Act (DD Act) and consists of consumers and family members, DD Act partners, and non-governmental organizations. The DD Council provides leadership in planning, funding, and implementing initiatives that lead to improved quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families. The council recently funded several pilot projects across the state, including Ready, Set to Go to Work; and STEP for SC. In addition to providing employment-training experiences for students with disabilities, these pilot projects also fund the training of job coaches and other support professionals who work directly with students.

Ready, Set to Go to Work

OBJECTIVES 1, 3 | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2

Ready, Set to Go to Work is a pilot project based in the Clover, SC School District providing evidence-based training and job experiences for students with disabilities. Students receive classroom instruction on topics such as resume writing, interviewing, socializing in the workplace, and job accommodations. An employment specialist works with local businesses to connect students to community-based employment. Thus far, 1,100 students have participated in the program. This number is expected to grow as the program continues to serve special education students in the Clover High School.

High School / High Tech (HS/HT)

OBJECTIVES 1, 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.1

SCVRD's HS/HT program exposes high school students with disabilities who are on a diploma track to careers in science, technology, engineering, and math. Students tour businesses and technical colleges and engage in internships. The program also promotes postsecondary education.

SC Disability Employment Coalition

OBJECTIVES 1, 2, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.2, 2.3, 4.1

The SC Disability Employment Coalition is a statewide systems improvement effort that comprises a broad stakeholder group working to improve employment recruitment, retention, and advancement for South Carolinians with disabilities. Primary activities of the coalition include raising awareness among South Carolina's businesses regarding hiring people with disabilities, supporting systems to ensure employment is the preferred service option and outcome for people with disabilities, disseminating information relating to employing people with disabilities, and collecting quantitative and qualitative data about the experiences of employers and employees with disabilities, among other activities.

In 2016, a consortium of partners working through the SC Disability Employment Coalition received a Partnership in Employment Systems Change grant known as the SC Employment First Initiative. The purpose of the grant is to increase competitive integrated employment outcomes for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The initiative had three broad goals: 1.) Equip high school students and recent graduates with intellectual and development disabilities with the skills, awareness, and confidence needed to enter competitive employment. 2.) Unify and empower South Carolina education professionals, employment service providers, families, and the community at large towards support of Employment First principles. 3.) Develop and expand supports for South Carolina-based employers who hire persons with disabilities in competitive, community-based positions. A major focus of the SC Employment First Initiative is to implement policy that competitive and integrated employment shall be considered the first option for any individual with disabilities applying for or receiving services from the state or any of its political subdivisions. In fact, Employment First legislation is pending in the South Carolina legislature which would have a positive effect on employment for people with disabilities.

Transition Alliance of South Carolina (TASC)

#### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2

The Transition Alliance of South Carolina is a broad systems improvement and technical assistance resource for professionals working with students with disabilities. Their primary outcome is to empower students to transition into community-based employment. Local transition programs choose to enhance their curriculum through a variety of evidence-based transition practices, including student-led IEP meetings, goal setting and attainment, socializing in the workplace, job accommodations, and other activities meant to empower students with disabilities to control their career strategy. TASC consists of a state-level interagency steering committee that supports local interagency transition teams across the state.

Business Partnership Networks (BPN)

#### OBJECTIVES 2, 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2

SCVRD has a Business Partnership Network (BPN) in each local office to gain input from local businesses regarding employment trends and needs. These networks are led by the local business development specialists, who work closely with local businesses to identify needs, improve service delivery, identify training options, provide skilled candidates with disabilities for employment, and coordinate VR rehabilitation engineering consultation for worksite accommodations for employees with disabilities. Business partners provide guidance regarding SCVRD resources and activities.

One example of effective leadership in creating an inclusive workforce is the Walgreens Distribution Center in Anderson, South Carolina. SCVRD has partnered with this center since its inception to identify and train employment candidates. As cited by RespectAbility: "A study of Walgreens Distribution Centers" conducted in 2012 showed that "workers with disabilities had a turnover rate 48 percent lower than that of the nondisabled population, with medical expenses 67 percent lower and time-off expenses 73 percent lower (Cann, S. (2012). *Disability Assurance*. Retrieved March, 21, 2016 from HR.BLR.com®, Compliance Tools for HR Managers,

<http://hr.blr.com/HR-news/Discrimination/Workplace-Diversity/Diversity-inclusion-your-bottom-line/>), RespectAbility USA.). SCVRD concurs with the input received that this is critically important given the sectors of South Carolina's economy that have traditionally high rates of turnover: Hospitality, Food Service, and Retail Trade. Meaningful and strategic outreach to employers and business owners that assists in reducing stigmas and misconceptions regarding disabilities and accommodations can serve to expand workplace diversity.

Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, provides yet another avenue for enhancing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Through these regulations, federal contractors and subcontractors have a utilization goal to make sure that 7 percent of their employees across all job groups are qualified people with disabilities.

#### STEP for SC

##### OBJECTIVES 1, 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.3, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2

STEP for SC is a pilot project executed by Community Options, Inc. in the Midlands region that connects high school students with disabilities with community-based career experiences. A job coach assesses students' job skills and provides training, so students are able to participate in community-based internships at local businesses. Job coaches work with students to transition internship experiences and supports into job accommodations and employment.

#### Career Boost

##### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

Career BOOST (Building Occupational Options for Students in Transition) is a contractual partnership between the SCCB, South Carolina's Independent Living Centers, the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina, and public schools. Under this contract, eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities receive classroom instruction in Self-Advocacy Skills and Work Readiness (Soft) Skills. Additionally, students with disabilities may participate in Career Exploration through paid internships, job shadowing, work place tours, and informational interviewing. Career BOOST also funds college and university campus tours that include meetings with academic advisors, disability resource centers, student housing, and financial aid officials. The purpose of Career BOOST is to provide these "Pre-Employment Transition Services" to give high school aged students with disabilities career exploration and preparation experiences before exiting the public school system.

#### Junior Student Internship Program (JSIP)

##### OBJECTIVES 1, 3 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 3.2

The SCCB provides eligible high school students with an opportunity to gain valuable work experience during a summer internship with business partners throughout the state. Participants receive a stipend upon successful completion of the program. This program is also available to college students.

#### Summer Teen Program

##### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2

Summer Teens is an eight (8) week summer residential program located at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center in Columbia. Summer Teens includes work readiness skills training, soft skills training, self-advocacy skills training, and work-based learning experiences. Summer Teens 2017 included a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Career Exploration Week where scientists from NASA, San Jose State University, the Space Telescope

Institute, and the International Astronomical Union used 3-D printer technology to help blind students explore STEM careers using tactile three-dimensional models.

Rallying for Inclusive, Successful Employment (RISE)

#### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.2

RISE is a comprehensive, systematic approach to increasing employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Projects and services include: supporting and participating in the SC Disability Employment Coalition, hosting community workshops for families, partnering with the University of South Carolina (USC) to improve data collection on barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities, and providing individualized employment and empowerment services to consumers.

Ticket to Work

#### OBJECTIVES 1, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.2, 4.2

Ticket to Work is a voluntary program for people receiving disability benefits from Social Security and whose primary goal is to find good careers and have a better self-supporting future. Consumers may receive employment services through an employment network provider, including career counseling, socialization to the workplace, and job support advice, among others.

Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA)

#### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.2

Walton Options for Independent Living and Able SC are WIPA providers that empower SSI and SSDI beneficiaries with disabilities to make informed decisions regarding their career strategies and transitioning to self-sufficiency. Community Work Incentives Coordinators provide in-depth counseling about benefits and the effect of work on those benefits; conduct outreach efforts to beneficiaries of SSI and SSDI (and their families) who are potentially eligible to participate in federal or state work incentives program; and work in cooperation with federal, state, and private agencies and nonprofit organizations that serve social security beneficiaries with disabilities.

Project SEARCH

#### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.2

Project SEARCH is an international program first developed in 1996 at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital. There are 300 programs across 46 states and five other countries. South Carolina currently has seven Project SEARCH locations: Spartanburg, Richland, Lexington, Anderson, Oconee Pickens, Greenville, and Fort Mill.

Project SEARCH is a unique, business-led transition program designed to provide education and job training to young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Students participate in the program for a full school year. They receive classroom instruction, including training in employability and independent living skills, and master core job skills through three 9- to 10-week internship rotations. The Spartanburg Regional Hospital site graduated eight students in 2015 and expanded their class to 12 students for 2016. Additional Project SEARCH sites have expanded to the following areas and host business sites: Lexington-Richland District Five (Palmetto Health Baptist Parkridge), Pickens (Baptist Easley Hospital), Anderson District Five (AnMed Health), Fort Mill (Piedmont Medical Center), Richland District One (Embassy Suites), and Greenville (Bon Secours Health System).

Upon successful completion of the program, students are employed in nontraditional, complex and rewarding jobs in the host-company and community. Along with job skills, the Project SEARCH program gives students self-confidence, opportunities, and hope for a thriving future.

Aging Workers and Workers that Acquire Disabilities

#### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.2

Identifying and meeting the needs of older workers to support their continued participation in employment is essential to meeting the need for talent and experience in the workforce. As an example, SCVRD provides Job Retention Services (JRS) for individuals who are currently employed but may face the jeopardy of losing their employment due to a variety of factors. Through evaluation of their strengths and abilities, identification of supports, and the use of rehabilitation technology, older workers can often maintain employment or retrain in a new role before losing their jobs.

As highlighted in the 34th Institute on Rehabilitation Issues titled “The Aging Workforce,” services and interventions must be adapted to meet the diverse needs of mature workers. This includes, but is not limited to, timely provision of supports, identification of training needs and process/procedure barriers, and planning for effective strategies to enhance outcomes and work options later in life (The Aging Workforce Primary Study Group, 34<sup>th</sup> IRI, University of Arkansas CURRENTS, 2009. 34th IRI ).

#### Homeless Population

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Back to Work Program

#### OBJECTIVE 1 | STRATEGIES 1.2

The Back to Work Program was launched by the DEW in collaboration with Transitions Homeless Recovery Center and the Main Street United Methodist Church, Columbia, South Carolina. This program was created to provide individuals living in transitional housing, a homeless shelter in this instance, with the practical skills they need to find gainful employment and to help them reintegrate into the workforce.

The five-week program begins with workshops designed to identify individuals’ barriers to employment and provide them with tools to overcome personal obstacles. The program’s training includes career exploration, conflict resolution, transferable job skills, building self-esteem, and maintaining financial stability. Each component of the program is designed to effect immediate positive change. The program’s goals are not only assisting participants with practical skills and obtaining employment but also teaching them how to sustain long-term employment.

The key to success for a Back to Work participant is the assignment of a job coach who mentors and holds the participant accountable throughout the program. Job coaches provide intense case management, assist with job placement, and guide participants as they transition into the workforce. This process may continue for up to 90 days upon the individual’s graduation from the program.

After graduation, participants attend a special hiring event with employers who have committed to interviewing Back to Work Program participants for their current job openings. Partnerships with Dress for Success Columbia and the Columbia Suit Project provide professional work attire for the graduates for interviews and once they are employed. Through December of 2017, 84 individuals have graduated from the program with Transitions; so far, 61 participants found employment after graduating. Those who are not directly employed after graduation continue to work with a Workforce Consultant.



Because of the success of the Back to Work program with Transitions, the program was expanded, and a new partnership was developed with Serenity Place in Greenville, South Carolina. The Greenville partnership has graduated twenty-one individuals and a new session was launched in January of 2018.

## Low-Income

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*Recipients of SNAP/TANF:* Families receiving SNAP and TANF often face real barriers to employment and sometimes have difficulty finding and keeping high-wage employment. Recognizing the importance of expanding career opportunities that lead to long-term self-sufficiency, DSS provides employment and training services for SNAP and TANF recipients, such as: resume assistance, soft skills development, job search assistance, and referrals to employers and partner organizations. DSS works to assist participants with removing barriers that prevent successful employment and to coach participants through the process of obtaining and retaining employment.

DSS employs Workforce Consultants who work with employers and training providers across the state to develop opportunities for SNAP and TANF recipients to assist in achieving their highest level of self-sufficiency. TANF Workforce Consultants and SNAP Employment & Training Coordinators promote Work Experience, OJT, Workfare, and Family Independence Tax Credit programs in their local area.

SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) has ongoing partnerships with state agencies, technical colleges, and community-based organizations across South Carolina. DSS partners with Adult Education to help SNAP E&T recipients gain skills, training, and work experience that increase self-sufficiency. Emphasis has been placed on obtaining a high school diploma (HSD) or high school equivalency diploma (HSED), and NCRC™.

In an effort to better align and coordinate programs that help individuals prepare for competitive employment, SNAP E&T employees are co-located in each of the comprehensive SC Works Centers across the State and in three of the satellite centers. More recently, DSS contracted the TANF program called STARS (Striving to Achieve Rapid Success). The contract includes a requirement for the selected vendor to co-locate TANF staff within all SC Works Comprehensive Centers and requires participation in local area business services meetings. The program is expected to be implemented in July 2018.

## Project HOPE

### OBJECTIVES 1, 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 3.2, 4.1

Project HOPE is a collaborative initiative funded by a US Department of Health and Human Services' Health Professions Opportunity Grant (HPOG), which provides funding for training and employment in the allied health field for low-income individuals, veterans, and youth aging out of foster care. Low-income is defined as an annual income less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Participants attend a five-week intensive, hands-on academic training session at a technical college in one of five locations across the state (Florence, Greenwood, Charleston, Rock Hill or Columbia). Upon successful completion of this training, health care career preparation is provided through continuing education and academic degree programs at any of the 16 colleges in the state's Technical College System. Participants receive employment-readiness and placement services during the course of the program and again upon completion of the training. Participants also receive case management and supportive services if needed (e.g. transportation, child care, and help with employment-related expenses).

## Pathways Scholarship Program

### OBJECTIVES 1, 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 4.1

The Pathways Scholarship Program (PSP) is a scholarship opportunity available for participants in the SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) program. These scholarships are awarded to SNAP recipients who wish to

further their education and to gain skills and certifications that can lead to employment. The PSP provides scholarships that will pay for tuition and books for SNAP recipients attending any accredited organization that provides employment-related certifications within South Carolina.

## B. THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

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Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.

### STRENGTHS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA WORKFORCE DELIVERY SYSTEM

#### PRIORITY FOR STATE LEADERSHIP

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Workforce development is a top priority for state leaders. The work being done by multiple partner agencies and programs across the state to train and educate job seekers and connect them with employers who are seeking skilled individuals for high-demand, high-wage jobs has the support of key partners, as well as business and industry leaders.

For example, in June of 2016, Governor Nikki Haley signed the South Carolina Workforce Development Act (Act 252). The Act creates a Coordinating Council for Workforce Development (CCWD) which includes representatives of workforce, education, economic development, and business and industry. The purpose of the Council is to better align state-wide efforts related to workforce, education, and training. Initial Council activities included a deep-dive into the issue of data alignment and integrity, mapping state resources for education, and surveying business needs.

As evidenced by the recent development and adoption of a 3-year strategic plan, the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) continues to be engaged and passionate about the needs of South Carolina's job seekers and employers alike, and to develop strategies and supporting policies that align with the Governor's vision for workforce development and that of other key leaders.

#### PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

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At both the state and local levels partners are working in collaboration to develop a customer-focused, outcome-driven workforce delivery system. In several comprehensive centers across the state, partners are co-located to provide streamlined services to job seekers and employers. In instances where partners are not physically co-located, staff have developed and implemented strong linkages and referral processes that ensure that job seekers receive appropriate services. Recent guidance to the LWDAs provided a template referral process that can be used in all areas to ensure consistency across the state.

Perhaps the strongest evidence of partnership is the ongoing development of a state partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Phase I of the MOU covered 12 agencies and was signed by 14 entities, including the SWDB and Gov. Haley, in 2015. The emphasis of Phase I is coordination of services among partners to foster cooperation, better education, and specify the responsibilities of state agencies and mandatory partner programs under WIA/WIOA. State partners are currently in the process of finalizing the Phase II of the state partner MOU, which will incorporate and include Phase I and will establish shared accountability of resources for SC Works center services.

#### SERVICE DELIVERY TO PRIORITY POPULATIONS

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South Carolina recognizes the opportunity to enhance and better coordinate the services provided to at-risk populations, including Veterans, disconnected youth, individuals with disabilities, offenders, and recipients of

public assistance. For the development of the initial Unified State Plan submitted in 2016, a collaborative work group was formed to examine ways to better serve individuals with barriers to employment through the workforce development system, such as:

- developing and implementing a universal intake process that reduces duplication and streamlines the service delivery process;
- creating an effective statewide referral and follow-up system to ensure that job seekers receive the appropriate services from partner programs;
- making the delivery system accessible to all job seekers, especially those with disabilities and language barriers; and
- reaching outside of the traditional delivery system to serve the hard to serve.

Additionally, the SWDB has formed a Priority Populations Committee to address the needs of all priority populations through increased outreach and policy development. The Committee will be supported by an Advisory Council consisting of subject matter experts who serve one or more of the populations identified. Similarly, each LWDB has a youth and a separate disability standing committee. LWDB committees receive support and guidance from their staff and the statewide Priority Populations Coordinator (formerly known as State Youth Coordinator).

#### INCREASED RESOURCE SHARING

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South Carolina has issued guidance making each Local Board responsible for ensuring that an MOU concerning the operations and funding of the local SC Works system is developed, negotiated, and executed annually with all of the required workforce system partners within its local area. The MOU must take the form of an “umbrella” document, agreed to and signed by all workforce system partners within the local area. The Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) is a mandatory component of the MOU and contains a total operating budget and individual budgets for infrastructure and additional services costs for each of the SC Works centers within a local area. The agreed upon infrastructure and additional shared costs and cost-sharing methodology identified in the IFA is a product of local discussion and negotiation.

A MOU template, which includes the IFA, has been developed in collaboration with core and other partners at the State level to increase consistency among all partners and maximize partner participation in the development and execution of the agreements. Additionally, annual negotiations for the IFA are conducted jointly with all partners reaching agreement simultaneously. Each required partner entering into the MOU/IFA development and negotiation process designates a specific individual with authority to commit financially and programmatically on behalf of the required partner. This individual may be staff from a State agency’s central, regional or local office or a local representative providing services for a State-level entity through a contract, grant or similar agreement. The State policy and guidance has thus far had a positive impact on increasing the alignment of programs and resources to support a comprehensive workforce system that seamlessly provides integrated services that are accessible to all job seekers, workers, and businesses.

#### WEAKNESSES OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA WORKFORCE DELIVERY SYSTEM

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Identifying weaknesses is important but addressing them with a strategic approach is vital to overcoming them to ensure a more robust and effective workforce system. Each weakness below is being addressed by one or more objectives and corresponding strategies of the Unified Plan.

#### LIMITED PROGRAM ALIGNMENT AND COORDINATION

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OBJECTIVES 1, 2 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4

Key partners and stakeholders are engaged at the state and local level. Although partner programs are co-located in many LWDA's there is an opportunity to better align and coordinate programs and services to enhance collaborative efforts and resources.

## LIMITED SYSTEM INTEGRATION

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### OBJECTIVE 2 | STRATEGIES 2.3, 2.4

WIOA Titles I (Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs) and III (Wagner-Peyser program), and the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program share a case management and data and reporting system that is separate from the systems used by Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Commission for the Blind. The use of individual management information systems creates a significant barrier to both program alignment and common performance reporting.

## INCONSISTENT SERVICE DELIVERY

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### OBJECTIVES 1, 2, 3 | STRATEGIES 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1

Most workforce, economic development, and education programs are managed locally, and the quality of service delivery may vary by area. A number of measures are underway to improve the consistency of service delivery, including: the implementation of SC Works Center Standards and WIOA Eligible Training Provider provisions. The SC Works Center Standards address service delivery to job seekers and employers and center management, and are used by LWDBs to evaluate effectiveness, programmatic and physical accessibility, and continuous improvement of the SC Works delivery system. Along the same lines, training providers are now required to submit program data and meet certain requirements to be eligible to receive WIOA training funds. This will help ensure that participants receive high-quality training in high-demand, high-wage occupations.

## JOB SEEKER INTEREST INCONSISTENT WITH IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS AND INDUSTRIES

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### OBJECTIVES 3, 4 | STRATEGIES 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2

Local WIOA programs use Labor Market Information (LMI) to determine high-demand occupations and industries for which they will fund training programs. While demand is up, the perception of manufacturing and other STEM related occupations as viable careers still needs improvement. As such, there is an opportunity to better educate job seekers about the high-demand, high-wage occupations in South Carolina.

## TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

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### *Objectives 1, 4 | Strategies 1.2, 4.2*

As discussed in the Economic and Workforce Analysis, many South Carolinians face varying challenges and may need more specific or dedicated services to meet their employment and training needs. Although there are a number of programs that address these barriers to employment, there remains a need for a more proactive and collaborative approach to providing progressive support services. Comments received from a number of partners emphasized the need to address the transportation, child care, and health care barriers in the state, and the orientation and mobility, and assistive technology barriers that individuals with disabilities specifically face. In response to the transportation gap, for example, the SWDB funded five Transportation Demo Projects that have improved access to transportation in rural areas, which has removed or reduced this barrier for individuals who wish to access employment and training. Additionally, many of the programs discussed in the Workforce, Education, and Activities Analysis provide transportation and childcare vouchers to eligible participants. Co-enrollment is strongly encouraged across all programs to ensure that eligible individuals receive the full range of

services available to them. Despite the efforts of many organizations and programs, there is still work to be done around helping individuals remove these barriers from their lives so that they can successfully participate in education and training, and ultimately employment.

### C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

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

South Carolina is positioned to continue providing high-quality workforce development programs and activities that prepare job seekers for high-demand, high-wage careers. The state's focus on partnership and collaboration will lead to better alignment of programs and resources creating a more customer-centered workforce delivery system.

Job Seeker Services. There is at least one comprehensive SC Works Center in each LWDA and one or more satellite centers or access points. Through these centers, job seekers can access career and education and training programs and services. Individuals can also get assistance with filing a claim for UI benefits and reemployment assistance, including but not limited to: looking for a job, resume preparation, and interviewing skills workshops. Job seekers can also access employment services and manage UI benefits remotely using SC Works Online Services (SCWOS) and the MyBenefits portal, respectively. In many local areas, partner programs are co-located, or staff is cross-trained to provide information or make appropriate referrals to other programs and services.

Adult Education providers deliver adult education and literacy activities, including GED preparation and testing, through 51 school-district programs, one of which is the Palmetto Unified School District of SC, and five community-based organizations. Adult Education teachers are trained educators who are required to hold and maintain valid SC teacher licenses. Additionally, programs are flexible in meeting the demands of individuals seeking services.

SCVRD has 24 area offices and 24 work training centers across the state. Through a team approach, SCVRD staff work to prepare clients for employment opportunities within their local labor market, as well as develop relationships with business and industry to individually match clients with employment opportunities that fit their strengths, abilities, capabilities, and skill sets. Comprehensive programs, including occupational therapy and physical therapy services, rehabilitation engineering, IT training centers, and a residential alcohol and drug treatment center further expand the capacity of SCVRD to meet the individualized needs of eligible individuals with disabilities.

Similarly, SCCB has 9 area offices across the state through which vocational rehabilitation services for the blind are delivered. SCCB staff work to prepare consumers for employment opportunities within their local labor market, as well as develop relationships with business and industry to individually match consumers with employment opportunities that fit their unique strengths, skills, abilities, capabilities, and informed choice. Through the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center consumers learn adjustment to blindness skills such as Braille Literacy, Orientation and Mobility Skills, and Daily Living Skills that support employment and receive individualized and group therapy to deal with emotional adjustment to blindness. SCCB works in partnership with South Carolina's K-12 and higher education systems to enable individuals who are blind or visually impaired to obtain the education and training necessary for employment.

There are a number of education and training opportunities available to job seekers through the technical college system and private providers. The SC Technical College System has a network of 16 technical colleges serving the 46 counties. Many of these colleges have satellite campuses making them accessible to job seekers in rural

counties and offer online and non-traditional formats to reach those who cannot participate in the traditional classroom experience.

Business/Employer Services. Employers can use the SC Works delivery system for employee recruitment and other services. Additionally, integrated business services teams have been organized in all LWDAs. The makeup of these teams varies by area, but the idea is to develop strategic partnerships with other agencies and to align the resources and services provided by each. This structure reduces duplication, ensures that employers have a single, coordinated point of contact, and ensures services are delivered efficiently.

Partnership and Collaboration. Reduced funding is a very real concern for many programs. The SWDB, through its efforts to develop and strengthen partnerships with workforce partners, has positioned the state to work toward aligning programs and funding so that programs can continue to provide the same level of high-quality service with less funding. The improvement in resource sharing among partners at the local level is an example of this partnership and collaboration in action.

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## 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—

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### 1. VISION

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

#### SOUTH CAROLINA'S STRATEGIC VISION:

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To cultivate the development of a skilled workforce and a responsive workforce system that meets the needs of business and industry leading to sustainable growth, economic prosperity, and global competitiveness for South Carolina.

The State's vision is supplemented by four guiding principles:

- Focus solely on activities that support the mission;
- Evaluate economic and labor market data, and actively listen to an inclusive group of partners, employers, and job seekers;
- Base strategies and decisions on data and input; and
- Be accountable for outcomes that support business growth and economic opportunities for all South Carolinians.

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### 2. GOALS

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

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

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

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

As a convener of the workforce system, the South Carolina Workforce Development Board (SWDB) is committed to developing a skilled pipeline of workers to meet the needs of business and industry in order to promote sustainable economic growth and global competitiveness. In order to move towards this vision, SWDB has adopted four objectives:

- Identify, invest in, and support educational and developmental strategies to better prepare a skilled workforce for current and emerging jobs
- Align resources, policies, and strategies between state, local, and regional systems to continuously improve outcomes for businesses, individuals, and partners
- Identify current and future workforce needs of South Carolina business and industry to support career pathways in growth sector
- Engage job seekers, employers, and other workforce partners through marketing and outreach and articulate a value proposition specific to each

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### 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 Departments of Labor and Education have designated certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators for the first plan submission. Indicators designated as “baseline” vary by program. A “baseline” indicator is one for which the state will not propose an expected level of performance in the state plan until the baseline has been met. The timeframes for proposing and reporting on “baseline” measures differ by measure. For example, four quarters of information is not available for the Employment Rate in the Fourth Quarter After Exit until the second quarter of Program Year (PY) 2018; while four quarters of data is available for the Median Earnings the Second Quarter After Exit measure in the fourth quarter of Program Year 2017. This is commonly referred to by the Departments as a “phased-in” approach to setting levels of performance for certain indicators for specific programs.

**DEW:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter Employment after Exit and Median Earnings (except Youth) proposed levels of performance for Title I (Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth) and Title III (Wagner-Peyser) programs, and Credential Attainment proposed level of performance for Title I were negotiated with the Department of Labor in August, 2016, for Program Years 2016 and 2017. The primary indicators of performance Median Earnings (Youth) and Measurable Skills Gain are designated as “baseline” indicators for Title I programs; the Effectiveness in Serving Employers primary indicator is designated as “baseline” for both Title I and Title III programs. Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 6-17 indicated that guidance on the WIOA performance accountability system negotiation process for Program Years 2018 and 2019 would be forthcoming. The State is still at a disadvantage to propose and negotiate levels for primary indicators of performance due to lack of data provided from the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) and the absence of a Statistical Adjustment Model (SAM). However, the state’s proposed levels of performance based on the limited information available are outlined in Appendix 1. The methodology behind the State’s proposed levels of performance is a result of extremely limited performance data provided for Program Years 2016 and 2017. At this time, it is unreasonable to propose or negotiate a higher level of performance than was negotiated for PY 2017 without substantive data to support the request.

**State Measures:** In September, 2017, The State Workforce Development Board unanimously approved a Participant Cost Rate Policy, establishing that each local workforce development board shall ensure that Adult and Dislocated Worker program expenditures meet a minimum participant cost rate of 30 percent. The annually evaluated rate, effective July 1, 2018, will be calculated using combined local Adult and Dislocated Worker program expenditures and will include both carry-in and new funds. The policy also includes a plan of action should a local area fall below the 30 percent rate.

Realizing that annual expenditure rates, customer services, and performance outcomes justify the continued national investment in the workforce system, the State Board renewed a policy for local workforce development area Fund Utilization. This policy requires each local workforce development board ensure that an annual 70 percent fund utilization rate is met for each of the WIOA Title I funding streams (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth). The rate will be calculated for each local area by dividing total program and administration expenditures by total available funds (carry-in and current annual allocation) for each funding stream. The policy also includes a plan of action should a local area fall below the 30 percent rate.

**Adult Education:** The proposed level of performance for the primary indicator Measurable Skills Gain was determined by using a 3-year aggregate average for Advancing an Educational Functioning Level. Advancing an Educational Functioning Level is determined by pre and post assessing students by administering the TABE, Best PLUS, and Best Literacy Assessments. All other measures are designated as “baseline” indicators.

**SCVRD and SCCB:** All six WIOA primary indicators of performance as described in WIOA sec. 116(b)(2)(A) are designated as “baseline” measures for Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

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#### 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.



South Carolina has a vast workforce development system consisting of multiple public and private partners, the goal of which is to facilitate financial stability and economic prosperity for employers, individuals, and communities. We will evaluate the overall effectiveness of our system using the following tools: (1) WIOA common performance measures that assess employment, earnings, credential attainment, skills gain, and employer engagement; (2) SC Works Certification Standards that assess system management, job seeker services, and employer services; and (3) SWDB Strategic Plan key performance indicators.

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## 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).

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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).

### OBJECTIVE 1

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Identify, invest in, and support educational and developmental strategies to better prepare a skilled workforce for current and emerging jobs

#### STRATEGY 1.1

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Identify pathways to in-demand jobs through credentials and work-based learning as required by industries and align training providers and career pathways to meet those needs.

#### STRATEGY 1.2

---

Identify, develop, and support policies that highlight or focus on priority populations in the workforce system.

#### STRATEGY 1.3

---

Create tools and templates to better understand the growth of South Carolina's talent pipeline and available workforce resources.

### OBJECTIVE 2

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Align resources, policies, and strategies between state, local, and regional systems to continuously improve outcomes for businesses, individuals, and partners

#### STRATEGY 2.1

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Develop and maintain a strategic alliance between state and local workforce development board members to support system thinking and establish influence across workforce partners.

## STRATEGY 2.2

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Enhance existing business services by creating and promoting an enhanced model of business services.

## STRATEGY 2.3

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Support the structure of a high profile governing body to communicate awareness on regulation and policy concerning workforce development.

## STRATEGY 2.4

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Develop data driven standards for system performance and accountability.

## OBJECTIVE 3

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Identify current and future workforce needs of South Carolina business and industry to support career pathways in growing sectors

## STRATEGY 3.1

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Encourage business and industry driven approaches to strengthen Sector Partnerships.

## STRATEGY 3.2

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Develop and implement Career Pathways initiatives based on employment needs to enhance value for job seekers and businesses.

## OBJECTIVE 4

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Engage job seekers, employers, and other workforce partners through marketing and outreach and articulate a value proposition specific to each

## STRATEGY 4.1

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Increase engagement and develop awareness with business and industry, job seekers, and workforce stakeholders.

## STRATEGY 4.2

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Identify and implement promising practices to develop and maintain cohesiveness and coordination across the workforce system.

## SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS AND TALENT PIPELINE

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Developing a skilled talent pipeline is at the heart of South Carolina's strategic plan for workforce development. Using sector strategies framework to align partners' programs and resources centered on growing critical industries, South Carolina will create an ongoing talent pipeline that meets business needs and creates family-sustaining careers for job seekers and workers.

The South Carolina initiative started in 2015 with the formation of a State Leadership Team. The **Leadership Team** is co-chaired by the SC Departments of Commerce, Education, Employment & Workforce, and the SC State Technical College System. The Leadership Team is additionally comprised of: key executives from the SC Department of Social Services, SC Vocational Rehabilitation, SC Commission for the Blind and other agencies involved in the South Carolina workforce development system; other

public and educational stakeholder representatives from the state, regional, and local levels; and business and industry representatives, including those from targeted industry sectors. The Leadership Team provides social, political and intellectual power as leaders and stakeholders in the State's broader Talent Development system.

A collaborative Data Sub-Committee was formed to collect and evaluate data pertinent to the identification of planning regions and state-level target industries. After a thorough data analysis, the state leadership team adopted the following clusters as the statewide industry sectors:

- Diversified Manufacturing
  - Metal and Metal Fabricating (including Vehicles)
  - Textiles
  - Lumber and Wood Products
  - Chemicals, Rubber, and Plastics
- Business and Information Technology Services
- Healthcare
- Transportation, Logistics, and Wholesale Trade
- Construction

Regional Workforce Planning and Implementation Teams are organized in each region. In Phase I, Regional Planning Teams completed several activities, including a regional self-assessment, asset identification, and a SWOT analysis. A thorough data analysis was also conducted for each region. The regional teams used the data to select target industries for their initial development and implementation efforts.

Phase II efforts were concluded in 2016 and produced state and regional workforce supply gap analyses, a draft asset map of federal and state resources for employment and training services, and a draft framework for state and regional roles in business engagement. New partnerships were forged with business and industry leaders, as well as state educational leaders, to include the Commission on Higher Education, and existing partnerships were strengthened. Regional teams received individual guidance and assistance on the continuation of activities and strategies identified in Phase I. Each region was also awarded a \$25,000 grant to financially assist with implementation activities. At the state-level, a Sector Strategies Coordinator was hired to facilitate the state's talent pipeline efforts.

The efforts in Phase II generated the platform for the subsequent component in talent development: the development of Career Pathways that are aligned with high-demand, high-growth sectors and occupations.

Phase III will support the integration of sector strategies and career pathways at a system-wide operational level with a focus on: expanding a system-wide model of sector strategies as the vehicle to achieve a skilled talent pipeline; utilizing state and regional workforce gap analyses; supporting regional operational needs through technical assistance and state guidance; and developing career pathway programs that support the talent pipeline.

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2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE STATE TO ACHIEVE FULLY INTEGRATED CUSTOMER SERVICES CONSISTENT WITH THE STRATEGIC

VISION AND GOALS DESCRIBED ABOVE. ALSO DESCRIBE STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN REGARD TO WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED IN SECTION II(A)(2).

#### STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.

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As demonstrated by the Economic and Workforce Analysis in section (II)(a)(1), the state's current labor supply is lacking the preparation needed to compete for in-demand occupations paying a self-sustaining wage and offering the opportunity for advancement along a career pathway. Many of the state's educated jobseekers have degrees or credentials in fields where there is little or no demand. Too few are trained for jobs in STEM fields, including Manufacturing and Healthcare, and many lack the soft skills required by hiring employers. To strengthen workforce development activities and to close the skills gap, the state will predominately rely on the following strategies:

#### OBJECTIVE 1

---

Identify, invest in, and support educational and developmental strategies to better prepare a skilled workforce for current and emerging jobs.

#### STRATEGY 1.1

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Identify pathways to in-demand jobs through credentials and work-based learning as required by industries and align training providers and career pathways to meet those needs.

Although there are a number of successful workforce, education, and training activities available to job seekers and workers, an opportunity exists to ensure that those who need and want to participate in these activities are aware of and can access them, and that training programs align with in-demand industries and occupations. A demand-side data analysis was conducted in 2015 to identify current and emerging, state and regional, high-growth, high-demand industries and related occupations. A supply-gap analysis was conducted the following year. Target industry employers and industry/trade associations are being convened to review the data and to assist with the identification of education, training, credentials, and soft skills needed to enter these occupations. To implement this strategy, the SWDB and State Partners will focus on removing barriers to access and connecting jobs seekers and workers to relevant training programs. New training programs may need to be developed and existing ones refined to meet the demand of business and industry. Career pathways will be developed to include on and off ramps for seamless progression from education to employment. These career pathways will take into consideration non-traditional training programs, such as OJT and Registered Apprenticeship programs.

#### STRATEGY 1.2

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Identify, develop, and support policies that highlight or focus on priority populations in the workforce system.

The SWDB formed a Priority Populations Committee (PPC) to address the needs of jobseekers and workers with barriers to employment through increased outreach, policy development, support, advocacy, and development of education and training programs specific to priority populations' needs. The Committee will be supported by an Advisory Council consisting of subject matter experts who serve one or more of the populations identified. The Advisory Council will be formed before the end of PY 2017. Specific action items and a strategy implementation plan will be developed and further refined as the Council begins to work with the Priority Populations Committee.

### STRATEGY 1.3

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Create tools and templates to better understand the growth of South Carolina's talent pipeline and available workforce resources.

As mentioned above, South Carolina has recently conducted demand and supply data analyses to identify current and emerging, high-growth and high-demand industries and related occupations, and the number of individuals who have the education, training, and skills required for these occupations. In alignment with this strategy, those analyses will be updated regularly to ensure that the workforce system continues to be responsive to the needs of business and industry. Education and training programs may need to be developed or revised to better align with the needs of business and industry, and robust career pathway programs will be developed. Understanding the growth of South Carolina's talent pipeline will also require better alignment and integration of program data. Although no immediate solution has been identified, efforts are underway to address this issue.

### STRATEGIES TO ALIGN PARTNER PROGRAMS

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Partnership and collaboration at the state and local level is strong. More than ever, partners are working together to develop a customer-focused, outcome-driven workforce system. Despite these efforts, however, there is still an opportunity to improve alignment, including the alignment of data across the various education, training, and social services programs that serve job seekers, workers, and businesses. To achieve better alignment, the State will implement the strategies outlined below:

### OBJECTIVE 2

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Align resources, policies, and strategies between state, local, and regional systems to continuously improve outcomes for businesses, individuals, and partners

### STRATEGY 2.2

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Enhance existing business services by creating and promoting an enhanced model of business services.

All 12 LWDAs include Business Services Teams (BST). The agencies represented on each BST vary depending on local area, but generally include SC Works partners. The alignment of business services improves service delivery, reduces duplication of efforts, and uses limited resources more efficiently. Workforce partners will continue to coordinate their existing business engagement services and will expand to include partners not currently represented.

Additionally, regional business services teams may be formed, either in addition to or in place of, local business services teams. The framework for regionalism was formed in Program Year 2015 with the designation of four planning regions, and the intent to align workforce development resources to the regional economies of South Carolina and to ensure coordinated and efficient services to job seekers and employers. With regard to business engagement, the LWDAs within a region are expected to establish regional service strategies, including business services, and develop and implement sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations. As part of the state's talent development efforts, the regions have formed planning teams inclusive of workforce, education, economic development, social services, and community-based partners, and have been working toward the development of sector-based strategies for specific industries.

Training has been developed and provided to local area and partner business services staff on engaging employers, assessing needs, and providing solutions. As part of a larger Frontline Staff Training initiative,

on-going training will be provided to staff that engage business and industry. The development of a Business Engagement Framework outlining the roles and responsibilities of the State, Regional, and LWDAs when serving businesses is ongoing. When completed, this framework will help state partners identify training needs and expectations.

Lastly, efforts to develop and sustain a skilled talent pipeline are on-going and will continue into Program Year 2018, with an emphasis on developing and implementing tools and resources to help regions sustain Phase I and II activities, including business engagement and the development of comprehensive career pathways for occupations in the high-demand sectors identified in Phase I.

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#### STRATEGY 2.4

Develop data driven standards for system performance and accountability.

WIOA performance measures provide one way of measuring program effectiveness and demonstrating accountability. Additionally, methods have been established for evaluating fund utilization, participant cost rate, and priority of service for WIOA Title I programs. To implement this strategy, additional methods will be identified for the evaluation of SC Works Certification Standards and SC Works customer service.

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#### OBJECTIVE 4

Engage job seekers, employers, and other workforce partners through marketing and outreach and articulate a value proposition specific to each

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#### STRATEGY 4.2

Identify and implement promising practices to develop and maintain cohesiveness and coordination across the workforce system.

Through participation in national and regional conferences, learning cohorts, and peer-to-peer sharing opportunities, state partners will learn of best practices implemented in South Carolina and across the country. Best practices will be cataloged and shared amongst partners, including LWDAs. As practices are implemented, a method for evaluating and recognizing success will be developed. Procedures will also be developed to replicate best practices in other local areas and regions of the state.

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### 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—

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#### A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include—

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##### 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).

On behalf of the Governor, the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) provides direction to the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) and the workforce development system as a whole, consistent with the functions of the SWDB as outlined in WIOA sec. 101(d). In September 2017, SWDB approved a strategic plan, “Strategies to Build a Competitive Workforce.” This plan serves as a blueprint for SWDB to implement its functions, build policies, align programs, and invest in workforce development.

This plan represents a three-year strategy to build a cohesive, collaborative, and innovative workforce system that is effective in meeting the needs of South Carolinians. Through the objectives in the strategic plan, SWDB continues to develop and maintain strategic alliances with public and private partnerships, identify in-demand jobs meeting industry needs, support policies highlighting priority populations, and create templates to communicate talent pipeline growth in South Carolina. Through the execution of 11 strategies, the board is a catalyst in building a stronger workforce for the state of South Carolina.

The functions of the SWDB are delegated to five standing committees. In alignment with its function and purpose, each committee has a defined action plan to execute the implementation of the strategic plan:

- **The Executive Committee:** the “management” arm ensures that deliverables are in line with the Governor’s vision for workforce development.
- **The Board Governance Committee:** the “administrative” arm ensures that the Board is prepared to lead and that outputs align with the Board’s strategic plan.
- **The Collaboration and Partnership Committee:** the “convening” arm brings partners together to identify new opportunities to enhance the workforce system.
- **The SC Works Management Committee:** the “operations” arm ensures effective and consistent service delivery.
- **The Priority Populations Committee:** the committee that will strengthen the workforce development system through the development of strategies and policies that ensure priority populations are served.

South Carolina’s workforce development system is built on strategies that require partnerships at state, regional, and local levels. To best serve the needs of the workforce system and its customers, SWDB convenes key stakeholders at both the private and public level to accomplish the goals represented in their strategic plan.

Ad hoc work groups comprised of these stakeholders are often formed within standing committees to address specific functions, such as the development and implementation of SC Works Center Certification Standards, SC Works Frontline Staff Training, and Business Engagement, to name a few examples.

At a minimum, each committee meets quarterly. Additional meetings are scheduled as needed. The full Board meets quarterly with one meeting held at the annual workforce symposium. Workforce partners and other stakeholders are encouraged to attend all SWDB meetings.

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## 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

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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.

(III)(a)(2)(A) and (B) are combined. See (III)(a)(2)(B).

## B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

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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.

### STRATEGY 1.1

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Identify pathways to access in-demand jobs through credentials and work-based learning as required by industry and align training providers and career pathways to meet those needs.

#### Talent Pipeline Development

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The state recently adopted an integrated approach to talent pipeline development aimed at aligning strategies, resources, and service delivery on a regional basis across workforce development, economic development, education, and other partners to maximize value for business customers and improve career opportunities for students, job seekers, and workers. Targeted industries have been identified at a state level and a similar data-driven sector identification process will occur in each of the four WIOA planning regions.

This approach will result in better alignment and coordination of resources among regional partners, enhanced career entry and advancement opportunities for workers along career pathways, and deeper, sustained, and trusted relationships between groups of regional employers in targeted industries. As a corollary, individuals will be better educated about in-demand industries and occupations, and resources for education and training will be aligned with these industries.

#### *Career and Technical Education (CATE) and Dual Enrollment Opportunities*

CATE and dual enrollment educational opportunities are available to South Carolina students through participating schools. Through CATE, students are exposed to a variety of viable career options and are prepared for fast-growing, high-paid jobs in high-growth occupations - including healthcare, the skilled trades, STEM, information technology, and marketing. High school students also have the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment, which allows students to be enrolled in high school while earning credits toward a college degree, diploma, or certificate. Participation in CATE programs and dual enrollment has increased over the years and pathways have been developed allowing students to smoothly transition from school to work or postsecondary education.

#### *Work-Based Learning*

Work-based learning opportunities are widely available through participation in most job training programs. Opportunities generally include OJT, pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship



programs, paid or unpaid work experiences, and internships. As provided in the Workforce Activities, Education, and Training Analysis section, each partner has a unique program offering tailored to the specific needs of their clientele. Overall, work-based learning is a promising practice, especially among youth and individuals with barriers to employment, and will continue to be used as an education and training tool. Going forward, there is an opportunity to better align work-based learning opportunities with high-demand, high-growth industries and occupations identified statewide and in each region. This will ensure students' ability to continue along a career pathway after completion.

#### *Integrated Education and Training (IET)*

The SC Department of Education (SCDE) Office of Adult Education (OAE) requires that local adult education providers develop career pathway models in their workforce areas and are developed with local workforce area partners.

#### *Reentry Education and Training Programs*

Several of the activities identified in section (II)(2)(a) relate to the provision of services to individuals during and after incarceration to ensure successful reentry into society and the workforce. Examples of successful reentry efforts include the formation of one-stop centers at Manning and Camille Graham facilities; SWDB-funded reentry projects at MacDougall Correctional Facility, targeting incarcerated veterans, and the Spartanburg County Detention Center; the Bounce Back program; and the provision of adult education services in all prison facilities.

#### *Pre-Employment Transition Services*

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The SCVRD provides a robust set of student and youth services to enhance the transition from school to work or postsecondary training opportunities. As indicated in WIOA, SCVRD transition counselors provide pre-employment transition services for students prior to their exit from high school, and SCVRD staff continue to provide services to support placement into competitive employment, or completion of postsecondary training and/or credential-based programs. The number of successful employment outcomes for youth referred by the school system has increased by 94 percent from 2010 to 2017.

In collaboration with SCDEW and SCDE, SCVRD's school-based transition counselors work together with local education agencies, community partners, and business partners to advise students with disabilities and their families regarding available career pathways and educational/training opportunities. Career readiness testing for high school juniors provides another assessment of skills needed for competitive employment. This can assist in identifying career opportunities regardless of whether the individual receives a diploma or completes an occupational course of study or a certificate of completion. Currently, the diploma is the only secondary credential recognized as documentation of high school graduation in South Carolina.

#### *Palmetto Academic Training Hub (PATH)/Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)*

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The workforce development system established under WIOA emphasizes informed consumer choice, job-driven training, provider performance, career pathways, and continuous improvement. The quality and selection of providers and programs of training services, including Registered Apprenticeship programs, is vital to achieving these core principles. As required by WIOA sec. 122, state and local partners have developed and implemented the Palmetto Academic and Training hub (PATH), a more robust Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) that aligns with the critical industries identified at the state and local levels,

enabling job seekers and training providers to make more informed choices about education and training programs and improving service delivery consistency.

## STRATEGY 1.2

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Identify, develop, and support policies that highlight or focus on priority populations in the workforce system.

### SWDB Priority Populations Committee

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The SWDB formed a Priority Populations Committee that will provide strategic direction and oversight and set policy for the state with regards to serving youth, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and other populations that face barriers to employment.

### LWDB Youth and Disability Committees

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Similarly, each LWDB is required to form a Youth and Disability Committee that will develop local service strategies to improve outcomes, including education and employment, for youth and individuals with disabilities.

### Priority Populations State Coordinator

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In an effort to provide leadership to the state in facilitating WIOA youth program changes and to address the need to coordinate with core programs and partners to serve identified priority populations, SCDEW created the WIOA-funded Priority Populations Coordinator position. The Priority Populations Coordinator works alongside the SWDB and LWDBs, as well as core, mandatory, and optional partners to create a statewide strategy for serving the youth population. During PY 2017, the Priority Populations Coordinator is supporting the SWDB Priority Populations Committee to establish common objective measures and action items to carry out identified strategies regarding priority populations.

### Partnerships that Support Improving Outcomes for Individuals with Barriers to Employment

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A number of partnerships already exist, such as the SC Disability Employment Coalition, Transition Alliance of South Carolina (TASC), and the Statewide Reentry Council, that develop and advocate for policies and practices that improve employment outcomes for individuals with barriers to employment. In fact, the Employment First legislation is pending in the South Carolina legislature which would have a positive effect on employment for people with disabilities. Additionally, South Carolina's Client Assistance Program (CAP) was recently moved to Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc. CAP advocates for clients with disabilities who are seeking or receiving services through SCVRD, SCCB and all Independent Living Programs, including Able SC, and also helps people understand their employment rights; such as their rights to reasonable accommodations and to be free from disability related discrimination. SWDB and state partners overwhelmingly support these partnerships and participate when appropriate, and rely on the expertise of the programs to advise SWDB Priority Populations Committee on the barriers that individuals face when trying to obtain training or employment.

### Align Funding with Initiatives that Overcome Barriers

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Each program year, the SWDB identifies initiatives to receive funding through WIOA State Reserve Funds. In recent program years, the SWDB has funded projects that serve offenders, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and OSY. Understanding that South Carolina is nearly at full employment, the SWDB recognizes

the importance of equipping individuals with barriers to employment with the needed education, skills, and support for entry into the workforce.

#### SC Works Certification Standards

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The State has established SC Works Certification Standards consistent with the requirement of WIOA sec. 121(g). The SC Works Certification Standards are in place and have been used by the LWDA's to assess the effectiveness and continuous improvement of service delivery. The standards also help ensure consistent service delivery across the State. All 12 LWDA's have submitted documentation of the assessment process and certification determination for their respective comprehensive centers. For certification, the comprehensive centers and delivery system for each LWDA must have met or exceeded the baseline measures for each standard. Because the standards created for the comprehensive centers go far above and beyond what is required by law, separate standards will be written for the assessment and certification of the satellite/affiliate sites. Before a LWDB can certify their SC Works centers, all affiliate/satellite locations are required to comply with applicable physical and programmatic accessibility requirements.

#### Self-Employment for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities (SEED) Program

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Self-employment through the development of a microenterprise is a viable option for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, particularly in rural areas where employment opportunities and public transportation is not readily available, through leveraging e-Commerce as an alternative business model. During 2018, SCCB will establish the SEED Program that assists eligible individuals through the business exploration, business planning, business capitalization, and business operationalization process leading to self-employment. SCCB is currently developing the policy framework to assist VR Counselors and consumers. SCCB has developed a Self-Employment Toolkit intended to walk eligible consumers through the microenterprise development process. SCCB has partnered with the University of Wisconsin-Madison to provide Self-Employment and Social Security Work Incentive training to SCCB's VR Counselors on May 17, 2018 and August 8, 2018. SCCB is working to build community partnerships to leverage resources from entities engaged in business development such as Small Business Development Centers, Business Incubator Programs, and South Carolina's Technical College System. SCCB is also working to incorporate our Career Exploration Lab (3D Printer Lab) as a tool to assist in product development and prototyping.

#### Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

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Established by the Randolph Sheppard Act, a federal law which mandates a priority to blind persons to operate vending facilities on Federal property, the Business Enterprise Program helps eligible individuals to become an entrepreneur by training, licensing, equipping, and supporting Blind Licensed Vendors who operate businesses such as snack bars, cafeterias, rest stops, and other merchandising venues throughout the state.

#### STRATEGY 1.3

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Create tools and templates to better understand the growth of South Carolina's talent pipeline and available workforce resources.

The creation of tools and templates to better understand South Carolina's pipeline requires better alignment and integration of program data. Although no immediate solution has been identified, initial activities of the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development (CCWD) have included a thorough

investigation into the issues of data alignment and integrity, mapping state resources for education, and surveying business needs. In the meantime, existing resources will be used to conduct regular data analyses and information will be shared among partners to ensure a full and clear picture of South Carolina's workforce and high-growth, high-demand industries and occupations.

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#### STRATEGY 2.2

Enhance existing business services by creating and promoting an enhanced model of business services.

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##### Integrated Business Services Teams

Business Services Teams (IBSTs) in each LWDA coordinate business engagement activities and conduct employer outreach. IBSTs inform and educate employers on the resources and services available through each of the partner programs. Core, mandatory and optional program partners generally participate on IBSTs. There is an opportunity for enhanced integration and coordination of business services across programs through the identification of agencies and organizations that are unrepresented, and the development of regional, sector-based strategies, including the development and implementation sector partnerships. Additionally, there is an opportunity for staff cross-training to ensure that representatives are able to provide information on all of the services available through the system, as opposed to limiting outreach and information to the program specifically represented by the consultant. State partners will participate in finalizing the draft Business Engagement Framework and developing training for system staff.

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#### STRATEGY 2.4

Develop data driven standards for system performance and accountability.

State partners have and will continue to ensure that WIOA performance measures are tracked and reported as required by the legislation. Where appropriate, new methods for evaluating system performance will be developed and implemented. Understanding the need to share and align data, the SWDB and state partners fully support the efforts of the CCWD Data Sharing Committee, which is examining issues related to data alignment and data integrity, and developing recommendations for data sharing among state partners. It is unclear whether recommendations will include data sharing among the core partner programs, but it may present a solution for all to consider.

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#### STRATEGY 3.1

Encourage business and industry driven approaches to strengthen Sector Partnerships.

During the third phase of South Carolina's talent pipeline efforts, industry-led sector partnerships are being formed within high-demand, high-growth sectors. The South Carolina Hospital Association (SCHA) will convene a healthcare partnership in CY 2018. As the convener, SCHA will facilitate and coordinate a public-private partnership to speak to the workforce needs of health care and lead the charge of bringing awareness to the employment needs of each of its members.

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#### STRATEGY 3.2

Develop and implement Career Pathways initiatives based on employment need to enhance value for job seekers and businesses.

South Carolina's efforts to develop a skilled talent pipeline have been underway since the spring of 2015. A demand-side data analysis was conducted in 2015 to identify current and emerging, state and regional, high-growth, high-demand industries and related occupations. A supply-gap analysis was conducted the following year. Target industry employers and industry/trade associations are being convened to review the data and assist with the identification of the education, training, credentials, and soft skills needed to enter these occupations. To implement this strategy, the SWDB and state partners will focus on removing barriers to access and connecting jobseekers and workers with relevant training programs. New training programs may need to be developed and existing ones refined to meet the demand of business and industry. Career pathways will be developed that include on and off ramps for seamless progression from education to employment. The career pathways will take into consideration non-traditional training programs, such as OJT and apprenticeship programs.

#### STRATEGY 4.1

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Increase engagement and develop awareness with business and industry job seekers and workforce stakeholders.

An ad hoc work group consisting of SWDB members and key stakeholders is being formed to understand the issues related to SC Works customer outreach, to conduct research, and to develop a plan to increase engagement and use of SC Works tools and resources through system-wide outreach to business and industry and job-seeking customers. Beyond the development of outreach materials, this work group will work to identify the value proposition for SC Works customers and incorporate that proposition into the development of any materials.

Businesses learn about SC Works employer/business services through the efforts of business services teams in each LWDA. Additional teams, called networks, provide similar services and educate businesses on the resources and services available, generally at no cost, to meet their workforce needs. As it relates to individuals, many programs refer their participants or clients to SC Works or otherwise make available information about the resources and services available through the centers.

#### STRATEGY 4.2

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Identify and implement promising practices to develop and maintain cohesiveness and coordination across the workforce system.

A number of best practices are outlined in Section (II)(2)(a). For example, South Carolina has been acknowledged nationally for its Apprenticeship Carolina and readySC programs. Project SEARCH is another example, which has grown to six sites in a short period of time. The USDOL has recognized South Carolina for its state partner MOU. Through efforts to more intentionally research, identify, implement, and measure the success of best practices, the state is positioned to be on the cutting edge of workforce development.

### C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

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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.

Several strategies have been identified by the collaborative work group formed to develop the State Unified Plan and implement WIOA, including: the development and consistent implementation of a universal intake and referral process; consistent use of LMI to make data driven decisions about the delivery of services; the integration of information, case management, data, and reporting systems; and Phase II of a statewide MOU with all required and other system partners.

A statewide plan for training frontline staff has been developed to ensure that all partners in the SC Works Centers have the knowledge and understanding of each program to guarantee all customers get the services they most need. Frontline staff topics and learning objectives were developed by the core partners and offered at the 2017 Workforce Symposium. Following the symposium, web-based program modules were developed and rolled out to SC Works Center staff. SCDEW staff invited center operators and administrators to learn about the modules and provide training on how to use them in their local offices. The second phase of this project will be led by a third party; the RFP process is on-going. All of these actions will lead to tailored, effective, and streamlined customer services.

One of the key WIOA reforms is shared accountability across programs as demonstrated by the requirements for aligning performance reporting, evaluation, and data systems that measure effectiveness, improve transparency, and support informed customer-choice within a unified, integrated workforce development system. All core partners agree that an integrated data and case management system will streamline the availability of information across partner agencies and make the delivery of services to job seekers and employers more efficient. Partners also agree that an integrated system will allow for the implementation of common intake, co-enrollment, referrals, and other processes that improve service delivery and program outcomes. There are barriers to the implementation of such a system, including the cost and overall feasibility. The work group formed to examine solutions participated in a number of system demonstrations, but ultimately determined that procuring a shared system or system “overlay” was not a viable option.

Although this work group is no longer researching or moving in the direction of a shared system, as a next step, the core partners will begin to examine opportunities for alignment through other means, which may include state-level policy development. Additionally, each core program continues to adapt and make changes to data collection and reporting systems to adhere to the final reporting requirements.

As mentioned previously, the CCWD Data Sharing Committee is working to finalize a plan for data sharing and potential legislation. It is unclear whether this plan will include data sharing among the core partner programs but may present a solution for all to consider.

Finally, the consistent use of current and accurate LMI data is also a priority for South Carolina workforce partners. A State Data Committee with research and data staff from multiple agencies is combining resources to ensure use of the best available data. This ongoing effort allows partners to better align limited resources for education, training, and supportive services to the skill needs of in-demand industries and occupations. As a result, job seekers will be better prepared to fill high-demand, high-growth jobs. The use of LMI to make such data driven decisions to develop a talent pipeline for new and expanding businesses is consistent with the sector strategies framework that is being implemented through partnership and collaboration with all core programs and many one-stop partners.

#### **D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS**

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Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities

and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs and to achieve the goals of industry or sector partners in the state. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Similarly, coordinating business engagement activity is one of South Carolina's strategies for bringing together numerous programs into an integrated customer-focused network. Ideally, business engagement activities and employer services will be delivered in a manner that reduces duplication, is consistent throughout the State, and integrates all partners.

The delivery of employer services and business engagement activities is coordinated through Business Services Teams in all 12 LWDAs. In most areas, all of the core partner programs are represented on the BST, as well as several other partners. This approach ensures that employers receive a consistent message about the services and resources available through SC Works and other partner programs, that employer contacts are coordinated to reduce the number of agencies contacting the same employers, and that job fairs and other hiring events are organized to include all workforce partners as opposed to each partner hosting individual events.

Additionally, regional teams are being organized in each of the WIOA planning regions to implement sector strategies - regional, multi-partner models that align public partners and their strategies and investments to regional talent development needs, as defined by employers in critical industries. This effort focuses on aligning strategies, resources, and service delivery on a regional basis across the talent development system to maximize value for business, students, jobseekers, and workers. One outcome of implementing sector strategies is deeper, sustained, and more trusted relationships with groups of regional employers. Business and industry is represented on the State Leadership Team and will be invited to participate on regional workforce teams.

DEW's Rapid Response staff partner with the SC Department of Commerce to identify businesses that may benefit from layoff aversion strategies, to include industry diversification assistance. This partnership ensures early intervention, potentially reducing the impact to businesses and employees.

An example of this layoff aversion strategy is the partnership between DEW and the SC Department of Commerce aimed at helping defense-related businesses expand into new markets and position the business for future success. This initiative, funded by a defense industry assistance grant from the Office of Economic Adjustment within the Department of Defense (DOD), offers business consulting services on an application basis to firms that could be adversely affected by US Department of Defense budget cuts. This partnership with the Department of Commerce ensures that defense-focused employers are able to diversify their products and markets, so they continue to thrive in the Palmetto State.

The annual Workforce Development Symposium hosted by the SC Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with DEW and SWDB, is an example of alignment and coordination to better serve employer customers. The Symposium unites the business community with economic development, education, and workforce professionals and is an opportunity for business leaders to learn about relevant workforce and economic issues affecting the state and provide critical feedback to strategic leaders on where to align resources and programs.

#### **E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

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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).



South Carolina's educational institutions are vital partners in the workforce development system providing education and training programs that are aligned with employer needs and preparing individuals for family-sustaining careers.

Through Career and Technology Education (CATE) students are exposed to a variety of viable career options and are prepared for fast-growing, high-paid jobs in high-growth occupations - including healthcare, the skilled trades, STEM, information technology, and marketing. Classroom instruction and student experiences are linked to career clusters. Career clusters connect what students learn in school with the knowledge and skills they need for success in college and careers. Each career cluster identifies different pathways from secondary school to two- and four-year colleges, graduate school, and the workplace (The idea of career clusters was introduced as part of the Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA) enacted in 2005 to give South Carolina students the educational tools needed to build prosperous, successful futures. The EEDA created a system called Personal Pathways to help students understand and become better prepared to meet employer skill needs. Personal Pathways requires all students to declare a career major and to develop an individual graduation plans (IGPs) that outlines their personal education and career strategies. Students and their parents revisit these plans at least once a year to make appropriate adjustments.). Exposure to career pathways in these fields is one way to change the outdated perception of manufacturing and other STEM-related fields that contributes to the South Carolina workforce skills gap.

High school students also have the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment, which allows students to be enrolled in high school while earning credits toward a college degree, diploma, or certificate. The Community College Research Center's recent study found that dual enrollment participation is positively related to a range of college outcomes, including college enrollment and persistence, greater credit accumulation, and a higher college GPA (Proviso 117.127, South Carolina's Workforce Study, p. 19.).

The SC Technical College System serves more than a quarter million South Carolinians each year and educating more undergraduates than all other public higher education institutions combined (SC Technical College System). The System has three main components - the technical colleges, readySC™, and Apprenticeship Carolina™. The 16 colleges combined offer 80 associate degrees, 27 diplomas, and nearly 1,000 certificates for academic credit.

The SC Technical College System and the SC Department of Education are co-chairs and key partners serving on the Talent Pipeline State Leadership Team. Regionally, local technical colleges, guidance counselors, superintendents, and other education partners will collaborate with workforce, economic development, and other significant stakeholders to develop regional sector initiatives that help close the workforce skills gap.

The colleges also partner with business and industry to provide training for new and incumbent workers. The other components of the System - readySC™ and Apprenticeship Carolina™ - focus on the recruiting and initial training needs of new and expanding organizations and building awareness and increasing the use of Registered Apprenticeships. readySC™ and Apprenticeship Carolina™ representatives serve on the BSTs, which include core partner programs and several mandatory and optional one-stop partners as well and work closely with workforce and economic development to identify and meet the needs of business and industry. Additionally, an apprenticeship liaison in each LWDA serves as the link between businesses and Apprenticeship Carolina™.

South Carolina Act 252 requires the formation of a Coordinating Council for Workforce Development (CCWD), the members of which represent workforce, education, economic development, and business



and industry. Areas of focus for the Council are data alignment across programs, mapping state resources for employment and training, and developing and maintaining a highly-skilled talent pipeline to meet immediate and future labor needs.

Similarly, the Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA), reauthorized in 2017, created a coordinating council which is largely focused on the development of career pathways around the sixteen career clusters. Both councils require similar membership presenting an opportunity for partnership and collaboration through complementary focus areas and agendas.

#### **F. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS.**

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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.

The state's vision for workforce development cannot be accomplished without the engagement and partnership of all education and training providers. Education partners prepare South Carolina's workforce for competitive employment in in-demand industries and occupations, and their perspective is vital. Workforce development, economic development, and education partners are committed to strengthening these existing partnerships through the Talent Pipeline Initiative and other projects that aim to close the workforce skills gap.

South Carolina has created the Eligible Training Provider List called Palmetto Academic Training hub (PATH) to meet the expectations of WIOA and to better serve those seeking education and training opportunities. When developing PATH as well as the procedures for all providers, DEW engaged the technical colleges, the Commission for Higher Education, and several independent and for-profit training providers in the process for applications, selection, and participation on the ETPL. In 2015, every eligible training provider was invited to one of several information sessions held in Columbia to let ETPs learn and understand the requirements being put into place and how to proceed. There has been ongoing communication on the progress of the system and the expectations of the providers. In building PATH, consideration is made for every size provider to ensure the ability to continue providing a robust list of available ETPs.

Additionally, the SWDB set aside funds to engage training providers to implement training opportunities "behind the wire" for incarcerated individuals preparing for release. Programs are coordinated among several providers, state agencies, and other organizations that can help create and facilitate the programs to provide targeted, job-driven training.

A strong and growing partnership exists with adult education providers to provide GED preparation, adult basic education, high school diploma, and career readiness certification classes. In 2016, Lexington-Richland School District 5 Adult Education Program was awarded a grant to develop and implement an innovative apprenticeship model serving youth and young adults with barriers to employment. The program has been successful in building relationships with business and developing work-based learning opportunities. With the requirement that providers use Integrated Education and Training (IET), many adult education providers are partnering with local technical colleges to develop career pathway programs. IET targets employment need areas within each of the 12 Workforce Areas. The goal is to satisfy employers by training individuals looking for employment where they are needed most.

The breadth and variety of providers in the state ensures that individuals have the opportunity to choose a provider and program that closely aligns with their education/training and employment goals. To ensure

access to high-quality training programs in both rural and metro areas, the state will continue to identify and engage non-traditional education and training providers.

#### G. LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

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

The state's vision is to create a workforce system that results in financial stability and economic prosperity for employers, job seekers, and communities. To do this, the state will focus on strengthening the workforce pipeline and aligning workforce development resources. As discussed in section (E), South Carolina has a robust technical college system that offers 80 associate degrees, 27 diplomas, and nearly 1,000 certificates for academic credits, and a wide variety of short-term training options that are aligned with the needs of business and industry.

The existing framework includes the use of state and federal scholarship funds in conjunction with WIOA funds to increase South Carolinian's access to employment and training opportunities and supportive services. For example, nearly 30 percent of the students who attend a South Carolina technical college rely on Lottery Tuition Assistance (LTA) to pursue their academic goals and prepare for a self-sustaining career. Since its inception, the technical college system has made nearly 400,000 LTA awards. LTA is funded annually by the South Carolina General Assembly. Additionally, WIOA leverages opportunities such as TAACCCT grants, Technical College H-1B grants, and Quick Job Scholarships available in the state.

A model example of efforts underway to leverage resources is the Central Carolina Technical College announcement that freshmen students from Clarendon, Lee, Kershaw, and Sumter counties will receive two years of free tuition to complete an academic program. The college worked with local governments, workforce development boards, and various corporate sponsors to raise \$250,000 which will cover the cost of the free tuition program. This program is an excellent example of collaboration and leveraging of resources for educational access.

Co-enrollment strategies also facilitate resource sharing across workforce development programs. One of the state's strategies for alignment and coordination is co-enrollment across core, mandatory, and optional programs, replicating the co-enrollment practice that already exists between TAA and WIOA and increasing access to education and training, case management, and supportive services.

SCVRD continues to develop job-driven skills training based on specific business needs in local communities. Skills training will be delivered through the department's local area offices in partnership with community entities, including technical colleges, and will help grow skilled talent pools from which local business partners can recruit and hire. Used in conjunction with other statewide workforce development efforts, this individualized training assists individuals with disabilities to access training that is customized to meet their needs. This initiative is coordinated through SCVRD's Business Services Team, whose members also collaborate at the local and regional level on interagency business services teams including all WIOA partners.

#### H. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

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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.

Through the state’s implementation of sector strategies, resources will be aligned across workforce, economic development, education, and other community-based entities with the ultimate goal of preparing individuals for employment in high-demand, high-wage occupations. Sector-based education and career pathways will increase awareness of these industries and occupations and improve access to education and training leading to recognized postsecondary credentials.

As discussed in section (E) above, CATE and dual enrollment are important components of the workforce system exposing high school students to in-demand career options and allowing them to earn college credit while completing their high school diploma.

Additionally, PATH/ETPL is closely aligned with the industry sectors and occupations identified at the state and regional levels ensuring that job seekers are being trained for in-demand occupations that pay a self-sustaining wage. Registered Apprenticeship programs are being added to PATH, further increasing access to industry-recognized credentials and apprenticeship certificates.

Business Services Teams also partner with Apprenticeship Carolina™ to help increase awareness and use of Registered Apprenticeships. Businesses are encouraged to use Registered Apprenticeships as a workforce development tool designed to build their talent pipeline. Since 2007, the number of programs has increased from 90 to 918.

Apprenticeship Carolina™ has a Youth Apprenticeship component designed to create recruitment pipelines of young, skilled workers, decrease turnover, and allow employers to influence, mold, and shape potential future employees. Youth apprenticeship programs now exist in 32 of South Carolina’s 46 counties. In some instances, the students graduate with a high school diploma, a nationally-recognized DOL credential, and credit hours toward education at a local technical college and/or certificate of study. Youth apprenticeship programs are a valuable tool that will be leveraged across the state.

## I. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.

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

### South Carolina Talent Pipeline Initiative

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The SC Department of Commerce is a co-chair of the Talent Pipeline State Leadership Team partnering with DEW, the SC Technical College System, and the SC Department of Education to adopt a sector strategies approach to developing a skilled talent pipeline for South Carolina’s business community. SC Department of Commerce Regional Workforce Advisors (RWA) and economic alliances are partnering with workforce and education entities regionally to develop and implement sector strategies.

### SC Certified Work Ready Communities (CRWC)

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The SC Department of Commerce was a member of the CWRC state leadership team formed to implement this initiative and continues to be a strong supporter. Likewise, at the county-level, economic developers have played a vital role in recruiting business support and helping counties earn the Certified Work Ready Community designation as a strategy for meeting the talent needs of employers.

### Business Services Teams

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Each LWDA has an Integrated Business Services Team (IBST) consisting of members who represent a variety of workforce and economic development entities. In nearly all of the local areas, economic development entities are represented on the BST.

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#### Rapid Response/Business Services Collaboration

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DEW Rapid Response staff partner with the SC Department of Commerce in a number of capacities, including identifying businesses in distress and/or experiencing a layoff or closure event to ensure early intervention which may avert the layoff or mitigate the impact to the business and employees.

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### 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—

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#### 1. THE STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE’S STRATEGIES. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF—

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##### 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.).

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#### DEW: WIOA ADULT, DISLOCATED, AND YOUTH PROGRAMS, TAA, AND WAGNER-PEYSER

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##### SOUTH CAROLINA WORKS ONLINE SERVICES (SCWOS)

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The information management system for WIOA Adult, DW and Youth programs, TAA, and Wagner-Peyser is the web-based SC Works Online Services (SCWOS) system developed by Geographic Solutions, Inc. The WIOA service delivery and case management components of the system have been deployed in South Carolina since October of 2002 and have been continuously upgraded and enhanced.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance module was added in 2008 to track the participants in that program. This portion of the system includes a module that tracks Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) payments and is updated daily. Wagner-Peyser, the state job matching system that integrates employer and job seeker data, was implemented in 2010 and has enhanced SCDEW’s ability to track services across programs.

SCWOS is also aligned with Unemployment Insurance, which enables automatic registration of UI claimants into the system if accounts do not already exist. These interfaces produce files that provide information about UI claimants, including whether they are registered for work, whether they have reported for mandatory profiling workshops, and what kinds of occupations they are looking for. South Carolina requires that all UI claimants conduct at least two of their work searches through SCWOS every week. To facilitate this verification, an electronic file is provided to UI each week. Electronic files are also provided that allow UI to verify whether a claimant should be waived from the mandatory work search requirements due to participation in training. SCWOS’s integration and interfaces all help support coordinated implementation of state strategies and training and employment activities.

The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) module was added to SCWOS in 2015 to manage and track employer engagement efforts. This module allows employers to be added to the system directly by

designated staff while maintaining the security and integrity of the system. Additionally, spidered or unregistered employers can be converted to Marketing Leads using a mini-registration that collects only enough data for logging and tracking purposes. This mini-registration allows all employer engagement efforts to be documented regardless of registration status.

SCWOS desktop and on-site monitoring is conducted at both the state and local levels. During the monitoring process SCDEW staff reviews local area policies and processes for compliance with WIOA law and regulations. Performance monitoring coupled with the ability to view and track user service data enhances and improves both the state's and local areas' ability to make effective WIOA program policies.

Although not a system shared with non-DOL programs, other organizations regularly request access to SCWOS for their staff, which helps to facilitate referral and coordination services.

### LABOR MARKET INFORMATION (LMI)

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The Business Intelligence Department (BID) of SCDEW collects, analyzes, and disseminates various data in cooperation with the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Data includes employment statistics, job forecasts, wages, demographics, and other labor market information to help public and private organizations, researchers, and others better understand today's complex workforce. The BID helps monitor and forecast national, statewide, and local economic trends, helping employers and job seekers make more informed career, education, and economic development decisions.

BID's Labor Market Information website provides real-time, monthly, and annual information and publications. The following are a sampling of what is available on the LMI website:

**Community Profile Report:** A comprehensive report with economic, demographic, industry, occupation and education statistics for the state, counties, metropolitan, and workforce areas.

**Insights:** A monthly report from the SC Department of Employment and Workforce with employment and unemployment analyses for the state, counties, and Metropolitan Statistical Areas.

**Help Wanted Online (HWOL):** The Labor Supply versus Demand by Local Workforce Region Report is real time labor market information consisting of the number of job ads advertised on the internet and various job boards compared to the number of unemployed and a ratio of unemployed per job ad. HWOL data are indicators of labor market demand and are regularly updated. The methodology uses internet scraping and the data series is Help Wanted OnLine (HWOL) developed by The Conference Board.

### ONLINE JOB BANK

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SCWOS is the system used for the state's job bank and labor exchange activities. Employers can post jobs, search resumes, and find qualified staff for their operations. Job seekers can search for jobs added in the system as well as from hundreds of spidered in job boards and company websites; post resumes; and get access to a wide-variety of educational and workforce information.

### OAE: ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMS

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The SC Department of Education (SCDE) Office of Adult Education (OAE) uses the vendor-provided web-based software application Literacy, Adult, and Community Education System (LACES). This system provides day to day academic activity documentation, compiles and produces all reports required by the National Reporting System (NRS) and allows the state office to track performance outcomes.

The OAE has access to each local program's database as well as a combined database for state reporting. While Adult Education produces aggregate reports for a number of partners and other entities, the OAE and local providers are the only entities that have access rights to this web-based application. South Carolina School Boards Insurance Trust (SCSBIT) requests information annually concerning instructional hours for each school district. OAE conducts data matches with SC Dept. of Social Services, SCDEW, and the SC Technical College System, and anticipates broadening accessibility to this information by data matching with the SC Commission on Higher Education.

#### SCVRD: REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS

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The Case Management System (CMS) for SCVRD is an internally developed set of programs that provide agency staff with real time access to client information to support integrated service delivery and data reporting based on the agency's unique needs. Client information is collected and reported to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and includes the Case Service Report RSA-911, Quarterly Cumulative Caseload Report RSA-113, and Annual Vocational Rehabilitation Program/Cost Report RSA-2. Within CMS are time management tools that facilitate casework and ensure compliance to policy. These tools include automatic tasks, appointments, and compliance notifications that are recorded in the client record. CMS also provides data for customized reports available in real-time. An accuracy rate identifies trends and needed areas for improvement at the caseload, area, region, and state level. Additionally, the system allows for quality assurance to take place online locally and at the SCVRD state office.

CMS includes the Universal Business System and Career Connect components that allow the agency to support employers by preparing, identifying, and referring clients with disabilities for their hiring needs. In addition, these components assist employers receiving federal contracts to meet their hiring and reporting requirements under Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Section 503), at 41 CFR Part 60-741. This enhances outreach to local business communities, provides greater detail in planning and reporting business outreach, manages the assignment of SCVRD points of contact to local businesses, and augments the SCVRD's ability to identify trends and respond effectively to employer needs.

#### SCCB: REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS

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SCCB currently uses the AWARE (Accessible Web-Based Activity and Reporting Environment for Vocational Rehabilitation) VR Case Management System. This system collects and manages case information for all SCCB consumer services programs (Vocational Rehabilitation, Older Blind, Children's Services, Independent Living for the Blind and Prevention of Blindness). Counselors and service providers have the capability of managing cases and training services online with real-time data entry and reporting. Although the standard rehabilitation case flow process is used to organize all data pages, system parameters are adaptable to meet the SCCB business process as needed. The functionalities of AWARE include, but are not limited to, a chronological history of key events of a case, audit logging of critical data, use of multiple caseload or reporting structure search criteria, caseload reports, managed layouts, standardized letters and forms catalog, and caseload activity due reminders.

Regarding data sharing, SCCB does not currently share data from AWARE with any agency or organization; however, data sharing with DEW is currently pending. The purposes of data sharing will be to obtain wage data for social security reimbursement and the WIOA primary performance indicators.

WIOA partners will continue to evaluate the feasibility of adopting an integrated case management, performance, and reporting system that will increase efficiency, reduce duplication of efforts, and improve the level of service to job seekers and employers.

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

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### **DEW: WIOA ADULT, DISLOCATED, AND YOUTH PROGRAMS, TAA, AND WAGNER-PEYSER**

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The SC Works Online Services (SCWOS) System integrates the required performance measures and has the capability to generate on-demand reports. Until final reporting guidance is issued, the State and its vendor are working closely to ensure any changes to the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL), the file format for data submission to DOL, are reviewed on monthly State User Group calls between the vendor and the State.

System generated reports, as well as our state developed ad hoc reports, are used to evaluate the efficiency, performance, and effectiveness of the workforce system. Reports also help staff identify data issues within the system so that data may be corrected in a timely fashion. Examples of available reports include caseload, Adult priority of service, and aggregate reports that advise on comprehensive oversight matters such as participants receiving training, participation levels, and Youth five percent limitation/exception in each of the LWDAs and SC Works Centers

The state follows Federal performance and reporting processes. South Carolina has made quarterly and annual submissions through the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) since it became available in October 2016. While data specific to LWDAs within our state is presently unavailable from the Department of Labor, the state is collaborating with the Department to ensure state data submissions are received and certified.

Additionally, the state requests wage records each quarter from the Unemployment Insurance Division of the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce. The state has data sharing agreements with Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) and Wage Record Interchange System 2 (WRIS2). Once a State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) data sharing agreement is finalized and available, South Carolina will likely participate in that system as well. Wage data is used to measure the entered employment rate and median earnings.

### **OAE: ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMS**

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Local providers eligible for adult education use a state standardized registration/intake form to collect student information upon entry into the local program. All data entry occurs at the local provider level. Instructional hours are added on a monthly basis to document student attendance. Goals and Cohorts are entered and marked “met” as required by federal guidance. OAE has access to all local program information through LACES, and each local program has the capability to run the federally required reports on only their program. At the state level, Adult Education can run these reports on all eligible providers.

### **SCVRD: REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS**

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The Case Management System (CMS) for SCVRD is an internally developed set of programs that allows for the flexibility of interfacing with partners as necessary. For example, SCVRD’s system works with the South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS) to process client procurements, the South Carolina



Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) for Social Security verification and beneficiary status through the State Verification and Exchange System (SVES), and the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Commission. An exchange of data from SCDEW is now in place for wage data necessary for reporting on WIOA performance measures: employment 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter after exit, employment 4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit, and median earnings 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter after exit. CMS also allows the agency to make changes and improvements quickly, deliver consistent services to clients statewide, react to data changes enacted by RSA as mandated, and provide real-time reporting.

SCVRD faces the following challenges with regard to implementing WIOA performance measures:

- identifying and collecting data which has not been required in the past;
- adequacy of resources to work on WIOA-mandated data collection and reporting requirements;
- identifying and accessing data for post-exit measures related to education, training, and credential attainment; and
- identifying and accessing data that is not available from UI wages, such as self-employment, federal/military, and out of state wage data.

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#### SCCB: REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS

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SCCB's data collection process consists of data that is collected directly from consumers, medical health providers (eye and medical doctors), educational institutions, consumer organizations and advocacy groups, and the Social Security Administration. Although Counselors in all consumer services programs have the primary responsibility of collecting and entering data, other staff, such as Counselor Assistants, Supervisors, and service providers can also collect and enter consumer data as needed.

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

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## 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.

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### PHASE I STATE PARTNER MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

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In South Carolina, the one-stop delivery system is SC Works. SC Works is a system that offers personalized assistance to those looking for work, education, and training opportunities, and connects employers to a skilled workforce. The vision of SC Works is service integration by aligning numerous programs into a unified, customer-focused network within each community.

As a step toward achieving this vision, Phase I of a state partner MOU was executed in 2015. The following partners joined in the MOU:

- SC Workforce Investment Board (SWIB)
- SC Department of Employment and Workforce
- State Board of Technical and Comprehensive Education



- Department of Social Services
- SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department
- Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging
- State Department of Education
- Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity (now under SC Department of Administration)
- Indian Development Council, Inc.
- Bamberg Job Corps Center
- Department of Juvenile Justice
- Department of Corrections
- Department of Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services

The focus of Phase I is coordination of services among partners that will foster cooperation, better education, and specify the responsibilities of state agencies and mandatory partner programs under WIOA.

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## PHASE II STATE PARTNER MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Phase I MOU partners, with input from the Resource Sharing and Infrastructure Funding Work group and other key stakeholders, are currently in the process of finalizing Phase II of the state partner MOU, which will incorporate and include Phase I and will establish shared accountability of resources for SC Works center services.

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## CO-ENROLLMENT POLICIES

Even in the absence of specific policies, co-enrollment is commonplace throughout the SC Works system. This strategy provides the customer with the ideal service plan while allowing the system to utilize its resources in an efficient manner. The state encourages local workforce areas to co-enroll participants into other programs that are appropriate in meeting their needs. Co-enrollment can offer the opportunity to access additional program services and funds to help address a participant's specific barriers to employment and/or education.

*Adult Education* - Given the changes in WIOA core program performance measures, co-enrollment is strongly encouraged as a way to ensure the continued success of multiple partner programs. Credit for attainment of a high school equivalency will be dependent upon participants also obtaining employment or entering an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential. Labor exchange services through Wagner-Peyser and training services through Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs will be critical in meeting performance goals for our high school equivalency population served through Adult Education.

*Trade Adjustment Assistance* - All dislocated workers are currently co-enrolled in Wagner-Peyser for labor exchange services. As most workers separated from employment due to increased imports or a shift in production also meet dislocated worker eligibility criteria, co-enrollment in the Title I Dislocated Worker Program is encouraged as an early intervention. Co-enrollment allows the process of needs and skills assessment to begin immediately, even before workers may become eligible for TAA, giving individuals

more time to consider the options available to them. OJT opportunities for TAA participants are also enhanced through co-enrollment and leveraging of resources, as WIOA allows up to 75 percent reimbursement to employers versus the 50 percent allowed under the TAA Program.

## PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING GUIDELINES FOR RESOURCE SHARING AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

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A work group of state partners was established to discuss and better understand the complexities of resource sharing and infrastructure funding of the one-stop delivery system. Guidance was developed, and reviewed by the work group, that will assist local boards in determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure. The guidance advises local workforce boards that infrastructure and shared services costs should be allocated proportionately among partners, unless not permitted due to partners' funding restrictions. Determining the proportionate share attributable to a specific partner program is part of the negotiation process. Partners should first review SC Works Center budgets to determine which costs should be shared. The USDOL-issued One-Stop Comprehensive Financial Management Technical Assistance Guide is referenced as a resource for federally accepted cost-sharing methodologies. Local boards and partners are expected to negotiate in good faith. Costs must be allowable, allocable, and reasonable. Partners may pay for their share of the system through cash payments or fairly evaluated in-kind contributions. The proportionate share methodology and payment mechanisms developed, negotiated, and approved by each partner must be included in the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) as part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to ensure costs are allocated to partners in proportion to benefit received.

State partners are in agreement that further guidance is needed to develop the state infrastructure funding mechanism and state criteria that will be used when consensus agreement cannot be reached at the local level.

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### 3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

#### A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

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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.

#### THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE (DEW)

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DEW is one of 16 cabinet agencies and is the state administrative entity for Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs and Title III Wagner-Peyser Program. The Executive Director and members of the SWDB are appointed by the Governor. The SWDB assists the Governor and executes his/her vision for the state's workforce development system by setting policy and providing strategic direction.

DEW is responsible for paying unemployment insurance benefits, collecting unemployment taxes, helping people find jobs, matching businesses with qualified candidates, and collecting and disseminating state/federal employment statistics.

Our main goal is to match job seekers with employers quickly, efficiently, and effectively, and we offer a variety of services to assist both groups.

#### MISSION

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To promote and support an effective, customer-driven workforce system that facilitates financial stability and economic prosperity for employers, individuals, and communities.

## VISION

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To be viewed as an efficient, transparent, customer-friendly partner in providing quality workforce solutions.

## COMMITMENT

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DEW is dedicated to the motto: See it. Own it. Work it. DEW it. We know that each and every employee plays a role in the success of the agency and accomplishing the mission. At its core, See it. Own it. Work it. DEW it., means DEW staff take ownership of known issues and work to come up with a solution.

FUNDING THE MAJORITY OF DEW'S BUDGET IS FUNDED THROUGH FEDERAL SOURCES. THE US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ALLOCATES FUNDS FROM THE FEDERAL UNEMPLOYMENT TAX (FUTA) TO THE STATES TO PAY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL COSTS. EMPLOYER-PAID STATE UNEMPLOYMENT TAXES PAY FOR STATE UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS.

## DIVISIONS

### Unemployment Insurance

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Unemployment Insurance (UI) is a nationwide program created to financially help eligible individuals, who are unemployed through no fault of their own, while they actively search for new work.

The program allows UI recipients to maintain purchasing power, therefore, easing the serious effects of unemployment on individual households, the community, and the state. In South Carolina, a UI claim can provide up to 20 weeks of benefits. The average weekly benefit amount is \$236. The maximum weekly benefit is \$326.

Employers finance the UI program through tax contributions and DEW is responsible for the collection, accounting, and auditing functions of South Carolina's UI tax program. DEW administers the UI program according to guidelines established by the South Carolina Code of Laws, Title 41, and South Carolina Code of Regulations, Chapter 47.

### Workforce and Economic Development

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The Division of Workforce and Economic Development (WED) is responsible for the administration of federal programs which provide funding and services to help businesses meet their need for skilled workers and individuals secure training to prepare for work. Additionally, the WED Division directs and oversees veteran's programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance Program, Alien Labor, and federal tax incentives.

DEW in partnership with SC Works provides all job seekers with career counseling, job referrals, testing and training services, and resume-writing assistance. Free tools to assist business include training opportunities, posting job openings, recruiting and screening candidates, and reviewing job market trends.

South Carolina has 12 LWDA's and 4 WIOA planning regions. Each LWDA also has at least one comprehensive SC Works Center where the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs,

Wagner-Peyser programs, and a variety of other partner programs and services are made available to job seekers and businesses. Some LWDAs also have satellite centers and access points making programs and services accessible to individuals. DEW provides oversight, technical assistance, and support to LWDAs to ensure compliance and enhance

#### **SOUTH CAROLINA STATE AGENCY OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (SCVRD)**

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The SCVRD board sets policy under which the Vocational Rehabilitation Department operates. Board members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, serving seven-year terms.

The agency operates in 24 area offices and 24 work training centers across the state, through which services are provided to all eligible individuals who desire to enter or maintain competitive, integrated employment. Through a team approach, SCVRD counselors, assessment and career exploration specialists, job readiness training staff, job preparedness instructors, and business development specialists work to prepare clients for employment opportunities within their local labor market, as well as develop relationships with business and industry to match clients individually with employment opportunities that fit their strengths, abilities, capabilities, and skill sets. Comprehensive programs, including occupational therapy and physical therapy services, rehabilitation engineering, IT training centers, as well as residential alcohol and drug treatment facilities further expand the capacity of SCVRD to meet the needs of eligible individuals with disabilities.

The SCVRD State Office consists of the following Departments: Administration; Area Operations; Client Services; Facility Planning and Management (Buildings and Grounds); Finance Operations; Grants and Funds Management; Human Resources; Human Resource Development; Internal Audits; Information Technology; Job Readiness Training Center Services; Legal, Safety, and Risk Management; Planning and Program Evaluation; Procurement and Facilities Services; and Public Information.

#### **SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND (SCCB)**

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The SCCB Board of Directors works with the Senior Management Team to set policy, establish goals and strategic plans, and ensure the quality provision of vocational rehabilitation services to blind consumers. Board members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, serving four-year terms.

The Commission operates 10 local area offices through which services are provided to all eligible individuals who desire to enter or maintain competitive integrated employment. The Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center in Columbia provides comprehensive adjustment to blindness services including personal adjustment to blindness, orientation and mobility skills, daily living skills, Braille literacy skills, and pre-vocational training on the use of Assistive Technology devices. SCCB counselors, Adjustment to Blindness Instructors, Vocational Evaluators, and Employment Consultants work to prepare consumers for employment opportunities within their local labor market. Employment Consultants build relationships with business in order to provide talent acquisition and talent retention services. In addition, the Commission manages a state-funded Blindness Prevention Program, Independent Living Program, the Older-Blind Program, Low Vision Clinics, and the Business Enterprise Program.

#### **ADULT EDUCATION**

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The South Carolina State Board of Education oversees the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). The SCDE is responsible for K-12 public education and is under the supervision of the elected State Superintendent of Education. The Office of Adult Education is contained within the SCDE under the Division of Federal, State, and Community Resources, and is managed by the position of State Director of

Adult Education. Technical support and compliance monitoring are provided by Education Associates within the Office of Adult Education. There are 81 school districts in South Carolina that are required by state legislation to provide Adult Education services.

Adult education programs are voluntary and afford opportunities for students to obtain a high school equivalency diploma (HSED), a high school diploma (HSD), a career readiness certificate, participate in English as a second language classes (ESL), and family literacy (FL). Some adults enroll to improve their basic literacy and/or numeracy skills. Adult education classes are taught by certified teachers and trained volunteers who are overseen by certified teachers. Each adult education program has a program director, instructors, administrative support, a designated data specialist, a transition specialist, and key staff to support initiatives offered by the program.

## B. STATE BOARD

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Provide a description of the State Board, including—

South Carolina's State Workforce Development Board was reconstituted under former Governor Haley's vision of a workforce system that provides employment and training services to build and maintain a highly skilled, demand-driven talent pipeline. Following the federal requirements for membership, leaders were identified based upon an understanding and experience with current workforce issues and proven record in driving change and reform.

The SWDB is currently a 33-member group comprised of majority business representatives who are leading efforts towards developing a demand-driven system that supports high-growth sectors. These representatives are from the health care, manufacturing, information technology, transportation and logistics, and construction industries. Coupled with leadership from the core programs, chief elected officials, and State Legislators, other state agencies and community-based organizations, the Board will seek program alignment and partnership. Business representatives will apply their expertise to measure outcomes towards building program accountability through the development and evaluation of performance measures.

The Board has divided its priorities amongst four committees:

The Board Governance Committee's purpose is to prepare, assist, and equip the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) to be the leading advocate for innovative, coordinated workforce development in South Carolina. Its functions include:

- equipping SWDB members with resources and tools to be leaders and drivers of workforce development;
- providing opportunities for SWDB members to be engaged with workforce efforts and support SWDB initiatives;
- supporting SWDB direction and decisions with data and systematic processes;
- developing members to be effective advocates on a local, state, and national level;
- developing and monitoring board-related policies;
- establishing and internally communicating the board's position on governance issues;
- evaluating the workforce development system on a continual basis; and

- gathering and presenting data for the establishment of best practices and continuous quality improvement.

The SC Works Management Committee's purpose is to build a demand-driven workforce delivery system that equips job seekers with the skills businesses need. Its functions include:

- championing initiatives to make in-person and online services and access to services more user-friendly;
- overseeing the implementation of the SC Works Certification process by the local areas, and monitoring and maintaining the progression of the standards;
- Developing benchmarks and baseline standards to measure and evaluate SC Works system performance;
- identifying training needs (hard, middle, and soft skills) and opportunities for businesses and job seekers and implementing and/or driving efforts to close gaps;
- initiating statewide operational practices to improve service delivery;
- improving communication with local workforce development boards; and
- promoting business engagement with the workforce system.

The Collaboration and Partnership Committee's purpose is to increase collaboration among workforce, economic development, and educational allies, in partnership with business and industry. Its functions include:

- sustaining the alignment and partnerships among workforce development, economic development, education, and community-based organizations;
- improving state-level partnerships through the development of a cross-agency workforce development strategic plan, regular meetings, and MOU(s) to facilitate local-level collaboration;
- promoting the integration of state-level data systems, identifying resources and strategies that remove duplicate efforts and costs; and
- advocating for the implementation of regional strategies that align public resources around targeted industry sectors.

The Priority Population Committee's purpose is to strengthen South Carolina's workforce system through the development of strategies and policies that ensure priority populations are served. Its functions include:

- promoting outreach efforts to all WIOA priority populations with a focus on youth with barriers, ex-offenders, veterans, individuals with disabilities, homeless, and long-term unemployed;
- working with the Priority Populations Coordinator to establish a written strategic plan and subsequent policies to support WIOA Youth program services;
- developing benchmarks and baseline standards to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services for individuals with barriers to employment;
- initiating statewide operational practices to improve service delivery to priority populations; and

- improving communication with appropriate agencies, non-profits, the faith community, and other community-based organizations that already serve priority groups.

Additional state and local stakeholders are routinely invited to attend or present at committee and full Board meetings, lending their expertise and feedback to policy development and workforce strategies.

## I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

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

### MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

Governor: Honorable Henry McMaster

### MEMBERS OF EACH CHAMBER OF THE STATE LEGISLATURE:

Senator: VACANT

Representative: Rep. Mike Forrester

### REPRESENTATIVES OF BUSINESS:

Palmetto Health, Valerie Richardson

Director of Food Service, Pee Dee Food and MEM, Nick P. Foong

ASSA ABLOY Entrance Systems, Thomas Freeland

Find Great People, John Uprichard

OCS Garage Doors and Hurricane Services, James Holloway

Richardson, Plowden and Robinson, P.A., Michelle Kelley

Google, Eric Wages

The Timken Company, Robert Friedman

VC3, David Dunn

U-Save Auto Rental, Archie Maddox

Horry Telephone Cooperative, Inc., Glenda Page

Piedmont Bushings and Insulators, LLC, Michael Sexton

Schaeffler, Gregory Tinnell

Cooper Standard, James Snead

Southeastern Freight, Clifford Bourke

Clemson University, Dr. Windsor Sherrill

SC Connect, Trip Dubard

### REPRESENTATIVES OF LABOR ORGANIZATIONS, APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS:

International Longshoremen Association, Charles Brave

SC Painters and Allied Trades, JAC, Local 1756, Edward Sturcken

#### COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS:

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Goodwill Industries of the Upstate/Midlands, Pat Michaels

Gleams, HRC, Inc., Dr. Joseph Patton

Columbia Urban League, James T. McLawhorn

Transitions, Colonel Craig Currey

#### CORE PARTNERS:

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Department of Employment and Workforce, Cheryl Stanton (Wagner-Peyser and WIOA)

Department of Education, Mike King (Adult Education)

Vocational Rehabilitation, Felicia Johnson (Interim) (Vocational Rehabilitation)

#### CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS:

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Spartanburg County Council, Roger Nutt

#### ADDITIONAL WORKFORCE PARTNERS:

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SC Technical College System, Dr. Tim Hardee

Central Carolina Technical College, Dr. Gregory M. Mikota

Veterans Administration, Howard Metcalf

Recruitment efforts are underway to fill in the few remaining required slots.

TERM LIMITS: Members of the SWDB serve for a term of years as provided below. Term of service is defined as beginning at the time of appointment and ending upon resignation or removal from the board.

Three-year term with the option for reappointment for one consecutive three-year term:

- State Legislators and Chief Elected Officials
- “Other” Representatives as the Governor may designate

Four-year term with the option for reappointment for one consecutive four-year term:

- Representatives of Business
- Representatives of Labor
- Representatives of Community-Based Organizations

Board members may be reappointed for a third term after a break in service. A break in service shall be defined as at least 12 consecutive calendar months since resignation or removal. Persons removed from the board are not eligible for reappointment.



Exception: The Board Chair serves for a period of time as requested by the Governor after which time he/she may be appointed to the Board as a member according to the term limits provided above.

## II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

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

**SWDB Strategic Planning:** In September 2017, SWDB completed a 3-year strategic plan, “Strategies to Build a Competitive Workforce”. Key stakeholders were engaged and feedback and input were incorporated into the development of a comprehensive plan for workforce development that truly speaks to the vision of a collaborative system. The strategic plan is the blueprint for SWDB to build policies, align programs, and invest in workforce development. It reflects extensive stakeholder input, data analysis, and programmatic review and was vetted by business and industry. The functions of SWDB are delegated to four standing committees. Each committee has an action plan which aligns the committee purpose and specific functions to the execution of the strategic plan.

**Quarterly Meetings and Planning:** At a minimum, each committee meets quarterly face-to-face or electronically. Additional meetings are scheduled as needed. The full Board meets quarterly with one of the meetings held at the annual workforce symposium. Workforce partners and other stakeholders are encouraged to attend all SWDB meetings and they do. One-on-one planning and information sessions are conducted for committee members to be educated on relevant issues and informed of their role with regard to specific workforce initiatives.

**New Member Orientation:** As members are appointed to SWDB, they receive an orientation that includes: a summary of the role and functions of SWDB, the organization of the Board, relevant Federal and state laws, and current SWDB initiatives. After initial appointment, SWDB staff and system partners continue educating new and returning members on issues related to the workforce regularly through committee participation and Board meetings. SWDB members are also encouraged to attend the annual Workforce Symposium hosted by the SC Chamber of Commerce (in partnership with DEW and the SC Department of Commerce) and other appropriate conferences, such as the Southeastern Training Association (SETA) spring and fall conferences.

**Board Member Mentoring:** The Board Governance Committee has implemented a mentoring practice where tenured SWDB members are identified and partnered with new members. The purpose of this practice is so that new members gain a better understanding of their role in advancing the South Carolina workforce development system.

**Board Training and Development:** In October of 2015, new and returning SWDB and LWDB members were invited to participate in a full-day state and local board training. The presenter provided an introduction to the role of state and local boards under WIOA, and specifically addressed the role of boards in state, regional, and local planning; strengthening partnerships across programs; and increasing employer engagement. In February of 2017, SWDB and LWDB members were invited once again to participate in training at the Workforce Development Symposium. Training content was developed based on feedback received from the PY15 SWDB Satisfaction Survey. Board members were provided an overview of the workforce system, a refresher on the role of state and local boards under WIOA, and a presentation on characteristics of a high-impact board.

Through the efforts of the strategic plan, SWDB has identified board training and development as a priority. SWDB seeks to develop and implement a structured professional and leadership development

program to include an enhanced onboarding process that is peer-centric. The Board Governance Committee will work with subject matter experts and key stakeholders to incorporate existing training processes (onboarding, mentorship) and state/national best practices into an innovative training and development model that cultivates a high-impact, tactical board.

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

##### A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

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

##### WIOA PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

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The WIOA Core Programs will provide data for federal reporting on the common indicators of performance required by section 116(b) of WIOA:

61. Employment in the 2nd quarter after program exit;
62. Education or training, or employment 2nd quarter after program exit (youth);
63. Employment in the 4th quarter after program exit;
64. Education or training, or employment 4th quarter after program exit (youth);
65. Median earnings in the 2nd quarter after program exit;
66. Postsecondary credential attainment during program participation or within 1 year after program exit or secondary school diploma or equivalent;
67. Measurable skill gains; and
68. Effectiveness in serving employers.

In addition to the mandated performance indicators, there are many other ways that programs are assessed and evaluated:

State Measures: In September 2017, The State Workforce Development Board unanimously approved a Participant Cost Rate Policy, establishing that each LWDB shall ensure that Adult and Dislocated Worker program expenditures meet a minimum participant cost rate of 30 percent. The annually evaluated rate, effective July 1, 2018, will be calculated using combined local Adult and Dislocated Worker program expenditures and will include both carry-in and new funds. The policy also includes a plan of action should a local area fall below the 30 percent rate.

Realizing that annual expenditure rates, customer services, and performance outcomes justify the continued national investment in the workforce system, the State Board renewed a policy for LWDA Fund Utilization. This policy requires each LWDB ensure that an annual 70 percent fund utilization rate is met for each of the WIOA Title I funding streams (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth). The rate will be calculated for each local area by dividing total program and administration expenditures by total available funds (carry-in and current annual allocation) for each funding stream. The policy also includes a plan of action should a local area fall below the 70 percent rate.

Other Forms of Assessment and Evaluation of Programs: The state board issued policy guidance regarding priority of service under the WIOA adult program to ensure consistent application of the priority of service requirement and to provide a more quantifiable definition for basic skills deficient. For those Title I Adult participants receiving individualized career services and training, the policy requires that 70 percent be low-income or basic skills deficient. LWDBs are responsible for establishing local procedures to comply with this policy and for conducting outreach to these priority populations. Compliance with the policy is monitored through Ad Hoc Reports from our participant data system. For PY 2016 and currently, all 12 LWDA are meeting or exceeding the 70 percent benchmark.

The SC Works Certification Standards were created in 2010, revised for system changes, and with the implementation of WIOA will be a responsibility of the LWDBs to ensure and certify adherence to each of the standards. There are sets of standards for job seeker services, business services, and center management. As needed, the standards will continue to be revised to ensure effectiveness in fostering quality services.

As data is analyzed by staff and reviewed by the SWDB, needs of the system are discovered and addressed. The Board identified the need for a broader number of businesses to be aware of the public program services and created an incentive for local business teams to reach a specified higher percentage of employers in their local area. The first year solely incentivized quantity and was very effective. The total number of new businesses engaged for the year was 11,635. The SWDB is now focusing on the quality of services provided by all programs as well as increasing the effectiveness of business service teams.

The State monitoring system is developed and utilized to monitor and evaluate the WIOA, TAA, and Wagner-Peyser DOL funded programs to ensure that (1) applicable Federal awards are used for authorized purposes in compliance with laws, regulations, and the provisions of contracts or grant agreements; and (2) the applicable programs are being implemented as intended in an efficient and effective manner. The ongoing review of program operations provide a greater degree of oversight, compliance, and operational efficiency which has the potential to eliminate bottlenecks, streamline processes and activities, and enhance delivery of operations while maintaining program cost-effectiveness across coordinating entities.

Based on annual monitoring visits, technical assistance site visits, and local board discussions, several areas of improvement are identified and recommended or required actions follow to obtain desired improvement and outcomes. An example is the identified need for staff training on the implementation of WIOA. The core programs, working together, are addressing the need for staff training at all levels to ensure cohesiveness in the centers. Core and other partners are creating an inclusive training plan to ensure an expected level of staff knowledge and professionalism across the workforce system. Staff will be evaluated on their understanding of the material and the training will be able to be adapted for locally-specific processes and resources.

Each year, state agencies submit an annual Accountability Report to the State Legislature. This report includes each agency's strategic planning goals, strategies, objectives, and performance results.

As indicated in the most recent Accountability Report, SCVRD continues its focus on individual employee responsibility for quality client service delivery, one client at a time, and quality partnerships, one partner at a time. The agency's goals, strategies, and objectives in the accountability report reflect the mission, vision, and values as well as the needs assessment-based VR Portion of the Unified State Plan submitted to and approved by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, U.S. Department of Education.

Accordingly, continuous improvement initiatives to build on the agency's long-term history of success have focused on quality. SCVRD has embarked on an initiative known as "Quality One" (or "Q1"), which has a theme of "Quality happens one person at a time." This included the establishment of workgroups to address quality measures and provide recommendations for a cohesive system that supports the provision of quality client services and metrics to gauge success and to realize results in increased successful employment outcomes for clients.

This initiative aligns with SCVRD's longstanding commitment to its Program Integrity model, which seeks a balance among productivity, customer service, and compliance assurance. Each of those components has measurable results and can be used to evaluate the agency at levels ranging from specific caseload or work unit up to an agency-wide level. The agency is proactively integrating the new WIOA common performance measures into program evaluation, data collection, and management information reports.

The use of data continues to be an important tool in the evaluation of the programs and overall system effectiveness. A statewide awareness of the need to improve data, data integration, and data analysis will greatly assist with system improvements at the state, regional, and local levels.

## B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNER PROGRAMS

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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.

## SC WORKS CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

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By providing access to programs, activities, and services, SC Works partners contribute to the overall effectiveness of the workforce delivery system. The SC Works Certification Standards, which measure the effectiveness of system management and services to job seekers and employers, are one of the ways that core, mandatory, and optional partner programs will be assessed each year. SWDB adopted a set of standards that establish and communicate clear expectations and minimum requirements for comprehensive SC Works Centers in an effort to provide consistent, excellent services to job seekers and employers. SC Works Centers were evaluated in 2017 and will be re-evaluated every three (3) years thereafter, as required by WIOA. Because the standards created for the comprehensive centers go far above and beyond what is required by law, separate standards will be written for the assessment and certification of the satellite/affiliate sites.

## OTHER ASSESSMENT METHODS

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Other programs use a combination of internal and external tools to assess the effectiveness of their programs and activities. Most federally-funded programs are assessed at least annually by their authorizing agencies and have a set of performance indicators against which program effectiveness is measured.

Most agencies/organizations also use internal processes to assess their programs and activities. The SC Technical College System, for example, evaluates associate degree, diploma, and certificate programs offered by local community and technical colleges on an annual basis. There are several indicators against which local programs perform in order to be considered productive, such as enrollment, graduation rates, and job placement. Regular evaluations are conducted with organizations that use the System's statewide programs and the System also conducts internal audits of programs and processes (local community and

technical colleges also undergo evaluations in compliance with a variety of accrediting bodies including the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACSCOC)).

### C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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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.

Thus far, the availability of WIOA performance data has been insufficient to assess the effectiveness of programs. Beginning with the 4-year plan submitted in 2020, the state will be positioned to report on previous assessment results.

### D. EVALUATION

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

The South Carolina workforce system continuously seeks ways to improve processes, policies, services, and outcomes for job seekers and employers. In Program Year 2017, an evaluation was conducted to analyze the effects of rising postsecondary education costs in comparison to the levels of debt that South Carolinians are taking on and determined the employment outcomes of recent graduates. Two cohorts of South Carolina college graduates were part of the study to determine the following: (1) the percentage of students found working in the state one and five years post-graduation, (2) their annual earnings, (3) median earnings one and five years post-graduation, and (4) and their industry of employment one and five years post-graduation.

Major findings showed that:

- 64.9 percent of South Carolina college graduates (FY2009-2010) were employed one-year post graduation, and 50.0 percent were employed five years post-graduation[1]
- Women, African-Americans, in-state students, and those pursuing less than a bachelor's degree were more likely to be found in wage records one and five years post-graduation. Students with Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) education were least likely to be found in wage records one and five years post-graduation
- Retention rates are higher for students that are native to South Carolina (78.6 percent) than those from out-of-state (50.2 percent)
- STEM graduates have the fastest median annual wage growth (9.6 percent) one to five years post-graduation; Trades come in second (8.2 percent); and third is Business and Communication (8.1 percent)
- The college majors associated with South Carolina's Talent Pipeline Initiative[2] showed either above average wages (\$35,238) one-year post-graduation or higher than average wage growth (6.3 percent per year) between the first and fifth years. Many of the fields of study funded

through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) will likely have similar wage outcomes.

Similarly, SWDB has allocated funding to a return on investment study that will be completed in Program Year 2018. Other recent evaluations lead to the adoption of a Participant Cost Rate Policy and the renewal of an LWDA Fund Utilization Policy.

In addition to these, the core program partners will work alongside SWDB and LWDBs to identify areas of opportunity that would benefit from further evaluation and research. The state will also coordinate evaluation and research projects with those provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education.

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[1] This is based on South Carolina's wage records

[2] The five high-demand, high growth sectors of the Talent Pipeline Initiative are Construction, Diversified Manufacturing, Business and Information Technology, Health Care, and Transportation and Logistics

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## 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

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For Title I programs, provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

#### I. YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 128(B)(2) OR (B)(3),

##### YOUTH FUNDS

- 33 percent based on the relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each workforce development area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state;
- 33 percent based on the relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each workforce development area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state; and
- 33 percent based on the relative number of disadvantaged youth in each workforce development area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state.

##### HOLD HARMLESS

- Applies to each funding stream. Ensures that funds are distributed without significant shifts in funding levels.
- A local area will not receive an allocation percentage that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the two preceding years.

## TITLE I FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

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While the frequency of federal reporting to USDOL-ETA is quarterly, the state requires LWDA's to report obligations and accrued expenditures on a monthly basis. Monthly reporting allows the state to assist local areas with timelier technical assistance on financial issues identified in the monthly reports. More frequent reporting also ensures accuracy in the quarterly reporting to USDOL-ETA and facilitates overall fiscal management of grant funds. The state also requires more detailed expenditure reporting, to include staff salaries and fringe benefits, operating expenses, types of training expenditures, supportive services, etc. This level of detail allows for tracking and analysis of program costs in three major categories:

- Participants costs;
- Costs for staff providing services to participants and/or employers; and
- Other staff and operating expenses.

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

### ADULT FUNDS

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- 33 percent based on the relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment within each workforce development area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state;
- 33 percent based on the relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each workforce development area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state; and
- 33 percent based on the relative number of disadvantaged adults in each workforce development area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged adults in the state.

### HOLD HARMLESS

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- Applies to each funding stream. Ensures that funds are distributed without significant shifts in funding levels.
- A local area will not receive an allocation percentage that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the two preceding years.

## TITLE I FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

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While the frequency of federal reporting to USDOL-ETA is quarterly, the state requires LWDA's to report obligations and accrued expenditures on a monthly basis. Monthly reporting allows the state to assist local areas with timelier technical assistance on financial issues identified in the monthly reports. More frequent reporting also ensures accuracy in the quarterly reporting to USDOL-ETA and facilitates overall fiscal management of grant funds. The state also requires more detailed expenditure reporting, to include staff salaries and fringe benefits, operating expenses, types of training expenditures, supportive services, etc. This level of detail allows for tracking and analysis of program costs in three major categories:

- Participants costs;
- Costs for staff providing services to participants and/or employers; and
- Other staff and operating expenses.

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

#### DISLOCATED WORKER FUNDS

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The distribution formula is based on the following factors and weights:

- Insured Unemployment Data 30%
- Unemployment Concentrations 25%
- Mass Layoff Data 10%
- Declining Industries Data 5%
- Farmer-Rancher Economic Hardship Data 5%
- Long-Term Unemployment Data 25%

#### HOLD HARMLESS

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- Applies to each funding stream. Ensures that funds are distributed without significant shifts in funding levels.
- A local area will not receive an allocation percentage that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the two preceding years.

#### TITLE I FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

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While the frequency of federal reporting to USDOL-ETA is quarterly, the state requires LWDAs to report obligations and accrued expenditures on a monthly basis. Monthly reporting allows the state to assist local areas with timelier technical assistance on financial issues identified in the monthly reports. More frequent reporting also ensures accuracy in the quarterly reporting to USDOL-ETA and facilitates overall fiscal management of grant funds. The state also requires more detailed expenditure reporting, to include staff salaries and fringe benefits, operating expenses, types of training expenditures, supportive services, etc. This level of detail allows for tracking and analysis of program costs in three major categories:

#### B. FOR TITLE II:

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##### I. MULTI-YEAR GRANTS OR CONTRACTS

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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.

The SC Department of Education (SCDE) is the state's eligible agency for adult education and literacy programs. SCDE's Office of Adult Education (OAE) is responsible for administering funds and providing program and performance oversight of adult education grantees. These providers, which were approved under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), will continue to receive AEFLA funding through June 30, 2018, so long as they adhere to state and federal grant requirements and financial and programmatic performance expectations. During the 2017-2018 grant year, OAE will implement a new competitive grant application process to identify, assess, and award multi-year adult education grants to eligible providers according to the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. The SCDE will award funds



through a competitive sub-granting process to eligible local providers/applicants for the development, implementation, and improvement of adult education and literacy activities within South Carolina. Each eligible provider receiving a subgrant must use the funding to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The same grant announcement, application, and process will be used to award funding for AEFLA programs under sections 231 and 225. The AEFLA program under section 243 will have a separate grant announcement and application process. AEFLA Section 231 (Grants and Contracts for Eligible Providers) grant funds will be allocated on a county-wide basis to each of South Carolina's 46 counties. OAE is in the process of determining the specifics of the allocation method but is strongly considering distributing funds to counties based on the percentage of the working age population (18-64 years old) without a high school diploma or equivalent. Data from the American Community Survey will be used to identify the number of individuals needing literacy services within each county and the funding allocation per county. Award amounts will be determined per program based on the quality of applications received and total funding requested and may vary depending upon program size, population (number of anticipated enrollees), and number of subgrants within the service area (i.e., county). An applicant may submit a single application to serve multiple counties. Final budgets may be negotiated based on demonstrated needs. All subgrants are contingent upon total allocations to the SCDE by the USED.

The SCDE-OAE will set aside up to 20 percent of AEFLA funds for correctional education. OAE is in the process of determining the exact dollar amount to be reserved for correctional education with consideration of total past spending on adult education services to institutionalized individuals in South Carolina. Section 225 (Corrections Education) grant funds will be distributed on a state-wide basis based upon the number of applications received and proposed services to be provided.

While OAE is still finalizing the local allocation method for IEL/CE grants, in the past priority has been given to areas where there are a significant number of English as a Second Language (ESL) individuals. The number or percentage of ESL adults is determined by using school district data of the number of K-12 English language learners. ESL youth is a strong indicator of ESL parents and individuals within a given school district and/or county.

Initially, AEFLA grant funds for all three sections (231 funds, 225 funds, and 243 funds) will be awarded to eligible providers for a three-year period, July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2021. Official grant award documents will be processed annually as continuation of funding is not automatic. In determining continuation funding, the SCDE will consider the subgrantee's evidence of a project's effectiveness in achieving objectives, program performance, timely submission and quality of all required reports (including interim and Annual Progress Reports), and the rationale for budget expenditures. A continuation application may be required.

The anticipated timeline beginning in 2018 is as follows:

January 29 RFP Release

February 12, 14, and 16 Pre-Application Technical Assistance Webinars

March 28 Proposals Due

March 29 Begin Proposal Review

May 2018 Complete Proposal Review

June 2018 Send Award Letters and Grant Notifications

June 2018 Required Grantee Meeting/Training

June 2018 Make-up Grantee Meeting/Training

July 1 First Year Funding Period Begins

The SC Department of Education - Office of Adult Education issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for adult education services in January 2018. The state's Request for Proposals (RFP) instructions will identify eligible providers as:

- Local education agencies
- Community-based or faith-based organizations
- Voluntary literacy organizations
- Institutions of higher learning
- Public or private nonprofit agencies
- Libraries
- Public housing authorities
- Other nonprofits that have the ability to provide literacy services
- Consortiums of organizations listed above
- Partnership between an employer and an entity listed above

As outlined in Section 463.24, an eligible provider must demonstrate effectiveness. To fulfill the demonstrated effectiveness requirement, applicants must submit, in no more than two pages, its performance record and participant outcomes. Applicants must submit a minimum of two consecutive years of performance data and/or information and a minimum of two consecutive years of participant outcomes data and/or information. An applicant that is unable to provide evidence of their demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities *will not be considered* for funding, and their application will not be reviewed. The demonstrated effectiveness applies to all four subgrant programs (Adult Education, Corrections Education, GFS and IEL/CE).

An eligible provider must show demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities by submitting:

Performance Record—a minimum of two consecutive years of performance data (within the previous five years) on improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains of

- reading,
- writing,
- mathematics, and
- English language acquisition.

Participant Outcomes - a minimum of two consecutive years of data and/or information (within the previous five years) on outcomes for participants related to

- employment,
- attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training

All proposals will be reviewed and rated on various elements to include demonstrated effectiveness as well as the 13 considerations in Title II of WIOA as identified in Section 231(e), LWDB local plan alignment, and partnership/collaboration.

#### Considerations for Funding

Applicants must demonstrate effectiveness and experience in providing the adult education and literacy services proposed in the application. Applicants must be in compliance with all state laws regarding the awarding of contracts and the expenditure of public funds. In addition, the funding agency shall consider:

- The degree to which the eligible provider would be responsive to regional needs and serving individuals in the community who were identified in the plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals who have low levels of literacy skills or who are English language learners.
- The ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities.
- 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, 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, as well as the activities and services of the One-Stop partners.
- Whether the eligible provider's program is of sufficient intensity and quality and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains and whether the program uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction.
- Whether the eligible provider's activities, including 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 the eligible provider's activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education, in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning and how such technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance.
- Whether the eligible provider's 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 exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

- Whether the eligible provider's activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet any minimum qualifications established by the state, where applicable, and who have access to high-quality professional development, including through electronic means.
- Whether the eligible provider's activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, One-Stop Centers, job training programs, social service agencies, businesses, industries, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways.
- Whether the eligible provider's activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with federal, state, and local support services (such as childcare, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs.
- Whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes and to monitor program performance.
- 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.

## 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 South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) - Office of Adult Education (OAE) will ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants and contracts under AEFLA. The entire RFP process, from beginning to end, will be managed by the SCDE, and eligible providers will submit proposals through the SCDE's grants submission system. Eligible applicants will not be required to apply nor submit proposals through any other agency or agencies.

The SC Department of Education will hold a full and open competitive competition consistent with the standards of CFR 200.319. SCDE will ensure compliance with all state and federal laws regarding the awarding of contracts and the expenditure of public funds as well as requirements outlined in Title II of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014.

The SCDE - Office of Adult Education will also ensure direct and equitable access in its processes and procedures related to the RFP announcement/distribution, the grant application, and technical assistance.

RFP Announcement/Distribution: An announcement of the availability of federal funds, under the auspices of WIOA - Title II, will be circulated to the widest extent possible. Various sources and mediums will be used to make the public and eligible providers aware of the RFP. SCDE's Public Information Office will send out an announcement to the public, school districts, and other stakeholders. The grant opportunity will be posted on the SC Department of Education's website and distributed via SCDE's

GrantNews listserv. The announcement will also be forwarded to current adult education providers and organizations such as the SC Association of Nonprofit Organizations (SCANPO); the South Carolina Library Association (SCLA); South Carolina Technical Education Association (SCTEA); South Carolina Association of School Administrators (SCASA); and others.

The RFP and all announcements will be consistent and contain information such as:

- Type of grants available
- RFP contact person
  - Applicants will be given a designated timeframe to ask questions and to receive a response.
- RFP process timeline (see above)
- Other pertinent items
- Any information required by state law regarding the awarding of contracts and the expenditure of public funds
- The same grant and application process will also be used for all eligible providers in the state. The SC Department of Education will require that all eligible providers under WIOA sections 225 (Corrections Education), 231 (Grants and Contracts for Eligible Providers), and 243 (Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education) use the same application with the same due date.
- All applications will be evaluated using the same scoring criteria. In addition, all proposal reviewers will receive adequate training to help ensure consistent scoring.
- Pre-Award/Technical Assistance sessions will be made available to all interested stakeholders and eligible providers via webinar and/or face-to-face meetings. During these sessions, there will be a review of the RFP and the awarding process. Attendees will also have a chance to ask questions specific to the RFP and adult education services. Dates, times, and locations of pre-award/technical assistance sessions will be included in the announcements and the Request for Proposals. In addition, eligible providers will have a stated timeframe to ask additional questions. Responses to all questions will be made available to the public.

South Carolina Department of Education - OAE will hold a full and open competition consistent with the standards of CFR 200.319. All eligible agencies will be granted direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants or contracts. The OAE will be in compliance with all state and federal laws regarding the award of contracts and the expenditure of public funds. The following steps will be initiated to ensure direct and equitable access:

- An announcement of the availability of federal funds, under the auspices of Title II of the Workforce Innovation Act of 2014, will be circulated in various professional print and web-based publications, newsletters, and newspapers in order to provide the widest possible state coverage.
- An announcement of the availability of funds will be sent to all existing adult education providers.
- The same grant and application process will be used for all eligible providers in the state.

- Standard criteria for evaluation of local proposals will be used for all eligible providers.
- Technical assistance workshops will be held to review the entire process and provide information to all eligible providers interested in applying. Dates, times, and places of these workshops will be included in the announcements and the Request for Proposal.

The announcement will contain information such as:

- Type of grants available
- Contact person to obtain RFP guidelines
- Timeline with grant application due date
- Other pertinent items
- Any information required by state law in regard to the awarding of contracts and the expenditure of public funds

### C. TITLE IV VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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

In South Carolina, vocational rehabilitation services are delivered by two agencies: SCVRD and SCCB. The Agencies maintain an agreement that outlines the roles and respective duties of each Agency. Federal grant funding is allocated as follows: 13 percent is allocated to SCCB and 87 percent is allocated to SCVRD. This is proportionally consistent with the client service and operational needs of the two agencies.

## 6. PROGRAM DATA

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### A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

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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.

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South Carolina core partners currently use a variety of agency-specific data systems to manage service delivery (e.g. intake, application for services, case management, referrals, etc.) and to collect and report data. With the exception of SCDEW-administered programs, these systems do not exchange data in real time with other state partners, and each entity separately requests, receives, and reports education, employment, and other performance data.

During initial development of the state plan, a work group was formed to assess the current operability of each core partner's information system. Each partner provided an overview of its information system and current reporting practices. All partners agreed that a coordinated system that would enable the use of common intake procedures, timely and appropriate referrals, and the exchange of common data elements would be more efficient. Additionally, it would support assessment and evaluation.

Despite this common understanding, there are obvious barriers to the implementation of such a system, including the cost and overall feasibility. The work group formed to examine solutions participated in a number of system demonstrations, but ultimately determined that procuring a shared system or system "overlay" was not a viable option.

Although this work group is no longer researching or moving in the direction of a shared system, as a next step, the core partners will begin to examine opportunities for alignment through other means, which may include state-level policy development. Additionally, and as mentioned previously, the CCWD Data Sharing Committee is working to finalize a plan for data sharing and potential legislation. It is unclear whether this plan will include data sharing among the core partner programs, but may present a solution for all to consider.

## 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.

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Our initial plan involved the exploration of data and systems integration solutions. Although each partner was open to exploring solutions, it was clear that each desired to remain in their legacy system. With this understanding, the work group participated in a number of demonstrations to explore the feasibility and efficacy of a system overlay. The demonstrations helped to refine our needs and wants, but the products were not ready for deployment and could not meet our immediate needs.

Core program partners have discussed the use a single system to track business engagement and employer services. Although a state-level plan or policy has not been developed, multiple local partners use the CRM feature of SCWOS to enter business engagement.

Lastly, it is important to reiterate the work being done by the CCWD Data Sharing Work Group, to not only demonstrate recognition of a need but to also to highlight the group of partners convened around the mission to find a solution. The SWDB and most core partner programs are represented on the CCWD and support the efforts of the Council and Data Sharing Work Group.

## 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.

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SWDB will assist the Governor in aligning technology and data systems across programs by developing strategies and operating policies that support system-wide adoption and implementation. Additionally, SWDB will support the efforts of the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development in its efforts to improve and advance data sharing among partner agencies and organizations, and other similar initiatives that align with SWDB's objectives and strategies related to data sharing, data alignment, and data integrity.

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

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Until all core programs are aligned in a fully integrated information system and are able to exchange real-time data, it will be difficult to submit a joint state performance report. The core partners will continue to examine this issue in greater detail and work toward the goal of unified data collection and reporting. For PY 2018 and PY 2019, the core program partners anticipate developing and producing the WIOA sec. 116 reports according to current agency specific reporting practices.

*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

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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.

Primarily, we will use the WIOA sec. 116(b) indicators of performance to assess participant success post-program. The applicable measures are: employment during 2nd and 4th quarter after exit (adult/DW), education, training, or employment 2nd and 4th quarter after exit (youth), median earnings 2nd quarter after exit, and credential attainment (during or) 1 year after program exit.

Additionally, the ultimate goal of South Carolina's Eligible Training Provider (ETP) project is to be able to track participants' post-program success more efficiently. After project completion and full implementation, the state anticipates being able to track whether participants continued their education, earned higher wages, or entered training related employment.

#### C. USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) WAGE RECORD DATA

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

The Business Intelligence Division (BID) of DEW requests wage records on a quarterly basis for all new WIOA registrants and all WIOA exiters from the Unemployment Insurance Division. DEW is also a member of the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS and WRIS 2), allowing the state to collect wage records for WIOA participants employed out-of-state. Wage records are used to verify if a participant gained or kept employment after exiting the WIOA program, and to determine the Entered Employment Rate and Median Earnings for performance reporting. To comply with the joint reporting requirements of WIOA, DEW is in the process of executing MOAs with all core program partners.

#### D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

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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.



The South Carolina workforce system complies with all federal and state laws and guidelines for the handling and protection of Personally Identifiable Information (PII), including but not limited to 2 CFR and TEGL 39-11, and ensures compliance through the following means: data sharing agreements with workforce partners, state and local memorandums of understanding (MOU), local area agreements, and resource sharing agreements. Additionally, PII is maintained and disposed of in a secure and confidential manner, and policies and procedures for the handling of PII are in place and reviewed regularly.

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## 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.

In accordance with the Jobs for Veterans Act, veterans and eligible spouses are given priority of service in employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the USDOL. Priority of service means that veterans and eligible spouses are given priority over non-covered persons for the receipt of employment, training, and placement service and that a veteran or an eligible spouse either receives access to a service earlier in time than a non-covered person, or, if the resource is limited, the veteran or eligible spouse receives access to the services instead of the non-covered person. The state has provided guidance to local workforce boards on how to implement the priority of service provisions.

The state monitors priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses by ensuring that local workforce areas have implemented appropriate priority of service policies. Local policies are assessed to determine the following:

- whether the policy explains the differences between Veterans' Services and priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses;
- whether the policy describes the roles and responsibilities of SC Works Center staff and management as they pertain to Veterans' Priority of Service; and,
- whether the policy demonstrates appropriate actions for showing priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses for Department of Labor funded programs in SC Works Centers.

DEW conducts on-site evaluations of local SC Works Centers to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of internal processes. DEW monitors assess SC Works Center staff practices to determine whether the entitlement to priority of service is entirely explained and what actions are taken at points of entry to show preference.

Additionally, veterans receive a 24-hour period of priority for jobs listed with the SC Works system. This means that all qualified veterans and eligible persons will have the opportunity to view and receive referrals prior to non-covered persons.

The state has issued guidance regarding services under the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP). DVOP staff must limit their activities to providing services to eligible veterans and eligible spouses who:

- meet the definition of an individual with a significant barrier to employment (SBE), as defined and updated by DOL, or

- are members of a veteran population identified by the Secretary of Labor as eligible for DVOP services, currently defined as veterans aged 18 to 24.

Per state guidance, an eligible veteran or eligible spouse who is identified as having a SBE must be immediately referred to a DVOP specialist. Veterans ages 18 to 24 must also be referred to DVOP specialists. In instances where a DVOP specialist is not available, referrals to a SCDEW career development specialist will be made. DVOP specialists will conduct an initial assessment to determine if the veteran or eligible spouse will benefit from the provision of case management. In the event that case management is determined not suitable, the DVOP will refer the veteran or eligible spouse to the other program staff who would best be able to meet their needs.

Veterans with a SBE and those aged 18 to 24 must have access to all appropriate SC Works services and are not limited to receiving services only from DVOP specialists. Additionally, veterans and eligible spouses who do not meet the SBE definition or are not within a specified category identified by the Secretary of Labor, are to be referred to appropriate non-JVSG SC Works staff member(s) to receive services, on a priority basis.

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## 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.

South Carolina's one-stop delivery system is designed to be fully accessible so that all job seekers and employers can participate in the services offered. The Methods of Administration (MOA) - a state document required by the Civil Rights Center - is a "living" document that ensures current federal regulations and directives are implemented at the state and local level expeditiously, and details how compliance with WIOA Section 188 will be accomplished.

Monitoring performed at both the state and local level ensures that all SC Works Centers are in compliance with Section 188 of WIOA, the ADA, and other applicable regulations. Individuals who seek to utilize South Carolina's workforce system can expect facilities, whether physical or virtual (e.g. SC Works Online Services) to meet federally-mandated accessibility standards. Complaints of discrimination are directed to the State Equal Opportunity Officer.

Per federal regulations, each LWDA must appoint a local Equal Opportunity Officer who is responsible for ensuring local WIOA Section 188 compliance. Local Equal Opportunity Officers are trained to use the "ADA Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal," the "Checklist for Existing Facilities," and a recommended assistive technology checklist. New local Equal Opportunity Officers are provided with detailed training on regulations, policies, and procedures following appointment. Ongoing training is provided through EO Roundtables and on-site training on such topics as, "Serving Customers with Disabilities," "Current EO Trends," as well as topics deemed relevant by LWDA's and designed in response to their training requests.

Local Equal Opportunity Officers are responsible for informing senior staff of applicable federal regulations, ensuring all programs and activities implemented are in compliance, and providing training for staff and center partners. Additionally, local Equal Opportunity Officers collect and resolve local grievances as needed. Each of the local Equal Opportunity Officers monitors for compliance independently. Local Equal Opportunity Officers actively liaise with DEW's Office of Equal Opportunity and USDOL's Civil Rights Center to remain current on regulatory updates and guidance. They are then responsible for circulating new information locally and ensuring it is properly implemented.

Through participation in the SC Disability Employment Coalition, DEW is coordinating efforts with Able SC, SCVRD, and other disability advocacy groups to increase outreach and employment opportunities for citizens with disabilities. These partnerships assist in providing resources, and developing materials to benefit individuals with disabilities, and providing guidance to service providers about how to discuss the complexities of self-disclosure..

Additionally, DEW issued State Instruction 14-03 requiring each LWDB to designate a standing committee that will provide information and assist with operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. Members of these committees will be individuals who have specific expertise serving individuals with disabilities.

SC Department of Education Office of Adult Education has a special education task force that creates and delivers training for adult education practitioners serving students with special needs. The OAE meets regularly with SCDE Office of Special Education Services to ensure compliance with all special education regulations. Additionally, OAE requires that all funded local providers have a written plan with local Special Education Departments to transition IEP (Individualized Education Plan) students, and that local providers comply with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) which requires each provider to describe the steps they propose to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally assisted programs. OAE monitors for compliance with the written transition IEP as part of its annual compliance process, and collaborates with the Office of Special Education to monitor all other GEPA requirements.

As a condition of partnering with SCVRD, other organizations are informed of their obligation to comply with applicable Civil Rights laws and regulations. Postsecondary training vendors are required to complete SCVR 153 - Assurance of Compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. This form acknowledges that the training vendor complied with Section 504, which ensured that individuals with disabilities have equal access to any federally funded program. The form is signed by the training vendor when the initial application is submitted for approval. Similarly, applicants, eligible individuals, and other interested persons are also informed in writing that services are provided on a nondiscriminatory basis, as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, as amended. Additionally, all staff members are required to complete the Office of Civil Rights training modules.

As part of the SC Works center certification process, LWDBs are required to evaluate accessibility of the SC Works delivery system. SC Works centers were evaluated in 2017 and will be re-evaluated every three (3) years thereafter as required by WIOA. In order to be certified according to the SC Works certification standards, each center must meet the following accessibility baseline measures:

- A. The Center is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Every workforce area will work with Vocational Rehabilitation partners and SCDEW Office of Equal Opportunity, as needed, to ensure ADA compliance.

- B. The Center provides assistive technology for customers to use when accessing computers and other services. This includes customers with visual impairments, physical disabilities, and hearing impairments.
- C. Staff should be identified to assist people with disabilities at the first point of contact and in case of emergency.
- D. There are linkages to services for people with special needs, including veterans and others, related to disability.
- E. The center is accessible to the most prominent limited-English proficiency groups in the workforce area. Interpreter services are available, and staff is aware of how to provide when needed.
- F. The center provides free parking adequate for the average customer traffic flow.
- G. Centers have flexible scheduling and work hours, as appropriate; to better accommodate job seekers and employers.

SC Works centers may be evaluated by SCVRD, by partners such as Able SC, and in some instances SCCB, to ensure ADA compliance. LWDA's have also partnered with SCVRD to assist with the procurement of accessible equipment. SCVRD is represented on all of the LWDBs and will participate on the disability standing committees discussed above.

- A. SCCB was recently asked to review blindness, it was requested, but in the process of scheduling these.
- B. SCCB is working with the SC Works system to ensure one-stop center accessibility to persons with visual impairments. SCCB Assistive Technology Staff are current evaluating centers in several areas of the state to propose and provide hardware and/or software that will enable persons who are blind or low vision to access one stop center programs.

These measures ensure that all South Carolinian's have equal access to workforce development activities and programs.

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#### 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.

Languages other than English are identified through Census language identification flash cards. To ensure accessibility, individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) are provided services via a qualified interpreter service when qualified bilingual staff is not available. Each LWDA has submitted an LEP Plan of Action outlining procedures on identifying customer language needs, provision of services in the language identified, and the right to free language assistance. The LEP Plan of Action is an ongoing process identifying procedures to meet the needs of LEP customers. A Request for Interpreter Service form has been made available to expedite the interpreter request process. Training on the provision of services to LEP individuals, as well as current interpretation resources and other materials, are provided on an ongoing basis. LEP individuals are notified of their rights under law via posters in Spanish and any other significant language groups identified.

As part of the SC Works center certification process, LWDBs are required to evaluate LEP accessibility.

#### 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.

In 2015, four (4) subject matter work groups were formed to examine operational and program alignment, resource sharing, data integration and information systems alignment, and serving priority populations. These work groups were intended to engage a variety of workforce partners in the WIOA planning and implementation process. The ideas and strategic recommendations of each work group were incorporated into the Unified State Plan submitted to DOL in April, 2016.

**Operational and Program Alignment:** The key tenants of WIOA include collaboration and the streamlined delivery of job seeker and employer services. The Operational and Program Alignment work group was charged with examining coordination and alignment of workforce programs and resources to create a more streamlined and efficient delivery system for job seekers and employers.

**Performance and Systems Alignment:** Another major theme of WIOA is accountability through performance measures shared by all core program partners, and the alignment and integration of partner intake, case management, data and reporting systems. The Performance and Systems Alignment work group was empowered with offering strategic recommendations for the adoption and implementation of common performance measures and was challenged to identify options for the coordination of program information systems.

**Resource Sharing and Infrastructure Funding:** Resource sharing is an important aspect of collaboration and partnership and helps create a strong workforce system despite limited resources. State guidance has been developed to assist LWDBs in the negotiation and execution of local resource sharing agreements.

**Priority Populations:** WIOA improves access to workforce programs for individuals with disabilities and prepares disconnected youth and other vulnerable populations for employment. The Priority Populations work group identified several populations that face significant barriers to employment, including but not limited to: youth, veterans, individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, and low-income and TANF/SNAP recipients.

After submission and approval of the plan, the work groups convened occasionally but were later re-organized, with the Core Partner Work Group taking ownership of state plan implementation and many of the issues originally delegated to the work groups.

The Core Partner Work Group consists of core program partner representation, including a representative of TANF and SNAP Employment and Training Programs. This work group meets on a monthly basis to share information and to collectively work toward system improvements. For example, the Core Partner work group was instrumental in the development and issuance of guidance to the local areas on the development and negotiation of MOU/IFAs. Similarly, the Core Partner work group has worked together to modify the state plan, focusing on aligning the state plan with the recently developed SWDB strategic plan, "Strategies for a Competitive Workforce".

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#### PUBLIC COMMENT

DEW staff provided an update to the SWDB Collaboration and Partnership Committee on February 7, 2018 on the status of the state plan modification, highlighting the goal to create a more cohesive, unified plan and to align the plan with the SWDB strategic plan. The Committee meeting was open to public.

Presentations to the SWDB Executive Committee and full board were delivered on February 14 and 28, 2018. The SWDB unanimously voted to approve key revisions to the state plan on February 28, 2018.

The Unified State Plan was published on March 6, 2018 for public comment. A small number of comments were received. The comments were reviewed by the Steering Committee and revisions were made to the plan as appropriate.

## 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 administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board; Yes
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities; Yes
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3); Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable; Yes

8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program; Yes
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs; Yes
10. The State has a One-Stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all One-Stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); Yes
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.

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### 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--

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#### A. ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

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##### 1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

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

South Carolina re-designated all 12 local workforce development areas that were designated as local areas for purposes of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and identified four (4) intrastate planning regions: Greater Upstate, Central, Pee Dee, and South Coast. The Upstate region includes four (4) local areas: Greenville, Upper Savannah, Upstate, and Worklink. The Central region includes three (3) local areas: Catawba, Lower Savannah, and Midlands. The Pee Dee region includes three (3) local areas: Pee Dee, Santee Lynches, and Wacammaw. The South Coast region includes two (2) local areas: Lowcountry and Trident.

###### 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.

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State Instruction 14-05, Local Workforce Development Area Designation and Local Workforce Development Board Certification, outlines the process used for designating local areas. The policy defines “performed successfully” as meeting or exceeding the performance goals for the WIA common measures for each of the last two consecutive years for which data is available. It further provides that “sustained fiscal integrity” means that the Secretary has not made a formal determination, during either of the last two consecutive years, that either the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the area misexpended funds provided under WIA due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provision involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration. Each local workforce area submitted a formal designation petition, including documentation of successful performance and fiscal integrity.

State Instruction 15-08, Regional Identification, provides an overview of the process used to identify planning regions. In making this determination, the state considered the factors listed in Sec. 106(b)(1)(B): the extent to which the local areas in a proposed region 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 subtitle B and other applicable provisions of WIOA. This also includes whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools. South Carolina also considered population centers, labor force conditions, commuting patterns, industrial composition, location quotients, geographic boundaries, income, poverty, educational attainment, and in-demand occupation groups.

The data collected was examined by the cross-agency data-subcommittee and state workforce partners convened as part of the South Carolina Sector Strategies/Talent Pipeline Project. Four planning regions were identified and presented to workforce partners and stakeholders during a September 2015 webinar on WIOA Region Identification. There was a public comment period at the end of September; after reviewing the comments, the SWDB approved the planning regions as proposed in October 2015.

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

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State Instruction 14-05 outlines the local area designation appeals process and provides that if an existing workforce area requests but is not granted designation as a local workforce development area, the unit of general local government or grant recipient may submit a written appeal to the State Workforce Development Board within 20 days of receiving written denial notification. Appeals submitted after this time will not be considered. The appealing entity must explain why it believes the denial is contrary to the provisions of Section 106(b)(2) of WIOA. No other cause for appeal will be considered under this section. The State Workforce Development Board must consider and respond in writing to such an appeal within 20 days of its receipt.

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

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If the Local Board and required partners fail to reach consensus on funding infrastructure costs under the Local Funding Mechanism (LFM), the State Funding Mechanism (SFM) is triggered. Under the SFM, the Governor is required to determine the partners’ contributions for infrastructure costs for local areas that have not reached consensus, applying statutory caps specified by WIOA for certain programs. The SFM is only applicable to required partners and cannot be triggered by additional partners not reaching



consensus. Even if all required partners except one agree on the terms of the IFA, consensus is not reached, and the SFM is triggered for all partners in the local area. The SFM's programmatic caps create uncertainty for local partners regarding how much they will be required to contribute toward infrastructure costs and the level of service they will be able to provide to their participants. It is the expectation that Local Boards and partners reach consensus on infrastructure funding during local negotiations, thus avoiding the necessity of utilizing the SFM.

State Funding Mechanism Steps:

- 1) Notice of failure to reach consensus given to the Governor. If the Local Board cannot reach consensus with partners on sufficiently funding infrastructure costs and the amounts to be contributed by each partner program locally, the Local Board is required to notify the State by August 15 annually via submission of the *Report of Outcomes from Local MOU Negotiations*, an attachment to State Instruction 16-19, Change II issued by the State regarding local MOU/IFAs. Additionally, the Local Board must submit all materials and documents used in negotiations under the LFM in order to assist the Governor in determining appropriate calculations by partner program.
- 2) The Governor determines the infrastructure budget for each center in a local area.
- 3) The Governor establishes cost allocation method(s).
- 4) The Governor determines the partners' proportionate shares.
- 5) The Governor calculates the statewide partner program caps using the limiting percentages required under WIOA.
- 6) The Governor must ensure that the funds required to be contributed by each partner program in the local area(s) that did not reach consensus, do not exceed the applicable program caps. The partners' proportionate shares must be adjusted if necessary.

**Appealing the State Funding Mechanism:** All Parties will actively participate in local IFA negotiations in a good faith effort to reach agreement. Any disputes shall first be attempted to be resolved informally. Any party may call a meeting to discuss and resolve disputes. Should the Local Board become unable to reach consensus with local partners regarding infrastructure funding, the Governor will make the final determination of each required partner's proportionate share of infrastructure costs under the SFM as described above. Appeals must be made to the SWDB within 14 days of the Governor's determination and submitted in writing as follows:

South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce

Attn: Appeals, State Workforce Development Board

1550 Gadsden Street

Columbia, SC 29201

## 2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

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A. PROVIDE STATE POLICIES OR GUIDANCE FOR THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND FOR USE OF STATE FUNDS FOR WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES.

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(VI)(2)(A) and (B) are combined. See (VI)(2)(B).

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

.....

The following are South Carolina's general practices for determining the use of state funds for workforce activities:

WIOA statewide activities funding proposals are developed when there is a general idea of the level of funds that will be received. Using the state plan and the SWDB Strategic Plan to identify areas of opportunity, several initiatives are proposed to the SWDB. The appropriate SWDB Committee reviews, discusses, and votes on final proposals of fund use to go before the full SWDB. Typically, the full Board votes on the use of statewide activities funding in their June meeting.

Previous and current activities have included funds for statewide initiatives such as the South Carolina Certified Work Ready Communities Initiative (CWRC), grant opportunities to pilot innovative workforce education and training programs, incumbent worker training, and funding to support statewide efforts to develop a talent pipeline, to name a few.

**Utilization of Rapid Response Funds**

The state retains 15 percent of Dislocated Worker funds for Rapid Response activities. Funds at the state-level are used to manage Rapid Response services, which include planning for and responding to layoffs and closures.

Rapid Response services are designed to provide early intervention assistance to businesses faced with closures or layoffs and to provide dislocated workers with information and resources to quickly seek and obtain alternate employment. SCDEW uses a proactive, comprehensive approach to Rapid Response by identifying, planning and responding to layoffs, and preventing or minimizing the impact of layoffs wherever possible.

DEW's proactive and comprehensive approach is organized in a five-step process:

- **Step 1: Research & Discovery.** The DEW Rapid Response team is proactive, using resources to identify businesses that are at risk of layoff or closure. Often, the business is contacted and provided information and resources that may minimize the risk of layoff or closure.
- **Step 2: Activation.** Upon receipt of a layoff announcement, WARN (Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification) or early warning notification, the Rapid Response team gathers information about the business, layoff or closure, and affected workers and develops a layoff aversion strategy specific to the employer's needs. The Rapid Response team also contacts business management to schedule a Management Meeting.
- **Step 3: The Management Meeting.** The ultimate goal of the Management Meeting is to avert or lessen the impact of the announced layoff or closure while at the same time, scheduling pre-layoff meetings with the affected workers.
- **Step 4: Group Orientation.** Group Orientations are scheduled with affected workers on-site and during normal business hours. Typically, affected workers receive information about WIOA, TAA

(when appropriate), filing a UI benefits claim, partner services and any other information that may alleviate long-term unemployment.

- **Step 5: On-site Reemployment Services.** Reemployment Services are provided by a Global Career Development Facilitator on-site to assist workers with rapid reentry into the workforce. Services include but are not limited to the following: SCWOS registration, resume preparation, job search assistance, and interview preparation.

Additionally, the Rapid Response team works closely with the Existing Industry Division at the South Carolina Department of Commerce (SCDOC). The Existing Industry Division provides referrals and coordinates with the SCDEW Rapid Response team to provide services to employers who may be experiencing a layoff or closure. The Rapid Response team and local area business service teams work with the SC Manufacturing Extension Partnership (SCMEP) to assess the sustainability and training needs of businesses. SCMEP conducts a Competitiveness Review and notes warning signs.

Often, businesses must expand their customer base and, to do so, must elevate the skill set of their workforce to industry standards to be competitive. Lean principals reduce overhead expenses and increase productivity. Equipment upgrades, and technological advancement require workers to be trained in new processes or risk being separated, regardless of their existing skill set.

The state has developed forms and processes to identify, target, and award Rapid Response funded Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) to businesses at risk of imminent layoffs or closures. Once a company completes an application, the LWDA business services team lead reviews the training application, assesses the business, the worker group and proposed training prior to endorsing the application and forwarding it to DEW for final funding approval. In determining whether to fund Rapid Response IWT applications, training is evaluated to ensure the skills are transferrable to future employment opportunities if the aversion strategy is unsuccessful. Rapid Response funded IWT is approved only if a credential or certification is issued.

Rapid Response funds are also used to supplement local funds in serving dislocated workers. This additional assistance provides training, supportive services, and increased front-line staff when needed to meet local needs. Given the size and location of a layoff, Rapid Response funds will assist with establishing transition centers specifically designed to increase the capacity and accessibility of services needed quickly for large numbers of laid off 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 case of a disaster declaration, workforce services and recovery efforts are coordinated with FEMA and the SC Emergency Management Division. Rapid Response staff assists in the identification of businesses adversely affected and workers who lost jobs as a result of the disaster. Information is disseminated on disaster unemployment assistance and reemployment services available. Relevant to public assistance declarations, staff coordinates with local areas to determine if applying for a National Dislocated Worker Grant is needed to secure additional funding for cleanup and/or humanitarian efforts. The state coordinates with FEMA to ensure non-duplication and adherence to maintenance of effort requirements.

During the recent flooding event in South Carolina, the Rapid Response Team participated in regional and local area meetings to provide information on filing disaster unemployment claims and workforce services available to both businesses and workers affected by the flood. Additional outreach was conducted at local area shelters, providing the following information and services to flood victims:

- DUA/UI claims filing
- referrals to FEMA to file claims
- job matching
- referrals to partner agencies.

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.

#### TAA/Rapid Response Early Intervention

The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) administers the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program , providing early intervention to worker groups on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed.

DEW leads Rapid Response efforts across the state. When working with a business to provide Rapid Response services, DEW staff activates team efforts locally. The team includes a rapid response coordinator from the LWDA, a representative from the SC Works Center representing Wagner-Peyser services, and a staff representative from the TAA program. Whenever possible, the team conducts on-site presentations at the business location. Every effort is made to provide information sessions prior to the commencement of the lay-off and/or plant closure. The presentation consists of an overview of the benefits and services that can be expected from each of the partner groups. During these sessions, the Rapid Response team emphasizes how the partner agency staff representatives will be working together as a team to offer the customer individualized and comprehensive reemployment benefits and services.

Once a petition is approved, additional sessions with affected workers are scheduled to provide information about TAA services only and enroll affected workers into the TAA program. These sessions give the workers the opportunity to ask detailed questions and may be set up through the employer, if the business is still open, through TAA staff at the nearest SC Works center, or at another convenient location.

When an individual enters the SC Works center and is identified as TAA eligible, a Trade Workforce Specialist provides the impacted worker with a one-on-one orientation to explain available Trade benefits and services.

#### Utilization of Rapid Response Funds for TAA Eligible Individuals

Funds are used for TAA staff to monitor, identify, and communicate available benefits with worker groups that file a TAA petition.

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## B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

### 1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

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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.

Many of SC's workforce training initiatives implemented at both the state and local level utilize work-based training models, such as On-The-Job-Training and Incumbent Worker Training. These initiatives are discussed throughout the plan in much greater detail.

### 2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

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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).

The growth of Registered Apprenticeship in South Carolina has been phenomenal. Since 2007, the number of programs has increased tenfold from 90 to 918 and the number of active apprentices is more than 14,000 from a mere 777 in 2007. Because of its innovative approach and fast growth, Apprenticeship Carolina™ is held as a model for the nation.

In an effort to maintain the momentum and growth of Registered Apprenticeships, each LWDA has identified an apprenticeship liaison who is responsible for promoting Apprenticeship Carolina™ and referring interested employers to their local Apprenticeship Carolina™ representative. As a result of this partnership, over 87 referrals have been made to Apprenticeship Carolina™ since the beginning of PY 2015.

Registered Apprenticeship programs are on the state's Eligible Training Provider List, PATH, and the SWDB and all 12 LWDBs have at least one (1) representative of an apprenticeship program whose presence will help further increase the awareness of and promote apprenticeships as a viable training option.

### 3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

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Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

An eligible training provider is a provider of training services that has met the eligibility requirements to receive funding through an Individual Training Account (ITA) to provide training services to eligible individuals.

To be an eligible training provider, an entity must qualify as one of the following:

- Institution of higher education that provides a program of training that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential;
- Entities that carry out programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act;

- Public or private training providers, including community-based organizations, joint labor-management organizations, pre-apprenticeship programs, and occupational/technical training; or
- Providers of adult education and literacy activities if such activities are provided concurrently or in combination with other training services.

The eligible training provider must provide a program of services that leads to:

- An industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of a registered apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State or the Federal government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree;
- A secondary school diploma or its equivalent if such activities are provided in combination with other training services;
- Employment; or
- Measurable skill gains toward a recognized credential or employment.

In addition to the required eligible training provider qualifications listed above, all training providers must:

- Be a legal entity;
- Be registered or licensed by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education to provide postsecondary education or training services, or licensed by the appropriate governing board, or agency prior to applying for placement on the ETPL; or
- Have the ability to:
- Offer programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials or certifications;
- Meet the needs of local employers and participants;
- Serve individuals with barriers to employment;
- Have refund policies specifying when refunds for tuition and other costs associated with the training program will be allowed. Refund policies must be written and published to ensure students are aware of how to request a refund;
- Have a grievance policy which provides for due process for students to file complaints with an organization against faculty, staff, or other employees. Grievance policies must be written and published to ensure students are aware of how to file a complaint; or
- Comply with all applicable non-discrimination and equal opportunity provisions as potential recipients of WIOA funds, in accordance with section 188 of WIOA.

### **Initial Eligibility and Application Process for New Training Providers**

Training providers and programs seeking approval for initial eligibility on the South Carolina ETPL must apply online by submitting an application through the Palmetto Academic Training Hub (PATH) website at [www.scpaath.org](http://www.scpaath.org). New training providers and programs will be continually added to the ETPL as they become eligible and approved. Once approved, initial eligibility status remains in effect for one (1) year from the eligibility date. After the initial eligibility period expires, training providers and each program of training are subject to procedures for continued eligibility status.

A training provider seeking to be certified as an eligible training provider on the South Carolina ETPL must provide all of the following:

- A completed ETPL application in PATH, which must include:
  - A description of each program of training services to be offered;
  - Information on cost of attendance, including costs of tuition and fees;
  - Training provider must be authorized or licensed by the appropriate governing board or agency prior to applying for placement on the ETPL
  - Evidence indicating the training program leads to an industry recognized certificate or credential, including any recognized postsecondary credentials;
  - Documentation of compliance with all state licensure requirements and the current licensing status, as applicable;
  - Identification of businesses that developed the training in partnership with the provider, if any; and
- A signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) entering into a data sharing agreement with the State agreeing to provide information on training outcomes, including individual student coursework and other Personally Identifying Information (PII) to match training and employment data and outcomes.

The State will review the application content in PATH to ensure all required information has been submitted correctly and make a content-only determination within 15 calendar days of the initial application. The State shall notify a provider if an application is determined to be incomplete and shall keep the application open for a period of 60 calendar days from the date of receipt. If a provider fails to submit all required information or materials within this 60-day period, the State will deny the application. The training provider may resubmit an application at any time. Upon content-only approval by the State, the application will be sent to all applicable local workforce areas, as the LWDBs hold the final approval authority for each local area in which the provider is located or providing training services. A training provider or program of training must be approved by a minimum of one local workforce area in order to be published on the ETPL.

#### **Continued Eligibility Application Process**

After the initial eligibility period of one (1) year, the training provider, with the exception of Registered Apprenticeship programs, must submit an application for continued eligibility for each program and resubmit every two (2) years thereafter. The continued eligibility application requirement ensures that training provider and program information is accurate and performance reporting standards are met. The continued eligibility application is required for any program of training that has been previously approved for the ETPL. A system generated email notification will be sent to the provider's listed point of contact 60 days prior to the expiration of a program's approval status.

A training provider seeking continued eligibility approval must provide all of the following in PATH:

- Any changes to provider or program information previously approved must be submitted, including a current program description, breakdown of tuition costs and fees, credentials to be attained, and contact information;
- A signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) entering into a data sharing agreement with the State agreeing to provide information on training outcomes, including individual student coursework and other Personally Identifying Information (PII) to match training and employment data and outcomes; and

- Evidence that the previously approved training provider has submitted performance reports annually and in a timely manner.

The State will review the application content in PATH to ensure all required information has been submitted correctly and make a content-only determination within 15 calendar days of the initial application. The State shall notify a provider if an application is determined to be incomplete and shall keep the application open for a period of 60 calendar days from the date of receipt. If a provider fails to submit all required information or materials within this 60-day period, the State will deny the application. The training provider may resubmit an application for continued eligibility at any time once all required data has been submitted. Upon content-only approval by the State, the application will be sent to all applicable local workforce areas, as the LWDBs hold the final approval authority for each local area in which the provider is located or providing training services.

ETPL training providers are responsible for maintaining up-to-date information for the ETPL in PATH to continue receiving WIOA training referrals and funds. Failure to update program information may result in removal of the program from the ETPL. Any significant change to a program, including a change in the program's cost, may require re-evaluation for approval.

### **Registered Apprenticeship**

All Registered Apprenticeship programs registered with the US Department of Labor (USDOL) are automatically eligible to be included on the ETPL. Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same eligibility, performance, or reporting requirements as other providers since they go through a detailed application and vetting procedure with USDOL. For inclusion on the ETPL, the following information will be required from all Registered Apprenticeship programs:

- Occupations included within the Registered Apprenticeship program;
- The name and address of the Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor;
- The name and address of the related technical instruction provider and the location if different from the sponsor's address;
- The method and length of instruction; and
- The number of active apprentices.

To include a Registered Apprenticeship on the ETPL, requests detailing all of the above information should be emailed to SCDEW Workforce Support staff.

### **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.**

The state issued policy regarding priority of service under the adult program ensures consistent application of the priority of service requirement and provides a more quantifiable definition for basic skills deficient. For those Title I Adult participants receiving individualized career services and training, the policy requires that 70 percent be low-income or basic skills deficient. LWDBs are responsible for establishing local procedures to comply with this policy and for conducting outreach to these priority



populations. Compliance with the policy is monitored through Ad Hoc Reports from our participant data system.

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

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Local workforce areas may request approval from SCDEW to transfer funds between the adult and dislocated worker fund streams. Transfer requests must be made in writing to the state via a "Fund Transfer Request Form" any time after receipt of the corresponding fiscal year funds authorization, typically in October of each year. Each transfer request must provide sufficient justification regarding the percentage of formula allocation being requested. The issuance of an adjusted Notice of Funds Authorization (NFA) reflecting funds earmarked for another program, e.g., Dislocated Worker funds for Adult, serves as the local workforce area's official notification that the transfer is approved.

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### 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.\*

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

Entering PY 2015, South Carolina took steps to strengthen its Title I Youth Programs across the state, utilizing the transition to WIOA as an opportunity to transform and reinvigorate youth workforce development activities. South Carolina has placed a higher emphasis on providing quality education, training, and employment opportunities for disconnected youth. State instruction 14-03 requires local boards to have a standing committee which provides information and assists with planning, operational, and other issues related to the provision of services to youth. These committees will play a critical role in the selection and evaluation of youth service providers.

To ensure all WIOA Youth Service Providers meet basic programmatic standards, the state has developed the following criteria for LWDAs to consider during their provider selection process:

1. Providers must demonstrate experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, specifically out-of-school or disconnected youth.
2. Providers must demonstrate experience and/or strategies in connecting youth to education, training and employment opportunities with emphasis on career readiness activities and promoting career pathways for participants.
3. Providers must exhibit strong community and business linkages to ensure the ability to develop work-based learning opportunities and meet the skill and training needs for the state's talent pipeline.
4. Providers must demonstrate ability to meet performance accountability measures through program design and strategies.

As the WIOA statute mandates, 75 percent of youth funds are to be expended on the out-of-school population. This shift in program design stems from the significant number of individuals who are disconnected from education and training across the country. Although South Carolina is positioned to achieve this requirement, local areas will further support this change by requiring prospective youth providers to have direct experience in serving priority populations and be able to illustrate strategies that motivate and engage youth with barriers.

In recent years, the business community has stressed the importance of soft skills and career readiness characteristics in youth and young adults. Recognizing the need, workforce development in South Carolina has integrated a stronger career ready component in program designs. Youth providers are expected to offer an intensive soft skills curriculum to ensure individuals are prepared for the behavioral aspects of entering the workforce. Providers that incorporate career academy models in conjunction with work-based learning to expose participants to the expectations of employers and workforce needs will increase placements and job retention for the area.

Understanding that youth providers may not be able to directly offer each of the 14 elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2), youth providers will be responsible for connecting with other workforce and community partners to achieve a holistic service delivery model. It is imperative that providers communicate closely with agencies and organizations that serve similar populations to allow for co-enrollment where appropriate and leveraging of resources. As formula funding has seen a decrease, local areas are faced with the challenge of providing quality services to individuals in need with less staff and financial resources. Providers must be imbedded in their respective areas to build mutually beneficial partnerships that generate referral processes, space sharing, and alternative funding.

With the increased focus on work-based learning opportunities for youth, providers are charged with working closely with the business community. In the past, local area youth providers collectively have seen limited success in work experience and OJT for youth beyond summer youth employment initiatives. However, with the onset of the 20 percent expenditure requirement in WIOA Sec. 129(c)(4), workforce development in South Carolina is strategizing to engage and offer solutions to employers that need to bring in younger generations to fill entry level positions and voids left by retiring individuals. Providers should present strategies that will create work-based learning and employment opportunities for the program participants, but also serve business and industry.

Performance measures are an indicator of consistent, effective and sustainable program models. Prospective providers must be able to present data to support their service delivery. For past WIOA youth providers, the proposal must report performance outcomes for at least the previous two program years, if applicable. Additionally, providers must speak to their ability and strategies to meet the new performance measures for WIOA.

## 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.

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Historically, South Carolina has served a predominately OSY population with successful outcomes. The state is well-positioned to continue this trend. There are several strategies in development that will help improve outcomes for OSY:

**SWDB Priority Populations Committee.** The SWDB voted to form a Priority Populations Committee that will provide strategic direction and oversight and set policy for the state with regard to services to youth, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and other populations that face barriers to employment. The direction and oversight of this committee will lead to improved outcomes for out-of-school youth.

**LWDB Youth Committees.** Each LWDB is required to form a Youth Committee that will provide information and assist with operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth. The Youth Committee is charged with developing local service strategies that will increase the number of OSY served and improve outcomes for this population. The statewide Priority Populations Coordinator works with each LWDA to ensure that their Youth Committee is engaged in State initiatives and collaborating with key partners. All 12 LWDAs have formed standing Youth Committees.

**Aligning Programs and Services.** Aligning programs and services through co-enrollment and referral processes has historically increased the number of individuals served and generally improved outcomes. As mentioned earlier, South Carolina was positioned to achieve the 75 percent OSY expenditure due to alignment strategies such as co-location and co-enrollment practices. Although the graduation rate continues to improve, South Carolina's Title I youth programs serve a high number of youth who have dropped out of secondary school. Seeing the overlap in customers, LWDAs have chosen to co-locate with Adult Education Providers to promote communication between provider staff and effectively recruit OSY and serve co-enrolled participants. Co-locating with Adult Education, allows those individuals who engage in equivalency programs to access the extra supports and services that WIOA provides. Additionally, the comprehensive SC Works centers are equipped to serve the OSY population and connect them to the many services, programs and partners represented. Some of the centers actually offer basic skills and equivalency classes on site, further providing a holistic approach to serving youth.

Another opportunity for increased program alignment is with the Local Workforce Development Board Youth and Disability Committees. Each local area has created a LWDB committee to address the needs of youth and one to ensure outreach and services for people with disabilities in the workforce. With Vocational Rehabilitation taking a leading role in the Disability Committee, the local areas are gaining a better understanding of the services that are offered to students and youth with disabilities through VR and other disability service providers. This has resulted in refined referral processes and opportunities to engage people with disabilities in the SC Works Centers. Similarly, at the state level, the Transition Alliance of South Carolina (TASC), an interagency collaborative to increase positive postsecondary outcomes for youth with disabilities, is working to expand partnerships between education and workforce at the state and local levels. As the special education programs in school districts are connected to the various services available through the SC Works system, youth with disabilities gain access to work-based learning opportunities through programs like Project Search and VR transition services while in school. With Project Search expanding across the state, local areas are working with VR and the host sites to establish referral processes to co-enroll students and provide additional work experience opportunities as well as supportive services after they exit the school setting.

**Work-Based Learning.** The state is committed to increasing the use of work-based learning opportunities to expose youth to employment and career opportunities. Increasing the use of work-based learning will help youth acquire the personal attributes, knowledge, and skills needed to obtain a job and advance in employment.

**Career Pathways.** One of the state's goals is to increase middle-skill, middle-wage attainment through education and training pathways that are aligned with the needs of critical industries. This goal is

consistent with WIOA's emphasis on the importance of career pathways, especially for youth participants. The next phase of South Carolina's Talent Pipeline Project is to develop career pathways that lead to high-demand, high-wage jobs in critical industry sectors. Identifying a career pathway as part of the initial objective assessment will increase the likelihood that an OSY participant will earn the skills required for competitive employment.

**Education to Employment.** The state was awarded a Youth Demonstration Grant to serve OSY in the North Charleston area. There has been much success with creating local partnerships with the legal and justice systems in the area for the activities associated with this grant. Best practices have been shared and replicated for WIOA in several areas of the state.

The strategies outlined above will be refined as the state continues working toward full implementation of WIOA. LWDB Youth Committees and Priority Population Committees, as well as the SWDB Priority Populations Committee, will be instrumental in refining these and developing additional strategies that will improve outcomes for OSY.

### 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.\*

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

South Carolina's 12 LWDAs are responsible for providing or connecting youth to the 14 required elements: (1) Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction and Evidence based Drop-out Prevention and Recovery Strategies; (2) Alternative Secondary School Services or Drop-out Recovery Services; (3) Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences; (4) Occupational Skills Training; (5) Education Offered Concurrently with and in the same context as Workforce Preparation; (6) Leadership Development; (7) Supportive Services; (8) Adult Mentoring; (9) Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling; (10) Financial Literacy Education; (11) Entrepreneurial Skills Training; (12) Labor Market and Employment Information Services; (13) Activities that Prepare for Transition to Postsecondary Education and Training; and (14) Follow-up Services. To ensure program participants have access to the 14 elements, the statewide Priority Populations Coordinator in conjunction with programmatic monitors will conduct annual reviews to evaluate each local area. Additionally, each local area will be responsible for describing how the elements are integrated within their program design in their local plan.

### 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.

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The state does not have a policy for "requires additional assistance to complete an educational program." As allowed in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) § 681.300, South Carolina permits each of the 12 LWDAs to determine their own policy. The areas are responsible for creating and submitting a policy to the state each program year. The state is currently reviewing local area policies to identify best practices

and areas of opportunity. A newly formed committee of the SWDB, which focuses on the workforce needs of priority populations, will determine state policy needs and assist in the development of such policies.

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.

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State law does not define “not attending school” or “attending school.” However, South Carolina compulsory education laws require children to attend regularly a public or private school or kindergarten which has been approved by the State Board of Education, a member school of the South Carolina Independent Schools’ Association, a member school of the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools, or some similar organization, or a parochial, denominational, or church-related school, or other programs which have been approved by the State Board of Education from the school year in which the child is five years of age before September first until the child attains his seventeenth birthday or graduates from high school ( S.C. Code, § 59-65-10).

For purposes of WIOA, as directed in NPRM at § 681.230, providers of Adult Education under Title II of WIOA, YouthBuild programs, and Job Corps programs are not considered to be schools. WIOA youth programs may consider a youth to be “not attending school” for youth program eligibility if he/she is attending Adult Education provided under Title II of WIOA, YouthBuild, or Job Corps. Students attending a post-secondary institution are considered to be “attending school” for WIOA eligibility purposes.

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.

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South Carolina’s definition for “Basic Skills Deficient” corresponds with the definition provided in WIOA Sec. 3(5)(A). Youth ages 14-24 are considered basic skills deficient if the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test.

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#### 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).)

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N/A

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

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N/A

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

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N/A

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.

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N/A

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.

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N/A

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.

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N/A

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E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

1. IDENTIFIES THE STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR WHICH A WAIVER IS REQUESTED AND THE GOALS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, INTENDS TO ACHIEVE AS A RESULT OF THE WAIVER AND HOW THOSE GOALS RELATE TO THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

2. DESCRIBES THE ACTIONS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, HAS UNDERTAKEN TO REMOVE STATE OR LOCAL STATUTORY OR REGULATORY BARRIERS;

3. DESCRIBES THE GOALS OF THE WAIVER AND THE EXPECTED PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES IF THE REQUEST IS GRANTED;

4. DESCRIBES HOW THE WAIVER WILL ALIGN WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY PRIORITIES, SUCH AS:

- A. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;
- B. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;
- C. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;
- D. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND
- E. OTHER GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

5. DESCRIBES THE INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER, INCLUDING HOW THE WAIVER WILL IMPACT SERVICES FOR DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS WITH MULTIPLE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT; AND

6. DESCRIBES THE PROCESSES USED TO:

- A. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;
- B. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;
- C. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;
- D. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.
- E. COLLECT AND REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT WAIVER OUTCOMES IN THE STATE'S WIOA ANNUAL REPORT

7. THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE THAT STATES PROVIDE THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE ABOUT THE OUTCOMES OF THE EXISTING WAIVER IN CASES WHERE THE STATE SEEKS RENEWAL OF A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WAIVER;

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The State of South Carolina seeks approval of the following statutory and regulatory waiver in accordance with the Secretary's waiver authority outlined in Section 189(i)(3)(A) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act(WIOA) and 20 CFR and 679.600. This waiver request will assist South Carolina to further develop its workforce while continuing to focus on innovative strategies for a demand-driven workforce.

#### **Waiver from the Eligible Training Provider data collection and reporting requirements**

South Carolina is seeking a waiver from the requirements outlined in the WIOA at Sections 116 and 122, and at 20 CFR 677.230 and 20 CFR 680.400 thru 680.530, which require the collection and reporting of performance related data on all students participating in training programs listed on the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

#### **Actions taken to remove barriers**

Subsequent to the passage of WIOA in 2014, South Carolina has been working diligently to implement the law's Eligible Training Provider (ETP) provisions. Under the leadership of the State Workforce Development Board, a workgroup of state and local workforce and educational stakeholders developed and deployed guidelines on the ETPL. In November, 2016, the new ETPL, Palmetto Academic Training hub (PATh) was launched providing an improved and enhanced customer experience compared to the state's previous ETPL. Memoranda of Agreement were issued to all current and new training providers to outline the data collection and submittal requirements.

Beyond the ETPL requirements, South Carolina's workforce development and education partners have been working to create a mechanism for a data warehouse for not only training providers, but all state

agencies and other entities to submit and utilize participant data. Through the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development (a legislated council whose mission is to catalogue all workforce resources, minimize duplication, and make recommendations to the Legislature on workforce system improvements), a multi-agency data workgroup convened to make recommendations for legislation requiring student and other economic and workforce development data be shared as allowable by governing entities. Draft legislation for a data governance structure for education and workforce development partners has been developed and approved by the CCWD, which is planned to be introduced in the next SC legislative session. Members of the General Assembly have expressed a desire for a longitudinal data system to aide in workforce development and evidence-based policy making.

The state is working to leverage existing systems to assist with meeting the WIOA ETP performance reporting requirements. Despite these efforts, the state has faced several challenges while working to implement the WIOA ETP requirements, which include:

- Ensuring that local areas have sufficient numbers of, and diversity of, training providers necessary to create an effective marketplace of training programs for WIOA participants utilizing ITAs.
- Ensuring objectivity in the process of determining training provider eligibility.
- Reducing the burden on training providers to submit performance information to the state which may not be readily accessible to the provider.
- Much of the performance information collected by training providers is self-reported through surveys, etc. There is no way to verify the accuracy of self-reported, inconsistently collected performance data.
- Training providers do not currently have a method to match students with data sources to calculate outcomes, so they are required to send student data through PATH to be matched with wage records. This is not only a reporting burden on training providers, but in many cases, sensitive information, including certain personal student data needed for performance reporting, is never collected from students.
- Training providers contend that to collect and submit information on all students is too big a burden. Thus, many providers choose not to be on the ETPL or to severely cut the number of programs. Several public technical colleges have removed credit programs from the ETPL because of the reporting burden. As a result, limiting consumer choice.

**Goals, outcomes, and benefits related to this waiver request include:**

- SC will continue to develop the infrastructure to support a robust ETPL without severely reducing training options during this period of development
- SC will continue to promote training related to the high-growth, high-demand industries through PATH
- More training providers may lead to lower cost and more robust demand-driven training options.
- Greater utilization of the ETPL by individuals pursuing training in South Carolina related to jobs that are in-demand by employers now and in the future.



- Stronger partnerships and relationships between training providers and the public workforce system.
- Time to build on and utilize those stronger relationships to find a data collection and performance solution that is equitable and effective for all partner and provider needs.

There are currently no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the requested waiver.

#### **Individuals Impacted by the Waiver**

Individuals who will be able to access training services in South Carolina related to high-growth industries while the state develops parameters to share and house participant data.

#### **Monitoring and Implementation**

Annual WIOA on-site reviews will include an evaluation of how waivers are impacting local programs to ensure programmatic goals and outcomes are being met.

State staff involved with the administration of the ETPL and performance reporting will periodically examine the appropriateness and the effectiveness of this waiver. This strategy ensures that the goals described above, as well as those outlined in the State's Unified Plan, are consistent with established objectives of the WIOA and federal and state regulations.

#### **Notice to Local Boards and Public Comment**

In accordance with the WIOA Regulations at 20 CFR 676.135, South Carolina is submitting a modification to its Unified State Plan, which is subject to the requirements outlined in the WIOA Regulations at 20 CFR 676.130(d) for public review and comment. As such, the premise of South Carolina's waiver request is currently outlined in our Unified State Plan, which is on our website and has been made public for comment.

A copy of this waiver request was provided to local workforce development boards and staff. Any timely comment received will be forwarded to the USDOL and included in the modification to the state's Unified Plan. Further, the impact of this waiver on the state's performance will be addressed in the state's WIOA Annual Report.

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#### **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

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#### 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.

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#### 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.

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Staff development is an important component of South Carolina's commitment to deliver high quality and effective workforce services. Employment services staff are trained in job search techniques, accessing labor market information, workshop facilitation, interviewing skills, resume writing certification, and addressing barriers to employment.

The staff also receives training to work with target populations, including "Building Bridges." Administered by the Bureau of Federal Prisons, this program helps individuals understand and develop skills to work

with the ex-offender population. In-depth, on-going customer service training is mandatory for all DEW employees. Additionally, sales training is provided to Employment Service staff to help develop strategies for increasing business penetration.

Onsite training and assessment are also provided in person to local staff and management. Regional Managers participate on LWDBs to provide information and are involved in workforce issues on the state and local level.

## 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.

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DEW shares information and provides technical assistance to staff who serve job seekers and employers. Technical assistance on Unemployment Insurance (UI) issues, questions regarding eligibility, and on the work search test are also provided to SC Works Center core program staff. Additionally, DEW's website supplies answers to frequently asked questions regarding UI. UI claimants receive information and assistance on the full range of one-stop services offered both online and in person. Rapid Response teams provide services to employers and workers in mass layoff situations and conduct claim filing activities when needed.

UI programs play a vital role in the integrated workforce system by providing income support benefits to eligible individuals who continue to be important customers of the workforce system. These benefits allow unemployed workers to engage in work search activities for suitable employment, and the workforce system is a key source of services to support the reemployment of UI claimants.

To ensure efficiency, a Workforce Information Portal (WIP) was developed to provide a secure method for partner staff to obtain the necessary UI data that is used to determine an individual's potential eligibility for services and training under WIOA. The WIP also allows staff to communicate potential UI fraud and availability issues in an efficient and streamlined manner. Sharing such information with UI staff helps to accelerate the claimants' return to suitable employment and ensure their continued eligibility to receive UI benefits.

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## 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.

Access to the online claim filing system is available at every SC Works location across the state. Resource rooms are staffed with individuals who can assist with filing a claim. A toll-free number is also available for individuals with questions specific to their claims. A network of access points has been established statewide for individuals to apply for benefits and perform their work search. Registration in the SC Works Online System (SCWOS) is required for all UI Claimants and two of the four required weekly work searches must be conducted within the system. Access to SCWOS is available at all comprehensive centers and access points. Claim filing guides are available in resource rooms at SC Works locations and employment service staff is available to assist and answer question about the filing process. An Unemployment Insurance "Frequently Asked Questions" guide is in development and will be distributed to Employment Service and partner staff.

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

### Universal Access

Individuals seeking employment and eligible to work in the United States are eligible for Wagner-Peyser services. These services can be provided in person or remotely. Job search assistance, access to labor market information, résumé assistance, workshops, and hiring events are offered in all comprehensive centers.

To identify individuals who are at risk of exhausting benefits, South Carolina requires all UI claimants to register for Employment Services in SCWOS. Individuals attending Worker Profiling and RESEA are first given information on services provided by the workforce system, and after an initial assessment they are provided with more customized services for their situation. These services could include referrals to employment, referral to partners, participation in workshops, and information on the local labor market, training options, and other services that are available.

### RESEA

The Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment Program (RESEA) provides a bridge between Employment Services and Unemployment Insurance in the provision of services to Unemployment Compensation for ex-Military members (UCX) and lack of work claimants with the goal of reducing duration and improving the integrity of the UI program. Numerous services are provided through the program to include but not limited to reemployment services, provision of labor market information, one stop orientations, development of employability plans, referrals to training and unemployment compensation eligibility reviews. The RESEA program is operated from all comprehensive SC Works Centers.

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## 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;

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All individuals applying for UI benefits are required to register with the state Employment Service by creating an account in SCWOS. This allows individuals to search for jobs, job referrals, create a resume, set up job matching criteria, develop employment plan, take self-assessments and search labor market information. SC Works Centers have resource rooms that support these services, and staff is available to assist. As a result of aligning these agencies and services, individuals with barriers to employment are provided staff assisted services. Additionally, referrals to partner and community service providers are available along with information on Federal Bonding.

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

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As stated previously, South Carolina law requires UI claimants to register in SCWOS and perform two job searches per week using the system. Wagner-Peyser staff is available to assist individuals with the registration process and the weekly work search if assistance is needed. Workshops on various reemployment topics are also offered at SC Works centers, and anyone interested is able to attend.

### 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

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In order to receive and maintain benefits in South Carolina, individuals must register in the SC Works Online System (SCWOS). Individuals must also be able, available, and actively seeking work. Claimants are required to perform four work searches per week, with at least two taking place in SCWOS. If an individual fails to perform a search or declines a request for an interview with a prospective employer, an issue can be placed on the claim for further clarification.

Job finding and placement services are offered both remotely and in person. To facilitate these services, each comprehensive SC Works location has staff available to assist individuals looking for employment. Employment Services staff post available positions for employers and help individuals match their skills with available positions for which they qualify, including UI claimants. SCWOS also spiders in jobs posted on many other job boards and individual company websites.

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

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Staff in SC Works centers across the state use an initial assessment to determine customers' needs. Based on information received during this process, coupled with an individual's stated goals, a path forward is identified for each customer. This path could include information or workshops offered in centers or at partner locations, or referrals to training programs and other partner or community-based services. In addition, staff may assist customers with training or financial aid applications as needed. Coordination and communication among partners is critical to the success of each individual in order to provide an array of options that will benefit the customer most.

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### 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

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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.

(E)(1)(a) and (b) are combined. See (E)(1)(b).

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.

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(E)(1)(a) and (b) are combined. See (E)(1)(b).

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.

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There are several factors that make the needs of the South Carolina's farm worker unique. Although the agricultural industry is a long-established tradition in South Carolina, its workforce has seen dramatic changes in recent years. Foreign workers have steadily increased as a percentage of the local and migrant workforce. Also, there is an exponential increase in H-2A workers and this trend is expected to continue.

South Carolina's MSFWs are predominantly from Latin-American countries - having Mexico as the main contributor of workers, but also including individuals from Central America and the Caribbean. Most of them speak Spanish, but we have also detected several indigenous dialects from the south of Mexico and regions of Central America.

Since most of the MSFWs are Latino, one important aspect when analyzing the needs of the farmworker is to consider the Latino community in the state as a whole. The Latino community in South Carolina is growing rapidly (it had the highest percentage rate of increase nationwide from 2000 to 2010). However, this community is still considered an "emergent" community. As a result, this community lacks the resource network that would be easily found in states with a traditional Latino community such as California, Texas or Florida - or even North Carolina. In those states, farm workers utilize resource networks, usually comprised of Latino community-based and religious-based organizations, to learn about the workforce system and how they can access workforce development services. In our state, this resource network is new and small. Furthermore, sometimes when farmworkers are able to navigate the system, they find that the agency providing the service lacks bilingual/bicultural staff to understand their language and overcome cultural differences. As a result, we have a community that is at risk of being isolated and unable to access available resources.

In PY 2015, the number of H-2A workers is expected to continue to increase. The peach and strawberry industries continue to increase the size of the H-2A worker program. Other specialty crops, as well as nursery and greenhouse work, have also contributed to the increase. These activities are primarily in the Savannah Ridge and Piedmont areas.

Overall, the projected agricultural workforce need for South Carolina in PY 2015 was approximately 11,750 workers. This is a small increase in the number of workers that was needed in PY 2014. April through September are the peak harvest months in South Carolina. It is anticipated that the number of agricultural job openings received by SCDEW will remain steady at about 9,000. This total includes approximately 4,850 migrant and seasonal farm workers and 4,480 H-2A. The number of domestic MSFWs in South Carolina is difficult to estimate and could be understated as some of these workers cannot be located.

In the SC Works Centers throughout the state, bilingual staff members work with MSFWs of limited English proficiency to provide career services. When no qualified and trained bilingual employee is

available, SCDEW will offer and secure, at no cost to the client, a qualified interpreter or translator service. If there is a need for remedial and/or occupational training, the MSFW is generally referred to a local Adult Education office for English as a Second Language and is then referred to a training provider.

Telamon is also a partner of the SC Works Centers and provides additional services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers. In the coming program year, efforts will be made to establish closer cooperation and service collaboration with partners, such as the state's NFJP grantee, to ensure greater alignment of career and training services to MSFWs.

## 2. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

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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:

Section IV.e.2.A below describes outreach efforts to MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Section IV.e.2.B describes the technical assistance being provided to outreach workers.

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

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SCDEW staff conduct outreach activities with agricultural workers through five significant offices: Beaufort, Charleston, Greenwood, Spartanburg, and Sumter. These are located in SC Works Centers. Other public and private community service agencies and migrant and seasonal farmworker groups also provide outreach services.

Other outreach efforts occur in traditional community settings such as housing facilities, faith-based organizations, health departments and restaurants, community centers, or other areas where MSFWs congregate. Outreach efforts should also include innovative ideas to continue increasing the number of individuals accessing services. Outreach workers are encouraged to continuously propose new ideas for effective outreach.

The farmworkers are contacted at their living, gathering or other assembly areas by outreach workers. An explanation of workforce services available to MSFWs, including the availability of referrals to agricultural and nonagricultural employment, training, and supportive services, and other job development services is provided in their native language. MSFW outreach workers are required to be bilingual and provide language appropriate services as needed. MSFWs are also provided information about other area organizations available to serve them.

The MSFW Program will continue to establish working relationships with local, regional and statewide agencies to disseminate information regarding the job services provided to MSFWs. Resource and information sharing are essential to reach this goal. MSFW outreach workers are experts in their own regions and are aware of the "best practices" to reach MSFWs who are not being reached by normal intake activities. Quarterly MSFW outreach worker training/meetings led by the State Monitor Advocate provide a standardized framework for continued success.

### 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.

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Outreach workers participate in the following training sessions:

- What is Outreach? Techniques for Effective MSFW Outreach: When, Where, and How
- Managers' Training: MSFW Outreach Worker Roles and Responsibilities
- New MSFW Outreach Worker Training
- Job Service Complaint Resolution System

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) is implementing a new training schedule that includes quarterly training for all outreach workers. This quarterly training includes topics inherent to the MSFW program such as: Federal Guidelines and Regulations, Federal LEARS Reporting, Migrant Immigration of Compliance Reports, Outreach Worker Roles and Responsibilities, MSFW Effective Outreach, and Best Practices. The quarterly training will also include information about SCDEW's job service activities and other workforce development programs, including the UI program. This includes other local and regional workforce development and supportive services programs, such as: Migrant Health Services, Migrant Education Program, and other community-based programs. These Quarterly Outreach Worker training/meetings also provide an opportunity for Outreach Workers to better understand the challenges and opportunities that may arise when serving MSFWs.

The SMA will consider current and future staff training needs when developing the agenda for training during the program year. One goal of quarterly training is to ensure that all outreach workers are equally proficient in their position.

#### 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.

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Outreach Workers will be trained on core programs along with specialty trainings designed to help them in their specific jobs. Training will be provided in the areas of resume development, customer service, sales, and career development facilitator.

#### 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.

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Professional development opportunities are available for state merit outreach staff such as resume writing certification, career development facilitator certification and other training options.

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

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Coordination with NFJP grantees will take place with outreach workers across the state to provide services. DEW outreach staff will coordinate visits with Telamon to locations across the state. The coordination of outreach efforts with the NFJP grantees includes agency field staff working in conjunction with the NFJP regional field representatives in the designated regions.



Vigorous outreach activities will be conducted to ensure that migrant and seasonal farmworkers are aware of the full range of employment services. DEW outreach workers and Rural Manpower staff will work together to coordinate outreach activities, thus maximizing program effectiveness and efficiency. Statewide, there will be five, full-time outreach worker positions dedicated to outreach activities in the Beaufort, Charleston, Greenwood, Spartanburg, and Sumter outreach areas. MSFW outreach staff, as well as Rural Manpower staff, will be primarily supported through Wagner-Peyser funding. The estimated number of MSFWs to be contacted by each outreach workers is approximately 4,850. Due to the varying concentrations of MSFWs in the different areas, some movement of outreach workers between areas will be necessary.

DEW partners with other agencies across the state of South Carolina that also target the MSFW population, including the WIOA Section 443 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) Grantee-Telamon Corporation, SC Legal Services, SC Department of Education Migrant Education Program, SCPHCA-Migrant Health Program, East Coast Migrant Head Start Program, and faith-based migrant community organizations and associations.

In addition, staff will continue to foster cooperation with other governmental and community-based organizations in providing information and promoting the MSFW program at appropriate meetings and through other avenues. For example, the State Monitor Advocate (“SMA”) actively participates in different coalitions and groups across the state to advocate for the MSFW community and forge collaborative partnerships. These groups include the Greenville Hispanic Alliance, Alianza Hispana de Columbia, Spartanburg Hispanic Alliance, Lowcountry Immigration Coalition, Council of Mexicans in the Carolinas and the SC Hispanic Leadership Council, among others. The SMA also maintains contact with community and faith-based organizations, as well as media outlets, healthcare providers, government agencies, and Department of Education representatives.

The SMA acts as a Member of the Advisory Council of the Institute of Mexicans Abroad. This institute is part of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico. As part of this group, the SMA works closely with the Mexican Consulate in Raleigh, N.C. which is entrusted with providing services to people of Mexican origin in the states of South Carolina and North Carolina. The SMA’s strategic goal is to develop a statewide effort to enhance the quality of life and quantity of services delivered to the MSFW community in South Carolina through the sharing of useful information and timely exchange of ideas.

Additionally, SCDEW conducts annual farmer meetings regionally to allow organizations that work with the MSFW population an opportunity to inform farmers of the many services and benefits available to their workers.

SCDEW will comply with CFR 20 653.107, Sub-part B, in delivering services to MSFWs. The roles and responsibilities of the outreach worker include:

- Contact and locate the MSFWs where they work, live or gather
- Observe the work and living conditions
- Explain the services available
- Provide information about the job service complaint system and assist in the preparation of a worker complaint
- Explain basic farm worker rights when the outreach worker refers an MSFW to a job (20 CFR 653 and 658)
- Refer to job openings and assist in the preparation of a work application

- Refer to supportive services, if needed
- Assist in making appointments

The farm workers will be contacted at their living, gathering or other assembly areas by outreach workers. An explanation of workforce services available to MSFWs, including the availability of referrals to agricultural and nonagricultural employment, training, and supportive services, and other job development services will be provided in a language readily understood by them. MSFW outreach workers are required to be bilingual and provide language appropriate services as needed. MSFWs will also be provided with information about other area organizations available to serve them.

Each outreach worker will maintain a log of daily contacts which will include the number of MSFWs contacted and details of assistance provided. The name of the individual contacted will be recorded in all cases where an application for work is taken, a referral to a job is made, and/or a complaint is filed. Detailed reports relative to the number of MSFWs, their office of registration, and services provided can be retrieved through the reporting module in SC Works Online Services (SCWOS), the data management, service delivery system for WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance. The “Notice to Job Seekers” which lists the services available through the SC Works Centers and the toll-free farmworker helpline flyers will be distributed to all MSFWs contacted.

Outreach workers will be familiar with working and living conditions of the migrant and seasonal farm workers. If they observe, have reason to believe, or are in receipt of information regarding a suspected violation of employment related laws or employment service regulations by an employer, the outreach worker shall document the suspected violation and provide the information to the SC Works Center Employment Services Management staff. They will provide assistance in the preparation of job service and non-job service complaints. Complaints will be recorded using the Employment Services Complaint Log and resolved using the Employment Services Complaint System.

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

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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:

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- I. HOW CAREER AND TRAINING SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER WIOA TITLE I WILL BE PROVIDED TO SFWS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP CENTERS;
  - II. HOW THE STATE SERVES AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH SERVICES.
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DEW's outreach program will focus on increasing MSFWs' ability to access career and training services through SC Works Centers. Outreach workers will inform MSFWs of and refer them to verified employment opportunities and the Employment Services Complaint System. Outreach workers will encourage the MSFWs to utilize the SC Works Centers to obtain the full range of career services; however, on-site assistance will also be offered in the preparation of applications, on a limited basis.

Outreach workers will refer individual MSFWs, or family members, who may be eligible, to WIOA and supportive services and, as needed, will provide assistance in making appointments and arranging transportation to and from SC Works Centers or other appropriate agencies. Further, the outreach workers will make follow-up contacts as necessary and appropriate to provide, to the maximum extent possible, the foregoing described services. MSFWs also will be shown how to use SC Works Online Services (SCWOS), an Internet-based workforce data management and service delivery system. Through SCWOS, MSFWs can establish a Wagner-Peyser application and apply for jobs.

In the SC Works Centers throughout the state, bilingual staff members work with MSFWs of limited English proficiency to provide career services. When no qualified and trained bilingual employee is available, DEW will offer and secure, at no cost to the client, a qualified interpreter or translator service. If there is a need for remedial and/or occupational training, the limited English proficiency MSFW is generally referred to a local Adult Education office, first, for an “English as a Second Language” course, then is referred to a training provider. Telamon is also a partner of the SC Works Centers and provides additional services to migrants and seasonal farm workers. In the coming program year, efforts will be initiated to establish closer cooperation and service collaboration with partners to ensure greater alignment of services to MSFWs.

**Table 17: South Carolina MSFW Employer Outreach**

#### SOUTH CAROLINA MSFW EMPLOYER OUTREACH

PY 2016	
Total Number of Ag Orders	260
Total Number of Ag Openings ( <i>Note: 51% of openings were filled</i> )	10,459
Total Number of Orders Filled	67
Total % of Orders Filled ( <i>Note: 26% of orders were 100% filled</i> )	26%
Total Number of Interstate Clearance Orders Received	235
Total Number of Interstate Clearance Orders Initiated	48

Program Year	2015
Number of Ag Orders Expected to be Received	265
Number of Ag Orders Projected to be Filled	79
% of Orders to be Filled	30%

<b>Estimated Number of Interstate Clearance Orders the State Will Receive</b>	240
<b>Estimated Number of Interstate Clearance Orders the State Will Initiate</b>	53

Extensive outreach to agricultural employers is an on-going process. This is critical to maintaining interpersonal contact with the employers. Employers are contacted by Rural Manpower coordinators operating out of two SC Works Centers strategically located throughout the state. The map below reflects the statewide coverage provided by Rural Manpower staff through a lead coordinator and support staff.

Examples of services provided to agricultural employers by DEW staff include:

- Local, regional and national recruitment assistance
- Screening job applicants
- Provision of information such as crop conditions, labor supply, and labor market information
- Connection and coordination of services with government and community agencies
- Technical assistance with foreign labor certification
- Soliciting and filling job orders
- Disseminating information on farm-related rules and regulations
- Registering of farm labor contractors
- Conducting prevailing wage and prevailing practice surveys
- Providing consultant inspections of migrant housing
- Offering assistance to farmers in obtaining supplies for migrants
- Referring complaints to proper enforcement agencies
- Assisting employers in obtaining work-related posters and notices
- Participating in agricultural related meetings and notifying farmers of these meetings

Many contacts with agricultural employers are made as a result of referrals from other agencies such as the SC Department of Agriculture and Clemson University as well as by word-of-mouth from other workers or farmers.

DEW periodically hosts grower meetings to inform agricultural employers of services available through the state workforce system. Intensive efforts will be made in the upcoming year to increase the market penetration of agricultural employers.

The most basic service provided to agricultural employers is the filling of job openings. Job orders from agricultural employers are entered in SCWOS and qualified candidates are referred. All H-2A order users are mandated to take all qualified United States referrals through the workforce system. Rural Manpower, in particular, strives to refer local applicants to all H-2A orders through community contacts and referrals. In addition, training has been provided to SC Works Center staff throughout the state to encourage local domestic US workers to apply for H-2A jobs.

Other services include the certification and renewals of certification for farm labor contractors and housing inspections of both H-2A and MSFW camps. The Rural Manpower coordinators also perform field checks and communicate with the Chicago National Processing Center in addressing matters relative to any H-2A deficiencies. They also provide critical coordination services by moving MSFW crews to the growers at the appropriate times.

The Employment Services staff will strive to meet and exceed federal program requirements with respect to equity and minimum service level indicators of compliance.

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

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DEW will market the complaint system to farmers utilizing field staff along with a poster for posting onsite.

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

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Services available to farmers and farmworkers are available online at [www.dew.sc.gov](http://www.dew.sc.gov), including phone numbers and services provided to agricultural employers.

### 4. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

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#### A. COLLABORATION

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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).

DEW partners with several agencies across the state that also serve the MSFW population. Such organizations include the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee - Telamon Corporation, South Carolina Legal Services, South Carolina Department of Education Migrant Education Program, South Carolina Primary Health Care Association-Migrant Health Program, East Coast Migrant Head Start Program, and faith-based migrant community organizations and associations.

In addition, staff continues to foster collaborative partnerships with other governmental and community-based organizations in providing information and promoting the MSFW program at appropriate meetings and through other outreach efforts. For example, DEW conducts annual farmer meetings regionally to allow organizations that work with the MSFW population an opportunity to inform farmers of the many services and benefits available to farmworkers. Both the State Monitor Advocate and the Rural Manpower supervisor serve on the USDOL Wage & Hour Farm Labor Coordinating Task Force which provides a forum for farm workers, labor partners, and stakeholders to share information. The SMA is also a member of the South Carolina Primary Health Care Association Advisory Council. In addition, Outreach Workers are encouraged to participate in local boards/meetings and become part of efforts to increase the quantity and quality of services delivered to the MSFW community. The SMA monitors and evaluates the Outreach Workers' collaborative efforts and their participation in local board/groups that are inherent stakeholders of the MSFW community.

The MSFW Program has become part of the organizing committee for the South Carolina Farm Worker Institute. This institute is a networking and learning opportunity for agencies, organizations, and community leaders working with farm workers across the state.

The State Monitor Advocate has established an ongoing effort to foster shared communications and promote a statewide collaboration to enhance quantity of services delivered to the MSFW community through the sharing of useful information and timely exchange of ideas.

## B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT.

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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.

Telamon and the SC Migrant Health Program were notified of the state plan modification and given the opportunity review and comment on the AOP. No comments were received on the Agricultural Outreach Plan.

## C. DATA ASSESSMENT.

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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.

Review of the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance show DEW has met all the performance indicators for services delivered to MSFW during the three most recent program years (PY2014, PY2015 and PY2016).

During PY2013, there were three indicators with an opportunity to improve delivery of services: Job Development Contact, Career Guidance and Placed \$0.50 above minimum wage. Several strategies and activities have been implemented to improve performance in all indicators. These activities have included increasing collaborative efforts to provide services to MSFWs as well as improve the tracking system for services provided.

Additionally, MSFW Outreach Workers have received continuous training and technical assistance to improve their activities. State Monitor Advocate monitors MSFW data constantly and provides technical assistance and guidance to MSFW Outreach Workers, WED Area Directors and DEW Regional Managers to continue improving performance on indicators. During the coming years, DEW's MSFW Program will strive to continue meeting all performance indicators.

## D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

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The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

The state has gone from six significant offices to five. Staff has continued to build working relationships in their region with entities to help serve migrant workers. All outreach staff are now bilingual and have

more access to the farm community. The state plans to continue to look for effective ways to serve the migrant and farm communities.

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#### E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

In accordance with 20 CFR Subpart B, 653.107, the State Monitor Advocate participated in the preparation of the agricultural plan and has been afforded the opportunity to approve and comment on the plan. Recommendations from the Annual MSFW Summary have been included in this plan.

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#### 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

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#### 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).

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##### 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 South Carolina adopted the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards (SCCCR) after the Office of Adult Education had adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCR) for Adult Education. Local programs have been aligning their instruction to the CCR standards through statewide 'Standards in Action' training.

The CCR Standards provide benchmarks aligned with the SCCCR Standards, and a crosswalk between the two sets of standards is in the process of being developed for Adult Education programs. Any SCCCR standards that are not otherwise represented to the CCR Standards will be added as an addendum to the CCR standards currently in place.

Local adult education programs follow the standards-based classroom model of instruction to provide a learner-based environment to empower students and help them achieve their academic and personal learning goals. Instructors use diagnostic tools and assessments to determine Educational Functional Levels (EFL) and to identify the needs of their individual learners. Instructors use these diagnostics to develop individual curricula for each student that includes the knowledge and skills needed to achieve a Measurable Skill Gain and to be prepared for entry into postsecondary education, training, or the workforce.

To assist local programs with aligning their curriculum to state-adopted challenging academic content standards, a Curriculum Framework has been developed for English-Language Arts (Reading, Language, and Writing) and Mathematics. The Curriculum Framework aligns the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards (SCCCRS) and the Office of College, Technical, and Adult Education Standards (OCTAE) with the current adult skills and literacy assessments used in South Carolina and the standards and academic requirements for enrollment in non-remedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions. The Curriculum Framework is organized by EFL and identifies the skills and standards students need to exit each level.

Ongoing professional development and training opportunities in designing and implementing standards- and research-based instruction for reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and implementing promising practices in the classroom. Additionally, it incorporates the essential components of reading for all levels of readers are offered at the state, regional, and local program levels throughout the year.

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## 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.

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### ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

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- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—
  1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
  2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

South Carolina Department of Education serves as the administrative/fiscal agent for Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). As administrative/fiscal agent, SCDE will solicit service providers to provide services to eligible individuals who:



- (a) have attained 16 years of age;
- (b) are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under the SC Compulsory School law; and
- (c) are basic skills deficient;
- (d) do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or
- (e) are English language learners.

All activities funded under WIOA are authorized, approved and overseen by the South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Adult Education.

The following organizations are eligible to apply to the South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Adult Education for federal funds provided they have demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services:

1. a local educational agency (LEA, i.e., school district);
2. a community-based organization or faith-based organization;
3. a volunteer literacy organization;
4. an institution of higher education;
5. a public or private nonprofit agency;
6. a library;
7. a public housing authority;
8. a nonprofit institution that is not described in any of items 1. through 7. and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals;
9. a consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in any of items 1. through 8.; and
10. a partnership between an employer and an entity described in any of items 1. through 9.

An eligible provider must show demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities by submitting:

a. Performance Record—a minimum of two consecutive years of performance data (within the previous five years) on improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains of

- Reading,
- Writing,
- Mathematics, and
- English language acquisition.

b. **Participant Outcomes**— a minimum of two consecutive years of data and/or information (within the previous five years) on outcomes for participants related to

- Employment,
- Attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and
- Transition to postsecondary education and training.

**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.

By federal law, providers are prohibited from using federal funds to supplant state or local dollars. All federal funding will be used to enhance learner services, as outlined in this Plan. South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Adult Education, will conduct competitions under WIOA upon receiving guidance from the US Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education.

Awards to eligible providers will be made through the Request for Proposal (RFP) applications process. To help ensure direct and equitable access to funds for adult literacy and basic skills activities, RFPs will be announced directly to providers and through multiple media outlets. In addition, all providers will be considered for grants based on the same criteria. These criteria are aligned with the directions contained in this Plan and the thirteen considerations required by federal legislation. After the initial three-year grant, all grants will be awarded on a four-year basis. Future efforts will be made to assess what support eligible providers might need in order to implement this Plan and broaden the discussion of how these needs can be met.

South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Adult Education, will use the following process to distribute funds to approved applicants:

Not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contacts under section 231. Local assistance grants will be distributed based on the ability to meet the requirements of AEFLA Purposes outlined in WIOA: (1) Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency; (2) Assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain the education and skills that (a) are necessary to becoming full partner in the education development of their children and (b) Lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family; (3) Assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma and in the transition to postsecondary education and training including through career pathways; (4) Assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in (a) improving their reading, writing, math, speaking, and comprehension skills in English and mathematics skills, and (b) acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

**Allowable Costs:** All allowable costs for the federally funded Adult Basic Education program are defined in the Office of Management and Budget Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit

Requirements for Federal Awards subpart E (2 CFR Part 200). This will be the document of determination for reasonableness, allowability, and allocability of costs. All costs must be supported by source documentation including cancelled checks, paid bills, payrolls, time and attendance records, purchase orders and signed copies of sub-grant award documents. South Carolina purchasing, and procurement laws must be followed by South Carolina School Districts or other state agencies in the acquisition of all goods associated with the sub-grant.

The scope of Adult Education services covers South Carolina's 81 school districts. Adult education provides flexible scheduling to accommodate student needs. Programs are organized to meet the literacy needs of local populations across the state.

As the eligible agency to receive AEFLA funds, in accordance with WIOA Title II (Sec. 231), we will require that each eligible provider use the grant to establish or operate one or more programs that provide services or instruction in one or more of the following categories:

- 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

South Carolina requires that *all* sub-grantees provide adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy, and workforce preparation.

WIOA Title II (Sec. 231) defines Adult Education as academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to:

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

Local adult education programs will offer the following Adult Education and Literacy Activities:

#### Adult Education

##### Adult Basic Education Program

Adult Basic Education instruction is designed for an adult who lacks competence in reading, writing, speaking, problem solving, or computation at a level necessary to function in society, on a job, or in a family.

##### Adult Secondary Education

Adult Secondary instruction is designed for adults who have some literacy skills and can function in everyday life but do not have an equivalent to a secondary school diploma.

## Literacy Activities

This is a program designed to teach an individual to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.

### Workplace Adult Education and Literacy Activity

Local eligible providers will offer these services for the purpose of improving the productivity of the workforce in their area through raising the basic skills level. Employers work with our programs and some sponsor classes at their worksites while others send them to regular adult education classes. This will further allow us to provide adult education activities concurrently and contextually with any workforce preparation activities and workforce training for either a specific occupation or cluster.

### Generational Family Services

Generational Family Services include Family Literacy Activities, Early Care and Education Career Pathways (ECE Career Pathway), and childcare. Parent centered initiatives offered through Generational Family Services can serve as a gateway to increased involvement in children's education and literacy activities and to careers centered on early care and education. The ECE Career Pathway, is designed to change the economic outlook for the family and is the culminating activity for family literacy participants and the initiative that can lead to economic self-sufficiency.

### Family Literacy Activities

Family Literacy programs address the literacy strengths and needs of the family while promoting adults' involvement in children's education and their own education. Programs provide both parent-initiated and child-initiated activities to support development of those relationships and to increase the motivation to learn for both parent and child.

Family literacy programs provide services that are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration, to make sustainable changes in a family and that integrate all of the following activities:

- Interactive Literacy Activities between parents and their children (Interactive Literacy)
- Education for Parents (Parent Education) in facilitating children's learning and becoming full partners in their education
- Parent literacy training (Adult Education) that leads to economic self-sufficiency and meets adults' stated goals
- Age-appropriate education (Early Care and Education) to prepare children for success in school and life experiences

### English Language Acquisition

English Language Acquisition programs assist English language learners in:

a) improving their:

i. reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in English and

ii. mathematics skills; and

b) acquiring an understanding of the American system of Government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

An English language learner is an individual who has limited ability in reading, writing, speaking, or comprehending the English language. These individuals' native language is a language other than English and usually lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.

#### Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IEL/CE)

IEL/CE instruction is a program or class which focuses on enabling English language learners to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. This includes instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, which may include workforce training.

#### Workforce Preparation Activities

The term workforce preparation activities means activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.

#### Integrated Education and Training (IET)

The term 'Integrated Education and Training' means 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.

#### SPECIAL RULE

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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.

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#### 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.

Section 225(a) of the Act states "from funds made available under Section 222(a)(1) for a fiscal year, each eligible agency shall carry out corrections education or education for other institutionalized individuals. The funds described in subsection (a) shall be used for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and for other institutionalized individuals, including programs for (1) adult education and literacy services, (2) special education, as determined by the eligible agency; (3) secondary school credit; and (4) integrated education and training; (5) career pathways; (6) concurrent enrollment; (7) peer tutoring; and (8) transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Corrections Education Program Requirements: In accordance with the WIOA Title II, Section 225(b), funds under this program are to be used for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and for other institutionalized individuals, including academic programs for:

1. adult education and literacy activities;
2. special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
3. secondary school credit;
4. integrated education and training (IET);
5. career pathways;
6. concurrent enrollment;
7. peer tutoring; and
8. transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

The South Carolina Department of Education - Office of Adult Education will reserve no more than 20 percent of its federal grant received under the Act to provide the required services.

Corrections education sub-grantees must provide adult education and literacy, career pathways, and concurrent enrollment. Sub-grantees have the option of providing additional academic programs (items 2, 3, 7, and 8 above). If selecting to provide item 3, secondary school credit, the SCDE Office of Adult Education only permits high school equivalency diploma preparation.

The South Carolina Department of Education - OAE and each eligible agency that is using assistance provided under Section 225 of the Act to carry out a program for criminal offenders in a correctional institution, shall give priority to serving individuals who will be released within a period of five (5) years.

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## 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.

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The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program will be funded under WIOA Section 243 funds. Programs will be established in each of the 12 local workforce areas. These funds will be utilized to assist students in improving their English language proficiency as well as offering opportunities for eligible individuals to prepare for and participate in postsecondary education or workforce training concurrently with adult education activities. The skills to be obtained will assist students in obtaining citizenship, achieve basic life skills needed, enhance employment, function in English at a higher cognitive level, and transition into a vocational or academic program.

The South Carolina Office of Adult Education will be responsible for monitoring programs for compliance with WIOA Title II, Section 243 and providing technical assistance to programs participating in the IEL/CE program. Providers receiving funds under the IEL/CE program will be required to offer high quality English language acquisition activities, while integrating workforce preparation skills. These programs will also be required to implement an Integrated Education and Training (IET) program with eligible students. Programs will be required to identify eligible students, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, for participation in the IET program.

### 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.

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The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program grant funds will be distributed through a statewide competition and allocated based on a combination of formula and performance factors. Funds will be used to provide services to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, to enable such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Approximately 12 providers in South Carolina will be awarded funds to be used to deliver English language acquisition activities integrated with workforce preparation activities. Programs receiving IEL/CE funds will be required to partner with other entities to allow eligible students to participate in an IET, which combines adult education and literacy activities concurrently with workforce training or postsecondary education.

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## 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.

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#### Alignment of Adult Education and Literacy Activities

The South Carolina Department of Education's (SCDE) Office of Adult Education (OAE) has worked diligently and collaboratively to align adult education and literacy activities with core and required one-stop partners. During PY 2018, the OAE, along with core partners and other state agencies, will continue to make revisions to the Unified State Plan as requested by our federal program offices.

Strategic goals for the workforce development system in South Carolina, as indicated in the Unified State Plan, include the following:

- Strengthen the Workforce Pipeline
  - Facilitation of middle skills and middle wage attainment;
  - Creation of education and career pathways;
  - Development of one, consistently delivered soft skills competency-based curricula;
  - Enhancement of school-to-work transition and youth-focused programs; and
  - Facilitation of Middle Skills and Middle Wage Attainment.
- Align the State's Current Public Workforce Development Resources to Ensure a Customer-Centered Delivery System
  - Coordinate Agency Business Engagement Activity;
  - Build and Use Data Driven Decision Making and Evaluation Methods;
  - Expand Specific Partnerships and Collaboration; and
  - Coordinate business engagement activity.

The Office of Adult Education is intricately involved with state-level partners in achieving the strategic workforce goals. OAE staff is a part of various workgroups that have been formed to carry out the workforce goals. The workgroups consist of all core partners and other state level partners.

Core partners have worked together to identify ways to improve customer service amongst all workforce partner staff. A statewide plan for training frontline staff has been developed to ensure all partners in the SC Works Centers and workforce system have the knowledge and understanding of each program to guarantee all customers get the services they most need. The frontline staff training will facilitate tailored, effective and streamlined customer service. Core partners planned the training and pooled resources and talents for the most effective delivery methods. The web-based training went live in PY 2017 and will be a useful tool for educating and training current staff and will be helpful in onboarding new staff.

Core partners have also outlined a state-level vision for system integration along with an initial timeline. Activities that have occurred or are in process include the following: review of final rules regarding performance and reporting, review of current intake forms/applications, and identification of common elements and referral processes. Long range planning will include a review of system needs and project development in the context of final reporting guidelines and data collection instructions. Each core program is adapting and making changes to data collection and reporting systems to adhere to the final reporting requirements.

Although the WIOA Integration workgroup consisting of state and local level core and partner program representatives has been convened to plan for universal referral and intake, the integrated operating system will be the most difficult to achieve. Each agency already has a system procured and in place that works well for their programs. Adopting an entirely new system to be used by all partners may take many years to facilitate. Instead the group will likely continue to investigate systems that offer the flexibility to use individual systems but share common data elements and reporting through a portal. All options will require a lengthy process, but integration remains a top priority for the state.

The Office of Adult Education continues efforts to develop and be a part of partner efforts to establish career pathways as a means to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities. The Office of Adult Education will continue to provide training to local adult education programs on career pathways. Local programs are monitored on the development of



their career pathways, and as a part of the request for proposal/competitive grant award, they will be required to outline or describe their plan for developing a career pathway.

In addition to the aforementioned core partner activities, the Director of the Office of Adult Education serves as a member of the State Workforce Development Board. His participation on the state board further facilitates alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other one-stop required partners.

The Office of Adult Education collaborative effort with the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Department, a core WIOA partner, continues to be one of our most successful collaborations. Adult education classes are provided at 24 Vocational Rehabilitation Offices around the state. VR clients referred to adult education are assessed with TABE to determine the focus of instruction. Clients who have an Applied Mathematics scale score of 442 or above and a Reading scale score of 461 or above participate in three-week class sessions provided in preparation for the Career Readiness Certificate assessments. Remediation is provided for clients who do not meet class entry requirements.

Another successful partnership is with the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS). SCDSS administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E & T) initiative. SNAP recipients gain skills, training, work, or experience that will increase self-sufficiency. Adult Education has an agreement with DSS to offer adult education services to SNAP recipients to assist with meeting these goals. Emphasis will be placed on attainment of an HSD, HSED and a career readiness certificate.

Over the last year, in collaboration with the SCDE Office of Transportation, Apprenticeship Carolina, a branch of the SC Technical College System, was contacted and successfully worked with both offices to develop the following three apprenticeships:

- School Bus Drivers
- School Bus Mechanics
- Data Clerks

This apprenticeship development was made possible due to high turnover in these positions across the state. The OAE hopes to have the first group of students enter one of the processes starting in the 2018-19 school year.

#### High Quality Professional Development

The Office of Adult Education continues its efforts to establish and provide high quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231(b), including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to these programs, and teaching strategies to assist volunteers.

For several years, OAE has operated technical assistance centers. The Technical Assistance Network (TAN) training system supports our professional development process. The TAN system serves as an extension of the Office of Adult Education and supplements the services of OAE by providing professional development and technical assistance to help improve the quality and services of adult education programs. Local adult education staff are required and encouraged to participate in trainings offered by the state and in regional trainings offered through their local TAN. Local adult education practitioners are

also encouraged to utilize existing professional development resources such as the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) and WorkforceGPS.

Annually, statewide training opportunities are offered during the spring and fall for both paid and volunteer adult education practitioners. These training institutes are used as a platform to inform adult education practitioners of priorities and changes and to educate them on new practices and tools. Professional development has focused on WIOA, standards, career pathways, digital literacy, math and reading instruction, and other topics related to the specific needs of adult learners.

During the summer, graduate level courses are offered as an additional learning opportunity for all adult education practitioners at low to no cost. These professional development courses include training on best practices, instructional resources and WIOA requirements as they relate to adult education. As a result of the modifications, the following four graduate-level courses are offered:

- Fundamentals of Adult Education: Program Development, Design and Implementation
- Blending College and Career Standards with Technology to Expand Adult Education Instruction
- Digital Literacy in Adult Education
- Teaching English Literacy to Adult Learners
- Content Area Reading & Writing for Adult Educators (Satisfies legislative requirements for the Read to Succeed endorsement and Certificate Renewal)

Trainings, meetings, and webinars serve as avenues to share information on national and local models and promising practices. Training will continue for local adult education and literacy providers using the many resources available locally, state-wide, and nationally. OAE is working to place a stronger emphasis on ensuring that materials and training will incorporate research-based components.

Participants are surveyed after all workshops, conference presentations, and training webinars to evaluate the activity/event. Survey results are used for continuous improvement purposes and to identify what additional training may be needed. The survey results are also used to improve professional development offerings. In the future, OAE and the TANs plan to implement methods to assess the impact of professional development on student performance.

#### Technical Assistance to Funded Eligible Providers

The OAE provides technical assistance to funded providers in many ways. Technical assistance was provided to individual providers or groups of providers either face-to-face, through conference calls, or web meetings. Statewide training sessions and regional meetings were conducted as well. With input from OAE, regional training was also conducted by TANs.

Overall program performance, as well as program performance through each initiative, is measured by the Desktop Monitoring Tool (DMT). Desktop monitoring allows both the state agency and local programs to understand how local programs are performing throughout the school year. Programs are required to submit this report quarterly. Programs that perform at aggregate averages of 55 percent or less for ABE and/or ESL students enter an ITAP (Intensive Technical Assistance Program) process and will remain in the process until program performance improves to levels above 55 percent for both ABE and ESL students.

Funds are being utilized for standards development. Led by OAE, a standards workgroup has been developed. The goal of the workgroup is to develop cross-walks between the state adopted standards, the OCTAE standards, GED and TASC standards, Accuplacer standards, and TABE standards. The program goal

is for each provider to have at least one classroom that is totally standards-based and improve from that point to cover all academic classes.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation of Adult Education Activities

To formally monitor providers, the Office of Adult Education assigns a compliance monitoring Local Program Review team (LPR) to review all school district programs and community-based organizations (CBO) receiving federal funds and/or state aid to support approved adult learning services.

The LPR process is a systemic approach designed to assess the educational opportunities and the effectiveness of adult education programs and services in the school districts and CBO's. One-fourth of the programs are reviewed each year by a team of OAE staff. The other three-fourths of the programs are informally reviewed by desktop monitoring tools and site visits. To be successful, the LPR effort requires continuous follow-up and support activities including professional development and on-site assistance.

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

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OAE has used funds for permissible activities to enhance the quality of programming in the adult education system. The permissible activities that were supported with federal leadership funds included:

- Technical Assistance Network (TAN) - Funding is used to support the TAN. The TAN, in collaboration with the OAE, develops and provides training to adult education practitioners on various adult education-related practices and models that support program development and instruction. Professional development activities through the TAN focus on career pathways, integrated education and training, and more.
- Standards - The OAE has been working to develop adult education standards that incorporate the state's K-12 standards and OCTAE standards.
- Distance Education - The OAE purchases distance education packages for use by local adult education providers.
- Graduate Level Courses - The OAE uses federal leadership funds to develop and execute graduate level college courses, based on WIOA guidelines, for adult education practitioners.
- Transition Services - OAE guides implementation of transition services that are provided locally and provides training for the Transition Specialists.
- IET - OAE has funded the development of a manufacturing career pathway and is currently developing a healthcare career pathway.

Generational Family Services have been incorporated into approximately 47 percent of South Carolina's adult education programs. Through partnerships adult education programs address one of the most prevalent and universal barriers for participation in adult education, "child care" and transportation. Programs have incorporated family literacy services to enhance adult education program offerings, and address participation barriers while intensifying student academic goals, (high school diploma (HSD), high school equivalency diploma (HSED), career readiness certification, postsecondary education and training, entering/retaining employment, and focusing on career pathways). Participating students select an academic goal and parent education goal(s): (1) Increase involvement in children's education, and (2) Increase involvement in children's literacy activities.

#### Generational Family Services (GFS) Program Requirements

The purpose of the AEFLA GFS Program initiatives (Family Literacy and Early Care and Education Career Pathway) are to provide needed support for efforts that will increase student and family commitment in local adult education programs. The intent of GFS is to provide initiatives that interrupt generational poverty and low literacy by equipping adult students who are parents or guardians and their children for lifelong learning and economic stability. GFS will provide adult education students who are parents or guardians of children with opportunities to improve their academic skills and use those skills to enhance the literacy skills of their children.

GFS is an extension of services that may be offered by local adult education programs to remove barriers from an enrolled student who is a parent or guardian and increase their ability to participate fully in adult education programs. Programs may apply for the Adult Education sub-grant funds in order to provide GFS services. GFS program participation will support the interwoven goals of adult education and family literacy for adults to obtain a high school equivalency diploma (HSED), enter employment, retain employment, move into postsecondary education and training, choose a career pathway, and obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children.

Programs *must* offer services that include the four components of family literacy. The activities must provide a broad array of services for the student to not only gain educational skills and earn a high school credential but also gain the skills to become the primary teacher for their children and prepare both the parent and the child for success in later life. The required four components of the GFS program are listed below.

- Adult Literacy (i.e., Adult Education (AE)) with the goal of obtaining a high school diploma, high school equivalent diploma, career readiness certificate, career pathway, postsecondary education, or the military.
- Training for Parents (i.e., Parent Education (PE)), guardians, or family members regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children.
- Educational Activities Between Parent and Child (i.e., Interactive Literacy Activities (ILA)) between parents or family members and their children. ILA must be supported by partnerships such as with the local school district, Head Start, Early Head Start, First Steps to School Readiness, Read to Succeed, and private partnerships.
- Early Childhood Services (i.e., Early Care and Education (ECE)) is an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences. These services may be supported by partnerships such as the school district, Head Start, Early Head Start, First Steps to School Readiness, Read to Succeed, and private partnerships.

***GFS Eligible Individuals:*** Participation in GFS Program initiatives is limited to adults and OSY, age sixteen (16) or older, who

- are enrolled in an adult education program; or
- are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in a secondary school under state law; or
- do not have a high school diploma or equivalent; and
- are basic skills deficient; or
- do not have a secondary school diploma or equivalent, and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or
- are English language learners; and

- have a child(ren) ages birth (0) to eight (8) years, per South Carolina’s requirement. This includes being a legal guardian, grandparent, stepparent, aunt, uncle, sibling, or other person with whom the child lives or who has been designated by a parent, legal guardian, or court to act in place of the parent.

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## F. ASSESSING QUALITY

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

Local eligible programs are accountable to the Office of Adult Education (OAE) to meet the standards of quality for administration and instruction as outlined by OAE. Effectiveness of programs, services and activities of local recipients of funds will be assessed through systematic evaluation of local programs. In addition, the performance outcomes of each local program will meet or exceed the established performance level for each core measure each fiscal year to ensure the highest quality service to adult learners who participate in programs. Program monitoring may include the following: formal on-site program reviews, and desktop monitoring reports.

OAE regularly conducts individual program monitoring. The purpose of this monitoring is to identify the specific areas in which a provider is in compliance or non-compliance with federal law and regulations, state statutes and rules. The timely identification of non-compliance provides a framework to make changes that are expected to result in programs becoming more efficient and effective. A comprehensive and multi-dimensional Compliance Monitoring process is a foundation for continuous improvement of services and systems within each Adult Education program. Our commitment to excellence supports accountability, collaboration, targeted technical assistance, continuous improvement and positive systemic change.

The OAE assigns a Local Program Review (LPR) Team to all school district programs and community-based organizations receiving federal funds and/or state aid to support approved adult education and literacy activities. All programs with a new Adult Education Director are required to go through the LPR process during their first year. All other programs are on a four-year rotating cycle.

The LPR process is a systemic approach designed to assess the educational opportunities and the effectiveness of the adult education programs and services by the providers. During a Local Program Review, team members review the quality indicators and documentation requirements for the following focus areas:

I. Administration

II. Professional Development

III. Data Collection and Analysis

IV. Orientation and Intake Process

V. Standardized Assessment

VI. Student Exit and Follow-Up

VII. Student Records (Current Year)

## VIII. Record Keeping

## IX. Curriculum and Instruction

## X. Career Pathways

## XI. Financial Monitoring

To be successful, the Local Program Review requires continuous follow-up and support activities including professional development and on-site assistance. The on-site review process involves careful, systematic research and examination of the activities, practices, and systems. In order to form sound recommendations in each of these areas, the LPR Team should be provided with documentation that serves as evidence. The basis for the on-site review process is founded on three methods of obtaining evidence:

- Review of documentation
- Conducting interviews
- Observations

Upon completion of the Local Program Review, findings are shared with the Superintendent, Board Chair, and Program Director who is responsible for correcting any issues. The local program is required to respond to a formal written report, if there are any required actions.

OAE currently uses multiple factors to determine the risk level of each program. Risk factor categories include staff turnover, financial, family literacy, performance, and ESL. Programs are determined to be High, Medium, or Low Risk dependent on the cumulative point value of the identified factors. Program technical assistance and monitoring are based on an individual program's level of risk.

OAE has initiated efforts to improve the core follow-up measure "Enter Postsecondary Education or Training." The state staff is working closer with local program Directors to determine ways of improving the performance of this measure. Staff also plans to expand the number of agencies where data matching occurs. Currently, postsecondary data matching only occurs at the 16 technical colleges. OAE is working on an agreement with SC Commission on Higher Education to data match with all public postsecondary institutions in South Carolina.

The process of data collection and analysis is reviewed at each LACES personnel quarterly meeting in the context of offering more in-depth information, re-clarification of previous information or introduction of new data information. As a result, local programs are using additional data for program improvement.

All programs receiving an Integrated English Literacy/Civics Education grant and/or Generational Family Services grant also complete a year-end Final Annual Report designed specifically for each grant.

### Setting of Targets

OAE negotiates proposed target percentages for each of the core indicators of performance with the US Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE). Each local eligible program is responsible for meeting or exceeding the negotiated performance targets. Each program shall analyze progress towards meeting the targets on an ongoing basis. Each program must utilize the approved standardized assessments which provide the framework needed to measure program effectiveness.

## Data Collection and Analysis

Local programs are required to collect data during Intake and Orientation on all incoming students. An analysis of the data on the program's performance is required of the program to determine if progress towards meeting targets is occurring, and to identify areas of improvement. Analysis should include a review of academic, employment, secondary credential, and postsecondary measures. Local programs must assure that National Reporting System of Adult Education data quality standards are met.

## Quarterly Desktop Monitoring Report

On a quarterly basis, local programs produce a data report that compares each program's outcomes to the negotiated performance targets and to the prior year's performance. Annually, deficient areas must be addressed through an action plan.

## On-Site Program Review/Monitoring

The Local Program Review (LPR) process is a systemic approach designed to assess the educational opportunities and the effectiveness of adult education programs and services in the school districts and CBO's. One-fourth of the programs are reviewed each year by a team of OAE staff. The other three-fourths of the programs are informally reviewed by desktop monitoring tools and site visits. To be successful, the LPR effort requires continuous follow-up and support activities including professional development and on-site assistance. Financial Monitoring is included as a part of this process. Financial monitoring checks to determine if costs are reasonable and allowable.

## Program Improvement

The Intensive Technical Assistance Program (ITAP) plan is designed with content to assist identified programs that are in need of intensive technical assistance to improve program performance. Training will take the form of off-site sessions, on-site sessions, and individual assistance. Sessions will be tailored to focus on specific strategies for developing systems to reorganize practices that will impact program administration, staff development, data collection and analysis, orientation and intake process, student exit and follow-up (specifically attendance), standardized assessment, student records, program records, and identified instructional areas. All sessions will focus on variables that directly and indirectly affect program performance. Local adult education programs that are identified as ITAP are given the designation as a result of the following three criteria:

- The aggregate average was 55 percent or less for the Adult Basic Education (ABE) educational functioning levels (EFLs) within the local adult education program
- The aggregate average was 55 percent or less for the English as a Second Language (ESL) EFLs within the local adult education program
- The average attendance hours for students within the local adult education program were on average thirty hours or less per student

Low performing programs enter a more intense type of technical assistance process that requires the following activities:

- Programs identified as in need of ITAP services for ABE or ESL attend training focused on Program Management as pertains to data, assessment, program design, instruction and retention.
- During the ITAP process, the OAE:

§ Participates in data analysis review with the local adult education director and teaching staff to identify problematic areas.

§ Conducts periodic visits to local programs to review classes, evaluate evidence of program management, and staff meetings, etc.

§ Assigns mentors that include directors and other program staff that can assist with program improvement.

§ Assist local programs in developing “action plans” for immediate implementation.

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## 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

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## 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     **South Carolina Department of Education**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:     **Molly M. Spearman**

Title of Authorized Representative:     **State Superintendent of Education**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)

(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to OCTAE\_MAT@ed.gov

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#### **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

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#### 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>.

GEPA (General Education Provisions Act) 427 requirements are overseen by the SCDE-OAE in the following ways:

- In cooperation with SCDE - Office of General Counsel and the SCDE - Office of Special Education Services, OAE delivers training for adult education practitioners serving students with special needs.
- OAE meets regularly with the SCDE - Office of Special Education Services to ensure compliance with all special education regulations.
- OAE requires that all funded local providers have a written plan with local Special Education Departments to transition IEP (Individualized Education Plan) students, and that local providers comply with GEPA which requires each provider to describe the steps they propose to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally assisted programs.

OAE monitors for compliance the written transition IEP as a part of its annual compliance process, and collaborates with the SCDE - Office of Special Education to monitor all other GEPA requirements.

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#### 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

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#### 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;

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SCVRD is an independent commission.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

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SCVRD is an independent commission.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

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SCVRD is an independent commission.

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#### B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

When requesting a waiver of the statewide 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;

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SCVRD has not requested a waiver of statewide requirement.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

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SCVRD has not requested a waiver of statewide requirement.

3. ALL STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS WILL APPLY

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requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

SCVRD has not requested a waiver of statewide requirement.

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#### 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;

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In carrying out its mission to prepare and assist eligible individuals to achieve and maintain competitive employment, the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD) actively seeks referrals and comparable services and benefits. In doing so, the department has established formal and informal partnerships with other providers of facilities and services. For the purpose of referral, service

collaboration, facility allocation, and staff designation, cooperative agreements have been established with the following agencies in South Carolina: Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Department of Corrections, the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN), the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). Detailed agreements between SCVRD and the SCDE describe the coordination of school-to-work transition services and also Adult Education services. With regard to the SC Independent Living Council, the department acts in an advisory and technical support capacity. The SCVRD portion of the Unified State Plan assures that an interagency agreement or similar document for interagency coordination between any appropriate public entities becomes operative. The department has entered into collaborative arrangements with institutions of higher education as well. This is to ensure the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, described in Title I of WIOA, are included in the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual. This includes the provision of vocational rehabilitation services during pending disputes as described in the interagency agreement or similar document. SCVRD will seek to assure the participation of individuals with physical and mental impairments in training and employment opportunities, as appropriate. With the exception of services specified in paragraph (E) and in paragraphs (1) through (4) and (14) of section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) enacted on July 22, 2014, information shall specify policies and procedures for public entities to identify and determine interagency coordination responsibilities of each public entity in order to promote coordination and timely delivery of vocational rehabilitation services.

## 2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

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SCVRD works closely with the S.C. Assistive Technology Program (SCATP) through ongoing communication, cross—participation in staff trainings, and participation in the annual AT Expo. Staff with the SCATP also participates in TASC, the Transition Alliance of South Carolina.

## 3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

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SCVRD will provide input to the US Department of Agriculture—Office of Rural Development as it endeavors to support the development activities that empower and build capacity of local communities.

## 4. NONEDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

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SCVRD partners with multiple agencies and entities serving out-of-school youth to include DJJ (Job Readiness Training and teen centers), Centers for Independent Living, USC Center for Disability Resources, Developmental Disabilities Council, and Family Connection of SC.

## 5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

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No State Use Contracting Program is in place in South Carolina.

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## D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

Describe:

### 1. DSU'S PLANS

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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.

SCVRD considers service provision to high school students with disabilities a significant priority and collaborates with local and state education agencies to serve them. SCVRD serves students with disabilities who have various pre-employment transition needs in their efforts to prepare for, find, and maintain competitive integrated employment. From students who pursue high school diplomas and occupational credentials to those who will receive certificates of attendance, SCVRD provides individualized services that will help students successfully enter competitive, integrated employment. This includes making available pre-employment transition services to all students that are eligible and potentially eligible for VR services. The State Board of Education statute, 43-243, requires the mandatory participation of representatives of state agencies involved in the financing or delivery of related services to children with disabilities in the state's Advisory Council on the Education of Students with Disabilities. The Advisory Council's purpose is to provide recommendations and input on special education and related services for students with disabilities to the Office of Special Education Services.

## 2. INFORMATION ON THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WITH RESPECT TO:

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### 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;

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SCVRD and the SCDE are signatories and partners in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This agreement expresses a basic commitment on behalf of both agencies to provide comprehensive vocational and educational services to individuals with disabilities. The agreement details each entity's roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, in identifying and serving students with disabilities. Items covered in the agreement include: student identification and exchange of information, procedures for outreach to students with disabilities who need transition services, methods for dispute resolution, consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for school-to-work transition activities, and the requirements for regular monitoring of the agreement. Timing of student referrals is individualized based on need but should generally occur no later than the second semester of the year prior to the student's exit from school.

Using the SCVRD-SCDE MOA as a model, SCVRD has developed agreements with all local education agencies in the state. These MOAs clarify roles and responsibilities at the local level. There is an SCVRD counselor assigned to each of the high schools in the state whose purpose is to provide pre-employment transition services, be a resource for coordination activities to ensure provision of pre-employment transition services, participate in school-based meetings as appropriate, and to seek referrals of students who can benefit from SCVRD services. SCVRD also maintains an agreement with the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind.

Provision of pre-employment transition services is a cornerstone of the agreements with local education agencies/school districts in terms of SCVRD's role. SCVRD provides a robust set of student and youth services to enhance the transition from school to work or postsecondary training opportunities. As indicated in WIOA, SCVRD transition counselors provide pre-employment transition services for students

prior to their exit from high school, and SCVRD staff continue to provide services to support placement into competitive integrated employment, or completion of postsecondary training and/or credential-based programs. The number of SCVRD successful employment outcomes for students referred by the school system has grown by 94 percent percent from 2010 to 2017.

SCVRD utilizes the “Guideposts for Success” (based on the work of the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth — NCWD/Y) as a framework for school-to-work transition services. This includes regular activities that focus on each of the required pre-employment transition service activities: job exploration counseling, work-based learning, counseling on opportunities for comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living skills, and instruction in self-advocacy. Group activities provide opportunities to not only facilitate peer mentoring, but also allow transition staff to observe and cultivate students’ leadership skills, as well as communication and social skills. Mentoring is a key component of the High School High Tech (HS/HT) program, and SCVRD collaborates with organizations that have youth-led mentoring programs in place. Through the agency’s VR Ambassadors program, former clients that have successfully transitioned into employment or postsecondary activities are available to assist with mentoring and participation in transition activities such as Disability Mentoring Day, and summer transition institutes.

SCVRD maintains a priority on providing work-based learning experiences for students. Following a 5-year transition demonstration grant from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and in keeping with evidence-based practices that support work experience to be one of the most influential factors in successful postsecondary employment outcomes, transition staff actively pursue job tryout, job shadowing, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities for students. This impacts not only the ultimate outcome of competitive, integrated employment but has been shown to be an integral support for school completion and drop-out prevention.

In collaboration with the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) and the SCDE, SCVRD’s school-based transition counselors work together with local education agencies, community partners, workforce development boards, SC Works Centers and business partners to advise students with disabilities, and their families, regarding available career pathways and educational/training opportunities. SCVRD maintains a Transition Services Coordinator position and additional regional Transition Specialist positions whose duties focus on the authorized activities required for effective provision of pre-employment transition services. These include:

- Coordinate all transition-related activities and projects including those that involve other agencies, community organizations and local SCVRD field offices;
- Develop, monitor and update all transition documents and cooperative agreements; • Provide technical assistance, professional development and training on transition-related issues to field office staff, education personnel, community organizations, families, and students;
- Review and update client service policy to ensure policies and procedures are reflective of SCVRD mission and focus on quality in serving youth in transition;
- Serve on the planning committee for the interagency South Carolina Youth Leadership Forum, a summer youth development and leadership program; • Participate in TASC, an interagency initiative to create systems change and support development of local interagency transition teams.

SCVRD continues to facilitate the development of innovative transition services to improve the successful outcomes of students and transition-aged youth. In this effort, SCVRD has integrated evidence-based practices for successful transition into the service delivery system. SCVRD also offers several additional programs to enhance transition services:

- HS/HT — an initiative of the Office of Disability Employment Policy, US Department of Labor whose mission is to reduce the dropout rate of youth with disabilities, increase their enrollment in postsecondary education and training, and improve their participation in employment-related activities. HS/HT expanded to an additional location, bringing the total HS/HT program locations to 12 across the state.
- Transition Services Specialist (TSS) — a cooperative funding initiative that enhances the general transition services offered to a school by engaging a school employee designated as the Transition Services Specialist. The TSS coordinates with the assigned SCVRD counselor, to provide pre-employment transition services. Work-based learning experiences are a critical component of the initiative. The intent of this program is to support higher rates of successful secondary school completion, enrollment in postsecondary training, and subsequent entry and maintenance of competitive integrated employment.
- Transition Services Counselor (TSC) — a cooperative funding initiative in which a designated SCVRD counselor provides the pre-employment transition activities and work-based experiences. These efforts have resulted in an increase in student referrals in the areas in which the programs are operating and have increased our collaborative efforts with the local school districts. The Youth Employment Services (YES) programs that operated through an RSA demonstration grant and were completed in December 2012 have been incorporated into either a TSC cooperative agreement or are receiving ongoing pre-employment and transition services through the efforts of the local transition staff assigned to the schools in those locations.
- Project SEARCH — this nationally recognized program is a one-year high school transition internship program providing training and education leading to employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. SCVRD has seen Project SEARCH programs expand in South Carolina to seven sites.
- Postsecondary Programs for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities — SCVRD collaborates with the five postsecondary programs in South Carolina for young adults with intellectual disabilities:
  - o Carolina LIFE,
  - o Clemson LIFE,
  - o Coastal Carolina LIFE,
  - o [College of Charleston] REACH, and
  - o Winthrop Think College.

Each program has an SCVRD counselor liaison who provides services for eligible students. SCVRD counselors monitor progress and assist with transition planning as the student approaches program completion. These efforts support continuity and coordination of services with the SCVRD office located in the student's hometown. These programs provide students with critical competitive employment and independent living skills. SCVRD counselors work closely with staff and students to explore careers, determine a suitable vocational goal, and assist with job placement.

- Transition Coaches — SCVRD has successfully implemented a demonstration project to provide transition coach positions for local area offices. The transition coach works with transition counselors to identify students with the most significant disabilities (as defined in WIOA) who need pre-employment transition services to include work experiences, and job coaching and job placement assistance to ensure a successful competitive, integrated employment outcome. The transition coach provides these services to students in their final year of high school.

SCVRD continues to explore and develop new initiatives that promote successful post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. These outcomes include competitive, integrated employment, independent living, community participation and postsecondary education.

#### B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

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Provision of pre-employment transition services is a cornerstone of the agreements with local education agencies/school districts in terms of SCVRD's role. SCVRD provides a robust set of student and youth services to enhance the transition from school to work or post-secondary training opportunities. As indicated in WIOA, SCVRD transition counselors provide pre-employment transition services for students prior to their exit from high school, and SCVRD staff continue to provide services to support placement into competitive integrated employment, or completion of post-secondary training and/or credential-based programs. The number of SCVRD successful employment outcomes for students referred by the school system has grown by 94 percent from 2010 to 2017.

#### C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

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SCVRD utilizes the "Guideposts for Success" (based on the work of the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth - NCWD/Y) as a framework for school-to-work transition services. This includes regular activities that focus on each of the required pre-employment transition service activities: job exploration counseling, work-based learning, counseling on opportunities for comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living skills, and instruction in self-advocacy. Group activities provide opportunities to not only facilitate peer mentoring, but also allow transition staff to observe and cultivate students' leadership skills, as well as communication and social skills. Mentoring is a key component of the High School High Tech (HS/HT) program, and SCVRD collaborates with organizations that have youth-led mentoring programs in place. Through the agency's VR Ambassadors program, former clients that have successfully transitioned into employment or postsecondary activities are available to assist with mentoring and participation in transition activities such as Disability Mentoring Day, and summer transition institutes.

SCVRD maintains a priority on providing work-based learning experiences for students. Following a 5-year transition demonstration grant from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and in keeping with evidence-based practices that support work experience to be one of the most influential factors in successful postsecondary employment outcomes, transition staff actively pursue job tryout, job shadowing, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities for students. This impacts not only the ultimate



outcome of competitive, integrated employment but has been shown to be an integral support for school completion and drop-out prevention.

In collaboration with the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) and the SCDE, SCVRD's school-based transition counselors work together with local education agencies, community partners, workforce development boards, SC Works Centers and business partners to advise students with disabilities, and their families, regarding available career pathways and educational/training opportunities.

SCVRD maintains a Transition Services Coordinator position and additional regional Transition Specialist positions whose duties focus on the authorized activities required for effective provision of pre-employment transition services. These include:

- Coordinate all transition-related activities and projects including those that involve other agencies, community organizations and local SCVRD field offices;
- Develop, monitor and update all transition documents and cooperative agreements;
- Provide technical assistance, professional development and training on transition-related issues to field office staff, education personnel, community organizations, families, and students;
- Review and update client service policy to ensure policies and procedures are reflective of SCVRD mission and focus on quality in serving youth in transition;
- Serve on the planning committee for the interagency South Carolina Youth Leadership Forum, a summer youth development and leadership program;
- Participate in TASC, an interagency initiative to create systems change and support development of local interagency transition teams.

SCVRD continues to facilitate the development of innovative transition services to improve the successful outcomes of students and transition-aged youth. In this effort, SCVRD has integrated evidence-based practices for successful transition into the service delivery system. SCVRD also offers several additional programs to enhance transition services:

- HS/HT - an initiative of the Office of Disability Employment Policy, US Department of Labor whose mission is to reduce the dropout rate of youth with disabilities, increase their enrollment in postsecondary education and training, and improve their participation in employment-related activities. HS/HT expanded to an additional location, bringing the total HS/HT program locations to 12 across the state.
- Transition Services Specialist (TSS) - a cooperative funding initiative that enhances the general transition services offered to a school by engaging a school employee designated as the Transition Services Specialist. The TSS coordinates with the assigned SCVRD counselor, to provide pre-employment transition services. Work-based learning experiences are a critical component of the initiative. The intent of this program is to support higher rates of successful secondary school completion, enrollment in postsecondary training, and subsequent entry and maintenance of competitive integrated employment.
- Transition Services Counselor (TSC) - a cooperative funding initiative in which a designated SCVRD counselor provides the pre-employment transition activities and work-based experiences. These efforts have resulted in an increase in student referrals in the areas in which the programs are operating and have increased our collaborative efforts with the local school districts. The

Youth Employment Services (YES) programs that operated through an RSA demonstration grant and were completed in December 2012 have been incorporated into either a TSC cooperative agreement or are receiving ongoing pre-employment and transition services through the efforts of the local transition staff assigned to the schools in those locations.

- Project SEARCH - this nationally recognized program is a one-year high school transition internship program providing training and education leading to employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. SCVRD has seen Project SEARCH programs expand in South Carolina to seven sites.
- Postsecondary Programs for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities - SCVRD collaborates with the five postsecondary programs in South Carolina for young adults with intellectual disabilities:

- o Carolina LIFE,

- o Clemson LIFE,

- o Coastal Carolina LIFE,

- o [College of Charleston] REACH, and

- o Winthrop Think College.

Each program has an SCVRD counselor liaison who provides services for eligible students. SCVRD counselors monitor progress and assist with transition planning as the student approaches program completion. These efforts support continuity and coordination of services with the SCVRD office located in the student's hometown. These programs provide students with critical competitive employment and independent living skills. SCVRD counselors work closely with staff and students to explore careers, determine a suitable vocational goal, and assist with job placement.

- Transition Coaches - SCVRD has successfully implemented a demonstration project to provide transition coach positions for local area offices. The transition coach works with transition counselors to identify students with the most significant disabilities (as defined in WIOA) who need pre-employment transition services to include work experiences, and job coaching and job placement assistance to ensure a successful competitive, integrated employment outcome. The transition coach provides these services to students in their final year of high school.

#### D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

Using the SCVRD-SCDE MOA as a model, SCVRD has developed agreements with all local education agencies in the state. These MOAs clarify roles and responsibilities at the local level. There is an SCVRD counselor assigned to each of the high schools in the state whose purpose is to be a resource for career development, participate in school-based meetings as appropriate, and to seek referrals of students who can benefit from SCVRD services. SCVRD also maintains an agreement with the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind.

SCVRD continues to explore and develop new initiatives that promote successful post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. These outcomes include competitive, integrated employment, independent living, community participation and postsecondary education.

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#### E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(3)). Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

The designated state unit, the Statewide Independent Living Council established under Section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended by WIOA, and the independent living centers described in Part C of Chapter I of Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities. In addition, TASC is an interagency group whose mission is to increase successful student postsecondary transition outcomes through active, interagency collaboration. With 16 partner agencies, TASC works to support transition services through training, professional development, and technical assistance provided to local interagency teams that provide direct transition services, both at the pre-employment stage and following postsecondary activities. SCVRD has cooperative agreements and works collaboratively with other non-profit organizations and partners such as the Developmental Disabilities Council, Spinal Cord Injury Association, Traumatic Brain Injury Association, Family Connection of SC, College Transition Connection, The ARC of the Midlands, and multiple other community organizations.

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#### 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.

SCVRD's supported employment goals and plans regarding the Title VI program are based on an analysis of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment and the department's performance on the common performance measures as well as agency key performance indicators. The priorities are as follows:

- Strengthening service delivery afforded to individuals whose disabilities and vocational needs are so significant that SCVRD's 110 traditional program services would not be sufficient to meet their employment needs;
- Providing services to people with the most significant disabilities, especially SSI and/or SSDI recipients, in order to successfully achieve and maintain competitive employment in integrated work settings; and
- Providing supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities.

In SFY 2017, SCVRD used designated funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services for the following goals and priorities:

- Job coaches serving the Aiken, Orangeburg, Laurens, and Lexington areas.
- SCVRD continues its partnership with DDSN in an ongoing demonstration project designed as an intensive placement and support program in the Lexington area. DDSN makes referrals to a specified VR counselor and job coach who are designated to exclusively serve these clients. This demonstration project incorporates many of the IPS evidence-based practices in providing services to individuals with most significant disabilities including those with intellectual disabilities. The key practices focus on individualized, client-centered services to assist persons

with cognitive impairments and emphasize rapid job placement as appropriate into competitive, integrated jobs. Follow up supports are provided in integrated work settings. In SFY 2016, the Lexington site achieved a 73 percent rehabilitation rate.

Activities with funds reserved for services for youth with the most significant disabilities (section 603(d)) included the following:

- Transition job coaches serving youth with most significant disabilities in the Sumter, Greenville, Richland and Rock Hill areas. Transition job coaches provide work-based learning experiences, job preparedness instruction, job development and placement with follow along supports. Transition coaches have been added in additional areas to assist in providing pre-employment transition services and supported employment services for youth with most significant disabilities.
- Project SEARCH is a national model based on intensive internship experience and job coaching. It pairs students in their final year of school with a host business/employer site that includes a series of internships to build job skills as well as to explore career opportunities. This program model is business-led, with partner support provided through the school district, VR, Development Disabilities agencies and other community partners. It focuses on serving young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as other students that may not otherwise have access to the immersion-based approach of this program. Interns in Project SEARCH train in real work settings, which allow the program staff to teach competitive, marketable, and transferable skills. The outcome goal of the program is competitive, integrated employment. The first site in South Carolina was established in Spartanburg during SFY 2014. This has now expanded to seven sites. In this program, students participate in a series of internships at a host business site, receive intensive instruction and job coaching, and are placed into competitive employment, often at the host business site and often prior to completion of their final year of high school. For the Spartanburg location, following their first-year program participants achieved an 86 percent success rate (participants achieving competitive, integrated employment).
- SCVRD leverages other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services. Extended services providers are identified in each area to provide follow along and extended services following successful exit from the VR program. Partnerships at the state and local level with DDSN and the local DSN boards continue to grow and provide key linkages to extended services providers.
- Strategies that contributed to the achievement of overall goals and specific objectives included:
  - Review and measurement of key performance indicators on a quarterly basis;
  - Monthly monitoring and specialized reporting on the results of outreach efforts to underserved and emerging disability populations;
  - Monthly monitoring and specialized reporting on services to youth and pre-employment transition services;
  - Dedicated staff for specific populations and specialized services: school-to-work transition; Deaf and hard of hearing; supported employment; and
  - Demonstration programs to enhance supported employment services and services for youth with the most significant disabilities, individuals diagnosed with ASD, and demand-driven training based on community labor market information.

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## 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

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SCVRD utilizes multiple methods of working with employers to identify competitive, integrated employment and career exploration opportunities to facilitate the provision of VR services for adults and transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities. On a statewide and local basis, the Business Partnership Network, or BPN, provides an opportunity for regular engagement with business partners to gain input on hiring needs, training curricula, and opportunities for outreach with business and industry. Business Advisory Councils (BACs) are established to provide input on specific programs, such as the IT Training Centers, in Columbia and at the Bryant Center in Lyman. Members of the BAC assist in evaluating courses of study and curricula to ensure SCVRD stays current with what is needed in the workplace for IT professionals. Also, SCVRD utilizes Business Development Specialists (BDSs) across the state whose role is to identify opportunities for training, work-based learning, job development and placement, and emerging career pathways. BDS staff participate on local business services teams, along with partners from SC Works and LWDBs, to provide a coordinated approach to business development activities. BDS staff also work with transition counselors and coaches to identify opportunities for work-based learning experiences, internships, apprenticeships, and OJT for students in conjunction with the pre-employment transition services that are provided in high school settings.

### 2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

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SCVRD utilizes multiple methods of working with employers to identify competitive, integrated employment and career exploration opportunities to facilitate the provision of VR services for adults and transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities. On a statewide and local basis, the Business Partnership Network, or BPN, provides an opportunity for regular engagement with business partners to gain input on hiring needs, training curricula, and opportunities for outreach with business and industry. Business Advisory Councils (BACs) are established to provide input on specific programs, such as the IT Training Centers, in Columbia and at the Bryant Center in Lyman. Members of the BAC assist in evaluating courses of study and curricula to ensure SCVRD stays current with what is needed in the workplace for IT professionals. Also, SCVRD utilizes Business Development Specialists (BDSs) across the state whose role is to identify opportunities for training, work-based learning, job development and placement, and emerging career pathways. BDS staff participate on local business services teams, along with partners from SC Works and LWDBs, to provide a coordinated approach to business development activities. BDS staff also work with transition counselors and coaches to identify opportunities for work-based learning experiences, internships, apprenticeships, and OJT for students in conjunction with the pre-employment transition services that are provided in high school settings.

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## 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;

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SCVRD has established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DHHS, the agency responsible for administering the state Medicaid plan. This MOU outlines roles, responsibilities, and collaborative efforts of both agencies. The purpose and objectives of this MOU include strengthening the partnership between the two agencies, with the ultimate outcome of developing opportunities for competitive, integrated employment for Medicaid beneficiaries who have disabilities.

#### 2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

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SCVRD is currently updating the existing MOU with DDSN. Staff works collaboratively with local Disabilities and Special Needs (DSN) boards and providers in serving individuals in need of supported employment services and long-term follow along supports to maintain competitive, integrated employment. DDSN has representatives on TASC to assist in school-to-work transition efforts as well as ensuring youth with the most significant disabilities have access to the supports needed to gain and maintain competitive employment. Through these efforts, clients/consumers are served in a complementary fashion based on the expertise and distinct roles of each agency.

In addition, SCVRD works closely with the Developmental Disabilities Council, an Executive Program designated to the Department of Administration. Collaborative efforts include partnering on many projects and grant-funded initiatives, as well as being signatories to an MOU for the TASC.

#### 3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

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SCVRD works collaboratively with DMH and has an established MOA that outlines roles, responsibilities, and referral procedures. In addition, several cooperative agreements are in place across the state for IPS (Individualized Placement and Support) caseloads to provide rapid placement and job coaching for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. Transition counselors working within the schools to provide pre-employment transition services coordinate with school-based mental health counselors to identify students in need of services, whether that is VR or mental health services. Through this “no wrong door” approach, students in need of services are connected to the appropriate resources in a timely manner.

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#### 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

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###### A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS.

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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;

Staffing patterns are set through a joint effort of the SCVRD commissioner, director of human resources, executive staff, and local supervisors. Employee turnover data are reviewed in an effort to determine trends and to identify staffing concerns. In addition, succession planning for critical need positions has been managed via the department's Professional Development and Leadership Program (PDLP). The PDLP was recently re-evaluated based on current needs, and a revised Leadership Development Program is being structured to better meet the specific talent needs of the Agency. Below is a chart, which provides details, by personnel category, on the number of personnel needed and currently employed in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services at SCVRD.

SCVRD utilizes a caseload management system that allows for monitoring and planning for service delivery capacity based on referral sources and the projected number of individuals expected to receive services.

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	Counselors	243	17	134
2	Area client services managers	27	2	15
3	Vocational evaluators and job prep. instructors	48	2	26
4	Job-readiness trainers	80	5	44
5	Area supervisors	26	0	14
6	Training center managers	24	1	13
7	Employment/job coaches	43	4	2
8	Administrative & team support specialists	71	4	39
9	Addictions counselors	9	0	5
10	Transition coaches	22	1	12

- ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	Counselors	243	17	134
2	Area client services managers	27	2	15
3	Vocational evaluators and job prep. instructors	48	2	26
4	Job-readiness trainers	80	5	44
5	Area supervisors	26	0	14
6	Training center managers	24	1	13
7	Employment/job coaches	43	4	2
8	Administrative & team support specialists	71	4	39
9	Addictions counselors	9	0	5
10	Transition coaches	22	1	12

iii. projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	Counselors	243	17	134
2	Area client services managers	27	2	15
3	Vocational evaluators and job prep. instructors	48	2	26
4	Job-readiness trainers	80	5	44
5	Area supervisors	26	0	14



6	Training center managers	24	1	13
7	Employment/job coaches	43	4	2
8	Administrative & team support specialists	71	4	39
9	Addictions counselors	9	0	5
10	Transition coaches	22	1	12

## 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;

SCVRD maintains close relationships with the University of South Carolina and South Carolina State University, both of which produce graduates who have Master of Rehabilitation Counseling degrees. SCVRD has opted to use a state Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) standard and can recruit not only from candidates with a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, but also with a Master's degree in related fields. These strategies satisfy staffing needs.

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

The following chart shows statistics for the in-state university vocational rehabilitation counseling degree programs. All graduates are eligible for Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification and the South Carolina Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) designation. As of this date, 4 have obtained their CRC certification and 1 has obtained their LPC. Data are collected annually by program directors at each university and shared with executive staff to assist in current and future staffing.

Row	Institutions	Total MRC students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Total MRC graduated from the previous year
1	SC State University Rehab. Counseling Program	49	7	21	25
2	USC Rehab. Counseling Program	43	17	14	7

iii. the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

The following chart shows statistics for the in-state university vocational rehabilitation counseling degree programs. All graduates are eligible for Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification and the South Carolina Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) designation. As of this date, 4 have obtained their CRC certification and 1 has obtained their LPC. Data are collected annually by program directors at each university and shared with executive staff to assist in current and future staffing.

Row	Institutions	Total MRC students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Total MRC graduated from the previous year
1	SC State University Rehab. Counseling Program	49	7	21	25
2	USC Rehab. Counseling Program	43	17	14	7

## 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.

Progress toward meeting the required CSPD standard began in January 2001. The department has a working relationship with the University of South Carolina and South Carolina State University (a historically black university), both of which offer all of the courses required by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE). A recruitment plan is in place to recruit graduates from all schools in South Carolina as well as out-of-state schools which have counseling and rehabilitation counseling degree programs. When this is not possible due to high demand, the department will continue to hire counselors with closely related Master's degrees. In accordance with South Carolina state law, each transcript is assessed, and the counselor is placed in a plan that allows up to 30 months to complete the current state educational requirements.

The University of South Carolina and South Carolina State University prepare individuals for graduate degrees in rehabilitation counseling. SCVRD conducts outreach programs to these universities and other universities to include: publications and distribution of targeted recruiting material, attendance at career days and job fairs, and recruitment events. In addition, practicum placements and internships are offered to students who are in CSPD qualifying programs. These efforts are designed to recruit qualified personnel, including minority graduates and those with disabilities. SCVRD Human Resources and Human Resources Development offices coordinate recruitment efforts with active support from local supervisors.

Employees of the department are assigned to work with school officials to assist in curriculum development for the graduate school programs. The Human Resources Development (HRD) director is an active member of the Rehabilitation Counseling Degree Advisory Boards for the University of South

Carolina, and South Carolina State University and East Carolina University. SCVRD has been especially successful in recruiting personnel from the South Carolina universities, particularly those from minority backgrounds. Students from these programs and out-of-state programs are encouraged to accept student internships and practicums placements with the department. The HRD staff, with input from the human resources department, coordinates the placement of non-paid practicum and internships, and the human resources department coordinates placements for students who qualify for paid internships. In addition, regular classes and tours are conducted in department facilities, and staff is available to present in university programs.

A substantial New Employee Orientation program is vital to the recruitment and retention of SCVRD staff. All new staff members are required to complete New Employee Orientation Parts I, II, and III. New Employee Orientation is intensive and comprehensive. The orientation program incorporates training in the following topics:

- A history of vocational rehabilitation
- Philosophical overview
- SCVRD agency mission, policies, procedures, and benefits
- An overview of training requirements and an intro to online training
- Campus tour
- Ethics in the workplace
- Client Relations and CAP (Client Assistance Program)
- Disability awareness and disability etiquette
- Customer service
- True Colors (personality assessment for team building)
- Medical and psychosocial aspects of specific disabilities
- Safety in the workplace
- Nonviolent crisis intervention
- Security: Personally Identifiable Information (PII)
- Panic alarm system
- Human Resources Development
- Public information
- Time management
- Job specific training
- SCVRD Grievance Procedures for Handling Client Discrimination Complaints

New employees are assigned mentors, participate in job shadowing, and receive performance coaching from their supervisors.

New counselors and selected direct service delivery staff are required to take the following training sessions:

- Motivational Interviewing
- Medical terminology (for those who did not have this as a graduate course)
- Client Services training
  - \*Counseling Skills training
- Rehabilitation technology online trainings

In addition to the New Employee Orientation program and to retain qualified staff, SCVRD uses a system for staff evaluation that is a modification of a system that is available to all state employees. The system focuses on the individual employees' job duties compared to stated goals and objectives. These goals and objectives are identified and discussed with the employee at the beginning of the rating period. Ongoing communication between the employee and supervisor clarifies the employee's understanding of how to meet the performance standards and enhance service delivery to the client.

At the conclusion of the rating period, an evaluation is performed to rate the employee on each duty in relation to performance objectives. The system provides for employee input into the development of the goals and objectives in order to support successful performance.

Another feature of the system allows objectives to be amended throughout the review period. This system also provides a mechanism for helping a substandard performer improve and a means of removing an employee from a position should performance not improve to an acceptable level. It is as follows:

- A covered employee is entitled to adequate notice of substandard performance and the opportunity to improve the substandard performance before receiving a "below performance requirements" rating and being removed from the position. If during the performance period an employee is considered "below performance requirements" in any essential job function or objective which significantly impacts performance, the employee may be provided with a written "Warning Notice of Substandard Performance." The warning notice shall provide for an improvement period of no less than 30 days and no more than 120 days. The warning notice may be issued at any time during the review period. An employee who receives more than two warning notices within a 365-day period shall be removed from the position. A warning notice is not required on the third occurrence.
- The department has developed career path matrices for staff to encourage retention of qualified staff and promotion to higher level positions. These career paths are keyed to requirements in the areas of education, experience, productivity, quality, and training. The matrices include elements related to the department's Program Integrity model which emphasizes a balance among customer service, compliance assurance, and productivity. Counselors are required to meet the state's CSPD standard within the required time frame in order to maintain status as a counselor and to advance to a higher level. A counselor who does not achieve the state CSPD standard within the required timeframes will be removed from his/her position. The career path matrices are published on SCVRD's intranet site.
- The department takes an active role in employee/employer relations. Through strong leadership and the assistance of all staff, the department provides a healthy and safe work environment. Employee behavior and performance problems are dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner, with an emphasis on assisting the employee to improve. The department promotes internal and external customer service and has made teamwork an integral part of day-to-day operations. The department's Celebration of Success program (a reward and recognition system) allows employees to recognize coworkers for customer service, productivity, program excellence, as well as individual accomplishments.

### 3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

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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**

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Section 101(a)(7)(B) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.18 indicates that the state VR agency is to establish and maintain standards to ensure that all professional personnel are prepared and trained and that the standards are consistent with national or state approved requirements. Given this option of selecting federal or state standards in order to achieve stability regarding standards and to develop a diverse staff, SCVRD has opted to use state standards to manage its CSPD, which are consistent with the initial guidelines. In 2006, the South Carolina General Assembly passed a bill, which established a state standard for the minimum educational and training requirements for counselors of the public vocational rehabilitation agency. This bill was signed by the governor on March 15, 2006. Under this state law, the department can continue its practice of hiring individuals with rehabilitation-related Master's degrees while mandating that they complete Master's level rehabilitation courses commensurate with their degree. The law reads as follows:

A State Agency of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor must meet the following standards: a Master's degree in rehabilitation counseling, a master's degree in the field of counseling with a graduate course in theories and techniques of counseling, or a Master's degree in any discipline. In addition to the Master's degree, the individual shall be required to document at least 18 credit hours of coursework at the Master's level or above, within thirty months of date of hire, in the core areas that follow: one graduate course with a primary focus on the theories and techniques of counseling and three graduate courses, each with a primary focus on one of the following areas: occupational information, job development and placement, medical aspects of disabilities, foundations of rehabilitation, psychological aspects of disabilities, and personal and vocational adjustment; and two graduate courses, each with a primary focus on one of the following areas: assessment, research methodology, vocational and career development, community resources, case management, and delivery of rehabilitation services, or a current Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification, regardless of degree.

As stated in detail in the previous section of this document, qualified candidates are recruited from universities who meet the minimum requirements of the state's CSPD standard. Internships and practicum opportunities are also offered to qualified candidates. Each candidate's transcript is reviewed and evaluated. New hires who do not meet the standard are immediately placed in a program to meet the standard within the 30-month time frame.

Of the 306 general counselors (includes counselors, and 8 addictions counselors and area client services managers) who are currently employed by SCVRD, 272 meet the state's CSPD standard for a rehabilitation counselor. Thirty-four (34) counselors have Master's degrees in a related field and are currently under a plan to complete requirements.

Funding support for the implementation of a retraining plan to assist VR counselors to meet the state educational requirement of CSPD has traditionally been provided by the department's In-Service Training Grant. Due to discontinuation of the RSA in-service training grant this cost has been absorbed into the

agency's overall budget effective 10/1/2015. Other funding options may be provided by RSA grants, if available. Evaluation of the plan to ensure that VR counselors meet the CSPD requirements is conducted through an analysis of transcripts and the department's electronic training records.

#### 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.

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As part of the agency's initiative to expand skills-based, demand driven training, staff are currently trained on accessing and utilizing labor market information for their local communities. In coordination with local BDSs, staff identifies in-demand industries and occupations and develops localized training or connects with the technical college system and other institutions of higher education to provide clients access to training commensurate with the evolving labor force. In addition, SCVRD is a partner in a statewide Talent Pipeline/Sector Strategies Project aimed at closing skills gaps and meeting the workforce needs of the current and emerging labor market through collaborative development of career pathways and identification of training and certifications required by employers to meet their hiring needs.

Paraprofessional staff must meet minimum hiring requirements according to position descriptions.

#### 4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

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Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

##### A. SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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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

SCVRD conducts needs assessments in order to plan for a balanced HRD program for all staff. The assessments take into account skill development, as well as long-range career opportunities directed toward developing and strengthening the role of qualified rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals. Needs assessments are conducted and evaluated by supervisors and HRD. The information is collected from multiple sources and formulated into a comprehensive HRD program. Institutions of higher education and appropriate professional associations are used to facilitate the recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel.

In addition to these efforts, the department provides, when appropriate and subject to the availability of funds, tuition assistance to employees who are taking work-related courses.

The department has developed a retention and succession plan that includes its Professional Development and Leadership Program (PDLP). The PDLP operated successfully for many years and has recently been re-evaluated in light of current needs. It is being revised to a more targeted Leadership Development Program that will address immediate needs identified through succession planning and evaluation of critical positions. The plan provides career development opportunities for staff via career paths, and targeted training opportunities. The Human Resources Development and Training Plan includes training provided by various technical assistance centers and other training professionals,

management/supervision courses offered by the South Carolina Office of Human Resources and in-house training. In May of 2015, 63 participants graduated from the two-year PDLP program. Each year, the agency offers entry into Level I, Professional Development, and Level II, Leadership. The PDLP program continues to be cited as an innovative program by training and technical assistance organizations and other agencies. A separate Supervision and Management track continues that focuses on meeting the training needs of new and existing supervisors. During this year, supervisors received training on various leadership topics to include communication, conflict management, coaching, managing priorities and projects, managing emotions under pressure, supervisory practices, and teambuilding.

SCVRD has an extensive HRD department that facilitates training for all employees, with programmatic training being provided by internal and external subject matter experts. The department provides/sponsors trainings that focus on medical, psychosocial, and vocational aspects of specific disabilities, and feature the application of assistive technology as appropriate. Recent topics include: disability etiquette, brain injury, alcohol/drug addictions, multiple sclerosis, mental illness, autism, deafness and hearing impairments, epilepsy, learning disabilities, musculoskeletal, spinal cord injury, diabetes, as well as other disability-specific trainings. Workshops on transition from school to work, HS/HT, supported employment, job retention services, vocational assessment, serving ex-offenders, serving the Hispanic/Latino population, leadership development, and maintaining a culture of quality were also provided.

Counseling skills training is provided on an ongoing basis with a focus on motivational interviewing techniques. A series of statewide trainings focusing on providing specific counseling skills and the application of those skills within the VR setting to counselors and other staff who provide direct services to clients also began in 2013 and will continue for all designated new staff.

All direct client service delivery staff receive training on job placement and developing employer relationships. In addition, trainings focusing on living with spinal cord injury, coaching for engagement, and vocational assessment in school-to-work transition were provided.

In addition to the focus on technology in specific trainings, SCVRD has two in-house rehabilitation technology centers. Rehabilitation technology engineers provide training and support to staff, businesses and clients as well as tours and presentations for the community. Rehabilitation technology engineers offer onsite services as well as services from the two regional locations. The agency also has a series of eight online training modules that focus on the identification of the need for rehabilitation technology services and application of those services.

Role-specific training is provided for all direct service delivery staff. Customer service, true colors training, ethics, disability awareness/etiquette, safety training, nonviolent intervention, panic alarm training, and a course on securing personally identifiable information are requirements for all employees.

Progress continues in building an online library of disability-specific modules which are available upon demand. These modules are interactive and competency based. As always, the impact of these training efforts on staff performance will be assessed and the recommendations considered for the improvement of future training programs. As prior training plans included training on the 1998 Rehabilitation Act, the current training plan will include objectives that focus on WIOA, informed choice, disability-specific trainings and transition.

SCVRD staff participate in relevant disability related conferences. These conferences offer current information on disabilities and initiatives in vocational rehabilitation.

## B. ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE

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procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

Numerous local trainings take place and extensive research is conducted when planning these sessions in order to provide the most up-to-date information that will assist staff in providing quality services to clients. When conducting disability-related trainings, SCVRD uses physicians, individuals that experience the specific disabilities and other experts who are current with the latest research in their field. For designated staff, the department sponsors attendance at graduate courses that provide information on cutting-edge initiatives in the field.

Executive staff is actively involved with the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation and the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Association. Staff also subscribe to numerous professional and research journals.

## 5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

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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.

SCVRD has current personnel recruitment and training policies that are reflective of the findings of the US Census Bureau, including the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS). This estimates that 27.8 percent of South Carolina's population identified themselves as African American (a 4.5 percent growth rate since the 2010 Census). Additionally, 5.3 percent of South Carolina's population identified themselves as Latino or Hispanic, per the 2014 ACS, and the department sponsors Spanish classes for staff to facilitate communication with this minority group. Hiring incentives are also utilized for staff that are bilingual in English and Spanish, which has resulted in an increased number of staff who are bilingual. The remaining minority populations are distributed among Native Americans, Asian, or dual race.

In addition, the department continues to place emphasis on services for individuals who are deaf to ensure that a counselor in each area can communicate effectively. The department takes advantage of web-based trainings. In addition, weekly American Sign Language (ASL) classes are provided for Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf (RCD). The department has a certified interpreter on staff that provides video remote and on-site interpretation, as well as serving as a Client Services Specialist for this area of expertise. In addition, qualified interpreters are used if accessing a certified interpreter would delay service provision.

## 6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

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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.

TASC is a robust state-level interagency collaborative that works in support of increasing positive postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities. It has multiple stakeholder agencies and organizations, and supports local level interagency teams through training, technical assistance, and strategic planning.



The department continues to coordinate the development of designated staff with emerging initiatives by the SCDE and the 81 local school districts (LEAs) under IDEA and state school-to-work transition efforts. Transition training efforts included the following: a two-day transition summer series was conducted for transition staff that included presentations and training on pre-employment transition services, vocational assessment, use of ACT and Work Keys assessments, referral development, best practices, documentation and use of school records, work experiences, using O\*Net, and postsecondary training. Selected transition staff participated in a session on active training techniques and self-determination. Over 40 transition staff participated in an annual interagency transition conference, focused on local interagency planning and content sessions focused on effective service delivery for students with disabilities. Youth leaders also participated in the conference. Disability-specific modules on learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorders are available for all staff via LOTIS, the agency's online training site. In addition to the disability-specific training modules, a module on transition basics, with a focus on evidence-based practices and quality service delivery, has been developed and is delivered in person to all SCVRD transition personnel. This has become the standard training for all new staff working with transition students. The agency continues to work collaboratively with the SCDE to provide training as a component of their State Personnel Development Grant - Project Gateway. In addition, selected transition staff participate in training on transition assessment and facilitating work experiences offered through the SCDE's annual research to practice training.

The TSS/TSC collaborative approach to the provision of transition services was continued this year in five schools. This approach designates a transition services specialist - who is a school district employee - or a designated VR counselor, to act as a liaison to refer students to the department and assist these students in participating in transition activities and work-based experiences in the community. This outreach effort has improved access to VR services for students with disabilities in the areas in which the program is operating and has increased our collaborative efforts with the local school district.

The department continues to designate a liaison counselor who provides pre-employment transition services to each public secondary school throughout the state. During this past year state office and local staff have provided in-service training to school staff, parents, and students regarding service availability. Also, cooperative agreements with DJJ and the Will Lou Gray Opportunity School afford the ability to work collaboratively to serve at-risk youth prior to their exit from high school.

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## 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:

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#### A. WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

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SCVRD designs new initiatives, enhances existing programs, and refines policies and procedures based on many factors. This includes continuous program assessment and evaluation by analyzing statistical trends and utilizing input from constituency groups. In keeping with SCVRD's strategic plan and, as specified by the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, this feedback loop begins with the statewide needs assessment. The triennial needs assessment was completed in 2015-2016 for inclusion in the first Unified State Plan submitted in 2016. Sections related to pre-employment transition services have been updated in conjunction with the required two-year plan modifications for 2018.

A variety of source information is used, including information from the United States Census Bureau's ACS, RSA, Cornell University Employment and Disability Institute (EDI, 2013), Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS), US Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Social Security Administration (SSA). SCVRD conducts quarterly internal and external customer satisfaction surveys and uses this information to strengthen service delivery.

SCVRD participated in the fall 2015 South Carolina State Survey conducted by the University of South Carolina's Institute for Public Service and Policy Research. This is a cost-shared random probability survey of citizens age 18 and older living in South Carolina. Specific questions were designed to measure experience and familiarity with SCVRD services. Results of this survey reveal that 13.7 percent of respondents indicated that they, or someone they know, has been served by SCVRD. This response varied significantly by race and income levels. Additionally, 33.7 percent of respondents reported that they were aware of the services provided by SCVRD. Of the respondents that indicated they were aware of SCVRD services, the most common response was that the purpose of the Vocational Rehabilitation program is to help people with injury, illness, or disability to enter or re-enter the workforce. These findings reinforce the need to continuously evaluate outreach efforts in the community. However, it should be noted that the consistency of messages regarding the purpose of the program among individuals familiar with it, appears to be high.

South Carolina's unemployment rate has changed from 5.6 percent in 2014 to 6.6 percent for the first half of 2015 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014; National Conference for State Legislators, 2015). These rates accentuate the difficult realities of employment for persons with disabilities. As of 2014, a total of 373,000 individuals aged 16-64 reported having a disability (Annual Disability Statistics Compendium, 2013 and 2014). Of those included in this group per the 2013 data, 64 percent are white, 27 percent are African American, 1 percent as Asian, 6 percent are Hispanic and the remainder are two or more races (Kaiser Family Foundation Population Distribution by Race & Ethnicity, 2015). In comparison, those served through SCVRD reflected the following: 48 percent white and 48 percent African American, .5 percent Native American, .4 percent Asian and 2.2 percent Hispanic.

#### Youth with Disabilities

Given the emphasis on services for students and youth in WIOA, Figure 20 highlights the number of youth with disabilities in transition. This data, from Cornell University, cites the prevalence of disability among non-institutionalized people ages 16 to 20 in South Carolina in 2013.

Figure 20 Ages 16 to 20	Any Disability	Visual	Hearing	Ambulatory	Cognitive	Self-Care	Independent Living
<b>Total Numbers Reported</b>	20,800	2,900	2,300	2,300	14,900	2,000	8,200
<b>Percentage</b>	6.3%	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%	4.5%	0.6%	2.5%

Figure 21 reflects the range of disabilities among working age people. This data, from Cornell University, cites the prevalence of disability among non-institutionalized people ages 21 to 64 in South Carolina in 2013.

Figure 21 Ages 21 to 64	Any Disability	Visual	Hearing	Ambulatory	Cognitive	Self-Care	Independent Living
<b>Total Numbers Reported</b>	352,200	68,700	67,100	190,800	138,200	64,100	118,900
<b>Percentage</b>	13%	2.5%	2.5%	7%	5.1%	2.4%	4.4%

#### Labor force Participation Rates by Disability Type

Figure 22 (data retrieved from Cornell University) illustrates employment rates of non-institutionalized working age people by disability status in South Carolina in 2013.

Figure 22 Ages 21 to 64 Employment by Disability Status	Any Disability	Visual	Hearing	Ambulatory	Cognitive	Self-Care	Independent Living
<b>Total Numbers Reported</b>	111,100	24,900	31,400	42,800	30,200	9,800	16,800
<b>Percentage</b>	31.5%	36.3%	46.8%	22.4%	21.9%	15.3%	14.2%

#### SSI/SSDI Recipients

According to the Social Security Administration 259,261 South Carolinians received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) in 2010. By 2013, the number of recipients had grown to 352,200 (Cornell EDI, 2013). This represents a 26 percent increase in just three years. The 352,200 South Carolinians who received SSI/SSDI in 2013 represented 11.6 percent of South Carolinians over the age of 18. In addition, updated information on SSI/SSDI beneficiaries in South Carolina indicates that there are 218,588 Title II disability beneficiaries and 109,569 Title XVI disability recipients as of FFY 2014. This reflects a substantial talent pool of individuals with barriers to employment. These individuals may not be reflected in the totals for unemployed as many of these individuals may not be actively seeking work or have never worked (SSA).

The provision of early intervention services is a major issue given the long application process associated with making eligibility determinations for both the SSI and SSDI programs. There will be a need for increased supported employment services to improve the employment outcomes of many SSI/SSDI recipients. As a total count, the number of SSI/SSDI recipients, who applied for services, increased to 2,256 by 2013. The trend reflects an increase of 7.3 percent from the previous three years.

## Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

During SFY 2015, SCVRD served 591 persons with a hearing disability. South Carolina has an incidence of hearing impairments of 4.6 percent of the population aged 18-64. The South Carolina Association of the Deaf (SCAD) has identified numerous resources for SCVRD counselor use since collaboration began in May of 2012. SCVRD has continued outreach and increased services to individuals that are deaf or hard of hearing.

## Emerging Disabilities

The increased need for services for individuals from identified emerging disabilities was identified in this needs assessment.

Based on the latest data available from the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, the prevalence of ASD continued to increase with one out of 88 children in South Carolina being diagnosed with autism. Based on census data, this rate of autism prevalence suggests that 7,000 to 7,500 transition-aged children (ages 16 to 25) in South Carolina experience autism.

Persons who are diagnosed with ASD often benefit from a stable and predictable work environment which can be accomplished with strong supported employment services.

Additionally, transition-aged youth with the most significant intellectual and multiple disabilities continue to need specific services from SCVRD. Persons with multiple disabilities face several challenges to employment including overall poorer health, less access to adequate health care and inactivity. Of the total individuals with disabilities age 24 or under actively receiving services during SFY 2015, 3,239 had a second disability. Providing vocational rehabilitation services to transition-aged youth with the most significant or multiple disabilities, including supported employment services, will improve their chance of productive, meaningful employment and will improve poverty and health outcomes (CDC, 2015).

Another area of identified need is response to the increase of traumatic brain injuries (TBI) through outreach and a focus on serving more individuals with brain injuries. This includes the general population as well as veterans from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The number of TBIs in the general population has increased slowly over the last decade according to the CDC; however, deaths from TBI have decreased. This decrease means an increase in the number of persons who might be returning to work and requiring vocational rehabilitation services.

The prevalence of traumatic brain injuries in the veteran population created a shift in the mission of the Defense and Veteran Brain Injury Center (DVBIC). DVBIC's efforts are focused on prevention, evaluation, and treatment. In South Carolina, SCVRD has been an active member of the Veterans Policy Academy since the summer of 2008 and continues to partner with the other agencies/entities to address the service needs of veterans with disabilities to ensure their return to the workforce.

According to the Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Statistical Center (2015), approximately 160 new cases of SCI will occur in South Carolina each year. Most of these will be males with an average age of 42 years old. Many of these injuries will be from falls or vehicle accidents. SCVRD is actively pursuing strategies to increase outreach to this group through collaboration with the Spinal Cord Injury Association of South Carolina and other interested groups.

## B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

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According to 2014 US Census Bureau estimates, South Carolina remains a state with a large minority population. The 2014 estimates reveal that among South Carolina residents, 63.9 percent are white, 27.8 percent are African American, and 5.2 percent are Latino or Hispanic. Individuals who are Native American (Catawba Tribe), Asian or dual race comprise the remainder of South Carolina's population. South Carolinians have a 14.2 percent rate of disability and Hispanics have the lowest rate at 5.4 percent.

A review of the RSA Minority Service Rate data shows that SCVRD exceeds the performance level for service to minorities. The ratio for minorities to non-minorities was .952 in 2014 and .967 through December 2015. These ratios indicate that minority populations are well represented among the individuals who use SCVRD services.

#### African American Population

In the 2014 estimates from the US Census Bureau, 27.8 percent of South Carolina's population identified themselves as African American. This number represents a 4.5 percent growth rate since the 2010 US Census. Of the 1.3 million African Americans living in South Carolina, 15.3 percent of persons aged 18 - 64 have a disability. This is a higher percentage than in the population at large where 14.2 percent of persons have a disability (ACS, 2014).

#### Native American Population

According to the 2014 ACS, 14,697 South Carolinians identified themselves as being "American Indian and Alaska Native." This number represents 15.7 percent growth since the 2010 US Census, but still less than 1 percent of the state's total population.

This population (American Indian and Alaska Native) has the highest incidence of disability among demographic groups in South Carolina with 24.4 percent identified with one disability. This is high even when compared with the higher national average of 16.7 percent of Native Americans age 18 to 64 with disabilities. In SFY 2014, 2015, and the first half of 2016, 1 percent of SCVRD applicants identified themselves as Native Americans.

Since the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) grant is not awarded in South Carolina, awareness of public VR services may be low for Native Americans in the state. Efforts to increase the number of Native Americans who seek and participate in SCVRD services will continue through outreach in communities where significant numbers of Native Americans live.

#### Latino/Hispanic Population

Individuals who identified themselves as Latino or Hispanic comprised 2.21 percent of SCVRD clients. An increase in the number of individuals with disabilities in Latino communities seeking vocational rehabilitation services is anticipated. This represents an opportunity to continue strategies to ensure this population is well served.

### C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

#### Older Adults

There are 640,000 persons aged 65 years and older, which account for 15.8 percent of South Carolina's population. This is slightly higher than the 14.5 percent of the population in the US. A study by the US Census Bureau (2014) estimated that approximately 40 percent of persons in this age group have at least one disability. In SFY 2015, SCVRD provided services to 365 persons aged 65 to 90 (

## Veterans

According to the ACS (2013) and BLS (2014), there are 391,660 veterans in South Carolina. The ACS estimates that 30.5 percent of Gulf War veterans have a service connected disability. As of 2014, the ACS estimated that 77.9 percent of these veterans were employed. The percentage of veterans with disabilities is consistent with the general population; however, the percentage of employed veterans is much higher. In 2013, the national employment rate for all veterans was 83 percent.

SCVRD provides services to veterans with disabilities; and, efforts to increase outreach to this population are ongoing. SCVRD has established relationships with local employers in all areas of the state, and collaboration with the Veterans Administration is essential to providing the greatest outreach for veterans with disabilities. SCVRD has assigned counselors to the state's seven VA specialty clinics and each area office has designated counselors to work with local VA offices for referrals.

## Rural Population

SCVRD has long established the maximum distance a client should have to travel to obtain SCVRD services is 50 miles. The department has expanded services to create full area offices in an additional 4 counties since the last needs assessment. This provides ample coverage statewide to all individuals with disabilities who wish to apply for services. However, according a publication of the South Carolina Office of Research and Statistics, "Urban and Rural Population in South Carolina," 39.5 percent of the population lives in rural areas, which ranks South Carolina 13th in the nation for the highest percentage of population living in rural areas. The rural nature of the state lends itself to minimal transit services. Seven out of the 46 counties do not have any type of public transportation. The lack of transportation creates an additional barrier for individuals to participate in vocational rehabilitation services and enter the work force. Therefore, SCVRD continues to develop partnerships and methods to ameliorate this barrier.

## Disability Types

SCVRD analyzed service provision to clients by disability categories to assess whether SCVRD successfully served all groups and to establish disability categories which call for more emphasis. The analysis compared three years (2009-2011) of SCVRD and national VR data which focused upon employment outcomes by disabilities (2011 is the last year RSA published agency report cards. The most recent comparative data available from RSA is from FFY 2013).

Consistent with previous findings, SCVRD increased outreach to those persons with physical and mental impairments. The data indicate that SCVRD employment outcome rates for persons with physical and mental impairments exceeded the national average while rates for persons with communicative and cognitive impairments show an opportunity for improvement. For this reason, SCVRD will continue to pursue improved outreach and service provision for these individuals with communicative and cognitive impairments.

In addition, SCVRD has identified populations that, in particular, require a strategic focus for enhancing services. These groups include individuals with diabetes, spinal cord injury, brain injury, multiple sclerosis, and cerebral palsy.

## D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

SCVRD actively participates in the Workforce Development system throughout the state. The Statewide Workforce Development Board, the SC Works system, and numerous cooperative arrangements with other state entities and programs enhance vocational rehabilitation efforts and improve employment outcomes throughout the state. With implementation of WIOA, the existing partnerships with core programs continue to be strengthened through unified planning and collaborative initiatives to meet both client/consumer/job seeker's needs, as well as the needs of business and industry.

SCDEW is the central point of contact responsible for workforce development and coordinates the State Workforce Development Board. The board oversees the state's efforts to develop a skilled, highly qualified work force to assist citizens to succeed in today's global economy. The board includes representatives from the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Corrections, Department of Social Services, Department of Commerce, legislators of the South Carolina Senate and House of

Representatives, local elected officials, WIOA core program partners and representatives of community-based organizations. It acts as a forum for collaboration, ensuring that vocational rehabilitation requirements are articulated as part of the statewide plan.

#### E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

To identify the needs for pre-ETS, data demonstrating the prevalence of disability among non-institutionalized people age 16 to 20 was gathered. In 2013, this total was 20,800. Data on the types of disability experienced by students served under IDEA was evaluated. This demonstrated that specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, and intellectual disability were the top three types of disabilities for students served under IDEA. In addition, data on the prevalence of autism for transition-aged youth (age 16 to 25) reflected this to represent an emerging disability. The CSNA also identified youth with most significant disabilities, including those with intellectual disability and multiple disabilities, as an emerging population requiring VR services.

Updated data collection requirements will allow for a more comprehensive view of services in the future to be provided to students, both VR clients and potentially eligible students that are receiving pre-employment transition services.

Figure 23 highlights the number of youth with disabilities in transition. Retrieved from Cornell University, this data table provides the prevalence of disability among non-institutionalized people ages 16 to 20 in South Carolina in 2013.

Figure 23 Ages 16 to 20	Any Disability	Visual	Hearing	Ambulatory	Cognitive	Self-Care	Independent Living
<b>Total Numbers Reported</b>	20,800	2,900	2,300	2,300	14,900	2,000	8,200
<b>Percentage</b>	6.3%	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%	4.5%	0.6%	2.5%

### Types of Disability Experienced by Students Served Under IDEA

As indicated above, data (such as that provided in Figure 24) on the types of disabilities for youth that are currently receiving services under IDEA and that can be expected to transition into postsecondary activities in the coming years are important for provision of pre-employment transition services, as well as supports to assist with success in training, education, and employment after high school.

Figure 24 provides the number of students in South Carolina ages 6 to 21 served under IDEA by types of disability for 2012 and 2013.

Figure 24	2012	2013
<b>All Disabilities</b>	88,904	89,202
<b>Specific Learning Disability</b>	41,491	41,100
<b>Intellectual Disability</b>	7,192	6,847
<b>Emotional Disturbance</b>	2,946	2,754
<b>Multiple Disability</b>	830	954
<b>Hearing Impairment</b>	1,046	1,011
<b>Orthopedic Impairment</b>	571	532
<b>Other Health Impairment</b>	11,081	11,635
<b>Visual Impairment</b>	414	421
<b>Autism</b>	4,481	5,082
<b>Deaf Blindness</b>	5	8
<b>Traumatic Brain Injury</b>	188	179
<b>Developmental Delay</b>	3,860	4,124

In 2014, the number of students age 6 to 21 served under IDEA part B in South Carolina was 90,129. For age 12 to 17, the total in South Carolina was 40,727 and for age 18 to 21 the state total was 5,113 (2016 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium).

According to the most recent school report card information from the SC Department of Education, in 2017 there were 27,306 students in public high schools in South Carolina that are identified as students with disabilities (students that have an Individualized Education Plan/IEP). (2017 SC Dept. of Education Report Cards, retrieved from SC Dept. of Ed website, Data Files for Researchers, High School: Data Files for Researchers, High]



In South Carolina, the graduation rate for school year 2012-2013 was 74 percent (NCES, 2015; Diplomas Count, 2015). Whites have the highest graduation rate at 80 percent, with African Americans at 70 percent, Hispanic/Latino 69 percent and Native Americans 67 percent. For transition-aged students with disabilities, the graduation rate was 39 percent (Ibid, 2015). South Carolina ranks 50<sup>th</sup> of 57 states and territories in the graduation rates of students with disabilities, according to a report prepared by the National Center for Special Education Accountability and Monitoring (2009).

The majority of transition-aged youth with disabilities served are minorities. Demographically, 42 percent were white, 55 percent were African American, .5 percent Native American, .5 percent Asian and .5 percent Pacific Islander. The remainders were two races or identified as Hispanic/Latino only.

Since only 39 percent of students with disabilities graduated high school with a standard diploma, and another 33 percent completed high school with a certificate of completion, it is essential that SCVRD continues to aggressively seek innovative methods to build strong partnerships with education providers and other community stakeholders. The provision of pre-employment transition services and services to youth with most significant disabilities (as defined in WIOA) is a significant area of focus for the agency.

## **2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND**

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SCVRD is unique among public VR programs in that it owns and operates its own Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs). The bulk of direct consumer services are delivered by SCVRD staff through its network of area offices, staff located at itinerant sites, and job readiness training centers (work training centers). Because of the service delivery structure established by SCVRD, there are needs related to the ongoing operation of its CRPs (area offices, work training centers, and comprehensive programs).

In response to the WIOA mandates for provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), SCVRD is expanding its approach to service delivery for students through contractual and pilot programs to ensure that all statutory and regulatory requirements are met, and that Pre-ETS are made available to all eligible and potentially eligible students that are interested in receiving those services.

### **Area Office Capital Projects - SFY 2020 - 2024**

The state of South Carolina requires that agencies submit for approval a five-year Comprehensive Permanent Improvement Plan (CPIP). This forms the basis for identifying needs for routine maintenance such as roofs and building repair. It also includes projects that are necessary to extend the life or expand use of existing structures, which are hereby included in this CSNA to establish the need for those projects.

#### **Parking Lot Repair**

The following SCVRD area office locations have repaving projects identified in the CPIP for SFY 2020 - 2024:

Anderson: Repair and resurface the existing parking lot and loading area. Subsurface investigations will be required to determine the level of deterioration of the existing paved areas. Exterior lighting will also be added to the parking areas for increased safety and security. The existing paved areas are deteriorated and are in need of repair and resurfacing since the facility is over 31 years old.

Marlboro: Repair and resurface the existing parking lot and loading area. This facility is over 26 years old, and the parking lot and loading areas are in need of repair and resurfacing. Subsurface investigations will

be required to determine the depth and extent of deterioration of the existing paving prior to resurfacing. Exterior lighting will also be added to the parking areas for increased safety and security.

Conway: Repair and resurface the existing parking lot and loading area. This facility is over 40 years old, and the parking lot and loading areas are in need of repair and resurfacing. Subsurface investigations will be required to determine the depth and extent of deterioration of the existing paving prior to resurfacing. Exterior lighting will also be added to the parking areas for increased safety and security.

Lexington: Repair and resurface the existing parking lot and loading area. This facility is over 37 years old, and the parking lot and loading areas are in need of repair and resurfacing. Subsurface investigations will be required to determine the depth and extent of deterioration of the existing paving prior to resurfacing. Exterior lighting will also be added to the parking areas for increased safety and security.

#### **Other CIP Projects Requiring Prior Approval - SFY 2020 - 2024**

At its offices and work training centers throughout the state, SCVRD has 77 HVAC systems that are more than 15 years old. All of these units use HCFC-22 or R142b refrigerants, which will no longer be produced or imported after 2020, and will be available only through stockpiled quantities. SCVRD will work with the State Energy Office in assessing all aging HVAC units and developing plans for replacement or repair. Replacement will also assist agency in achieving the State Energy Office's required 20% reduction in energy usage by 2020.

There is a need to replace an existing cooling tower due to wear on existing equipment in the SCVRD state office located in West Columbia.

#### **Oconee Pickens - Seneca office expansion**

Some years ago, the need to expand the SCVRD area office and work training center located in Seneca (referred to internally as the Oconee Pickens office) was identified. Oconee and Pickens counties are largely rural counties that are situated within the Upstate region of the state. According to the 2010 Census (American Fact Finder, P2, Urban and Rural Total Population 2010 Census Summary File 1), the population for Oconee County is 65% rural and Pickens County is 36% rural. By comparison, 19.2% of the U.S. population lives in rural areas (American Fact Finder, Urban and Rural Universe, Total Population 2010 Census Summary File 1). With the need to expand capacity for services to reach potential consumers in this rural setting and bring necessary training services to meet the needs of both consumers and business and industry for customized and demand-driven training, expansion of the existing facility in Seneca is necessary. The greater upstate region of South Carolina has identified industry sectors with significant skill gaps and workforce development needs that can be met through further development of customized and demand-driven training offered through the SCVRD Work Training Center in conjunction with industry and education partners. The region has experienced extensive growth in many industries such as advanced manufacturing and health care. In combination with interest from employers and legislators, the Oconee Pickens office has been identified as a site needing additional capacity (space) for service delivery staff. In response to WIOA as well as local and regional economic and workforce development needs, it has also been identified as a location requiring expansion of its work training center facility to provide customized and demand-driven training opportunities for consumers. With expansion of the work training center, there will be development of customized and demand-driven trainings that meet the needs of business and industry that have previously been limited due to space. Support for state funding for the project demonstrates the need and interest of the community.

Per the project plan submitted to the State, the following is a summary of the project:

Design and construct an 8200 square foot addition and 1407 square foot renovation to the existing Work Training Center and production space, clean work room, offices, and storage. This addition will be utilized for additional contract workspace used to provide consumers with job readiness training.

Replace the roof of the Oconee/Pickens VR Center Building, consisting of approximately 20,000 square feet of roof deck. Remove approximately 20,000 square feet of existing built up roof. Apply roof insulation and SBS smooth granular surfaced modified bitumen roofing system with associated flashings and metalwork. New roofing system to have a 20-year warranty. Removal and disposal of asbestos containing roofing and flashing materials may be required.

The roof is approximately 29 years old and has exceeded its life expectancy. The addition is needed to increase capacity to serve the growing consumer population in this region, as well as to increase the types of contract work necessary to train our consumers for competitive employment.

### **Establishment of Pre-ETS programs and expansion of service delivery models**

#### **CareerBOOST**

In 2016, the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) began a pilot program for delivery of Pre-ETS. Named CareerBOOST, this program expanded the capacity to delivery Pre-ETS through contractual agreements with service providers (Centers for Independent Living) that coordinate with the VR programs and local educational agencies (LEAs) to provide services on-site at middle and high schools across the state. Reviews of the program by LEAs and participants were positive during the first two years of operation, and internal evaluations of services and learning objectives indicated positive impact. SCVRD was in the process of collaborating with SCCB to increase funding for CareerBOOST at the time SCCB received technical assistance from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) that costs for services to students who were not blind or visually impaired should be covered by SCVRD. At that point, SCVRD initiated proper procurement procedures to take over the contracts and procure for expansion of the established programs. New contracts for CareerBOOST will be awarded in August 2019.

#### **Summer Pre-ETS Programs**

SCVRD has operated summer transition programs for students with disabilities in its Comprehensive Program facilities located in West Columbia and Lyman for many years. These programs continue to operate and provide students with an intensive, weeklong immersion in Pre-ETS activities. Students from across the state participate in these programs.

In 2019, SCVRD collaborated with the University of South Carolina (UofSC) to provide a summer career academy for students. Titled Power Up 2019, this pilot was designed as a contractual agreement for delivery of Pre-ETS for students from across the state in the format of a summer career academy located at UofSC. Expertise through UofSC was an essential element in the delivery of services for the pilot. Curriculum and service delivery planning templates are the property of SCVRD and are available to be used for replication of the services in additional locations. The response to the program has been overwhelmingly positive. SCVRD plans to utilize the materials and service delivery structure (schedule, logistics and activities) for scaling the services to reach more students.

South Carolina has five comprehensive postsecondary transition programs for students with intellectual disabilities. The need for counseling on opportunities for enrollment in postsecondary education for this population of students has been identified, and SCVRD intends to partner with the UofSC College of Education and Carolina LIFE program for provision of this Pre-ETS required activity on a pilot basis for

students in the Midlands region of the state. The services will be delivered and evaluated with the intent of scaling the contractual model of Pre-ETS service delivery across the state. Pre-ETS delivered in the format of summer camps focused on this student population are also being contracted currently in one location with a comprehensive postsecondary transition program at Coastal Carolina University, with plans to expand this as a model for delivering Pre-ETS and preparing students with intellectual disabilities for participation in postsecondary opportunities.

SCVRD has identified the need for outreach and expansion of service delivery through contractual services for students with an interest in STEM and IT fields. Partners at UofSC have begun exploration of a program to allow students to participate in Pre-ETS alongside project-based career exploration in these fields and have asked SCVRD to partner in development of these services. SCVRD anticipates development of contractual services to expand delivery of Pre-ETS through this partnership.

The need for enhanced outreach to students with autism has been identified and established. Through partnership with service providers that have expertise in Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) therapy, SCVRD will be contracting for Pre-ETS with vendors that will deliver the Pre-ETS required activities using ABA strategies. This method of service delivery for Pre-ETS to meet the needs of this population has the potential to become a national model in service delivery for students with autism.

SCVRD has traditionally delivered Pre-ETS through in-house staffing in partnership with LEAs and other partners involved in school-to-work transition services. In recognition of the many avenues for delivery of Pre-ETS, SCVRD is expanding its use of contractual services that are topically driven in order meet the needs of students for job exploration counseling. This includes job exploration services that are contracted with vendors for exposure to careers in culinary arts, forensic science, entrepreneurship, STEM fields, and many more.

#### **Holmesview Center and Palmetto Center**

SCVRD has historically owned and operated substance abuse recovery centers in two locations in the state. In 2016, the Holmesview Center located in the Greenville/Spartanburg area of the state was destroyed by fire. The need for such services has long been established, and plans are to rebuild the Holmesview Center in order to meet the continued need for substance abuse recovery services.

Below is the summary of the Holmesview Center project submitted to the State, proposed for SFY 2023/2024:

Construct a new drug and alcohol recovery center to replace the structure that was destroyed by fire in November 2016. The facility will include men's and women's dorm rooms, community room, day room, group therapy rooms, exercise area, computer classroom, offices, kitchen, dining and support areas.

Palmetto Center is located in Florence in the Pee Dee region of the state and continues to provide statewide access to recovery services. Due to aging infrastructure and safety concerns, the Palmetto Center was rebuilt. Demand is high for these services provided in conjunction with the full complement of VR services to prepare individuals for re-entry into employment or for job retention. Continued operation of Palmetto Center is expected.

In addition to using a recovery model, these centers provide services with a focus on vocational counseling, vocational assessment, and career preparation, which sets them apart from other recovery services.

## Changes to Information Technology Training Center Program

To meet the needs of consumers with disabilities, SCVRD has operated the Information Technology Training Center (ITTC) on its campus in West Columbia. The need for IT professionals has been identified as a skills gap requiring services to support workforce development efforts in this field. The ITTC model utilizes an intensive, residential or commuter schedule of training in several IT related fields. Curricula are developed and updated based on input from industry representatives through a Business Advisory Council. A full evaluation of the ITTC program has recently been completed and changes to the structure of that program are anticipated. As such, it may become necessary to repurpose or reconfigure use of the existing program buildings.

### 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 .

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Section (E) of the Statewide Needs Assessment outlines current data on prevalence of disability for youth and students with disabilities in South Carolina. It also describes recent totals of students served under IDEA Part B, the types of disabilities experienced and current totals of students in high school with an IEP. Additionally, information in section (E) of the Statewide Needs Assessment identifies the gap in graduation rates for students with disabilities, highlighting the need for effective transition career services and pre-employment transition services.

To meet the needs of students and youth with disabilities, SCVRD coordinates with school districts, partner organizations and service providers to complement and support a wide range of school-to-work transition services, including pre-employment transition services.

During SFY 2015, SCVRD received 4,451 transition-aged referrals (age 14 to 24 at application). During the year, 8,988 transition-aged youth were active clients with many of them still in high school or college. 1,966 transition-aged youth had successful employment outcomes during SFY 2015, which continues the upward trend that has occurred since SFY 2013 (48 percent increase).

As pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities expanded, SCVRD increased the number of students and youth referred and receiving services. In SFY 2017, 4,854 transition-aged youth were referred for services. This included 2,493 students with disabilities that were referred by the school system. A total of 8,523 students who were referred by the school system were active in the VR system during the year. Employment outcomes remained stable, with 1,888 successful employment outcomes for transition-aged youth, 1,052 of whom were referred by the school system.

Based on the past three years' data on services for students and youth, SCVRD estimates it will provide services, including but not limited to pre-employment transition services, to approximately 8,480 individuals that are initially referred by the school system.

Data collection for the new 911 Case Services Report will allow for better identification of students with disabilities and provision of pre-employment transition services. As the new data becomes available, projections and fiscal forecasting for the provision of pre-employment transition services will be updated.

Pre-ETS are delivered primarily through dedicated school-to-work transition counselors and transition coaches. There are transition counselors assigned to every public high school in the state, including at the state Department of Juvenile Justice facility. Counselors work collaboratively with local education agency

staff to identify students with disabilities. They are located on-site in the high schools and establish a schedule through which individualized, and group pre-employment transition services are provided. These services are made available to all students, including potentially eligible students. VR transition counselors enlist the assistance of teachers, guidance counselors, school nurses, school transition coordinators/specialists and school job coaches to ensure that students with many different types of disabilities are made aware of the available pre-ETS services. This includes students with IEPs, students with 504 plans, and students with disabilities that may not have either but would meet the requirements to have a 504 plan. Students with most significant disabilities that require supported employment services and more intensive supports are identified and referred to the transition coach for provision of pre-employment transition services. Workplace readiness training and work-based learning experiences are provided both in the schools and in the community, as well as through SCVRD's job readiness training centers located throughout the state. In many locations, schools transport students to the job readiness training centers during the school day. This training provides a foundation from which students can move on to community-based work experiences, internships, and other job exploration and work readiness training activities.

Transition counselors present information on pre-ETS at teacher trainings and administrative meetings, school assemblies, parent night events, and resource fairs. In addition, The Transition Alliance of South Carolina (TASC) is an interagency collaborative whose mission is to increase successful student postsecondary transition outcomes through active interagency collaboration. Their efforts help build capacity for transition programming at the state level, while also serving as a bridge to local communities. Through their support, 59 local interagency transition teams have been established. These teams are another avenue for making stakeholders aware of the availability of pre-ETS.

Information on pre-ETS and transition services for youth is located on the SCVRD website.

TASC is a robust state-level interagency collaborative that works in support of increasing positive postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities. It has multiple stakeholder agencies and organizations, and supports local level interagency teams through training, technical assistance, and strategic planning.

The department continues to coordinate the development of designated staff with emerging initiatives by the SCDE and the 81 local school districts (LEAs) under IDEA and state school-to-work transition efforts. Transition training efforts this year included the following: a two-day transition summer series was conducted for transition staff that included presentations and training on pre-employment transition services, vocational assessment, use of ACT and WorkKeys® assessments, referral development, best practices, documentation and use of school records, work experiences, using O\*Net, and postsecondary training. Selected transition staff participated in a session on active training techniques and self-determination. Over 40 transition staff participated in an annual interagency transition conference, focused on local interagency planning and content sessions focused on effective service delivery for students with disabilities. Youth leaders also participated in the conference. Disability-specific modules on learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorders are available for all staff via LOTIS, the agency's online training site. In addition to the disability-specific training modules, a module on transition basics, with a focus on evidence-based practices and quality service delivery, has been developed and is delivered in person to all SCVRD transition personnel. This has become the standard training for all new staff working with transition students. The agency continues to work collaboratively with the SCDE to provide training as a component of their State Personnel Development Grant - Project

Gateway. In addition, selected transition staff participate in training on transition assessment and facilitating work experiences offered through the SCDE's annual research to practice training.

The TSS/TSC collaborative approach to the provision of transition services was continued this year in five schools. This approach designates a transition services specialist - who is a school district employee - or a designated VR counselor, to act as a liaison to refer students to the department and assist these students in participating in transition activities and work-based experiences in the community. This outreach effort has improved access to VR services for students with disabilities in the areas in which the program is operating and has increased our collaborative efforts with the local school district.

The department continues to designate a liaison counselor who provides pre-employment transition services to each public secondary school throughout the state. During this past year state office and local staff have provided in-service training to school staff, parents, and students regarding service availability. Also, cooperative agreements with DJJ and the Will Lou Gray Opportunity School afford the ability to work collaboratively to serve at-risk youth prior to their exit from high school.

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## K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

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### 1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES;

Number of individuals in the state eligible for SCVRD services = 29,398. Source: RSA 113 and internal count of supported employment services

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### 2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

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#### A. THE VR PROGRAM;

Title I, Part B (RSA 113 A15+C1+C2 round to nearest 1000) = 29,000 (SCVRD)

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#### B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

Title VI, Part B = 250 (SCVRD)

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### C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION;

SCVRD is not under an order of selection.

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### 3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

SCVRD is not under an order of selection.

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### 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.

\$33,775,615 (SCVRD)

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## 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.

SCVRD is an independent commission.

The SCVRD Strategic Planning Template below outlines the goals, strategies and objectives developed for the agency. These goals were established based on the findings of the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment and are updated annually in conjunction with the agency's strategic planning efforts as well as state-specific reporting requirements. Each goal is tied to a defined strategy and set of objectives, designed to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant/realistic, and timely. These are long-term planning goals, strategies, and objectives that include, at minimum, annual assessment of results as well as adjustment and revision based on the needs of the state and further implementation of WIOA.

Figure 27: Strategic Planning Template

Type	Goal	Strategy	Objective	Associated Enterprise Objective	Description
<b>G</b>	<b>1</b>	.	.	Government and Citizens	Successful employment outcomes for South Carolinians with disabilities through specialized, individualized services.
<b>S</b>	.	1.1	.	.	Improve the quality of employment outcomes for eligible individuals with disabilities.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.1.1	.	Support continuous improvement within Program Integrity: Productivity, Compliance Assurance and Customer Service
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.1.2	.	Increase services to underserved and emerging disability populations.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.1.3	.	Strengthen the workforce pipeline through matching client strengths and abilities with community employment results.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.1.4	.	Demonstrate effectiveness in national comparative data for performance measures.
<b>S</b>	.	1.2	.	.	Enhance school-to-work transition services.



<b>O</b>	.	.	1.2.1	.	Maximize relationships with education officials in all SC school districts to support development of education and career pathways.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.2.2	.	Improve services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders and intellectual/developmental disabilities.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.2.3	.	Enhance services for at-risk youth with disabilities.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.2.4	.	Expose students with disabilities to careers in science, technology, engineering and math through High School/High Tech programs.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.2.5	.	Provide pre-employment transition services to prepare students for postsecondary outcomes.
<b>S</b>	.	1.3	.	.	Enhance job-driven vocational training programs.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.3.1	.	Develop job-readiness skills through work training center activities, demand-driven skills training, and on-the-job supports.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.3.2	.	Equip clients for job search through resume development, interviewing skills, other “soft” skills and disability-related classes.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.3.3	.	Develop customized training opportunities that align with employer-identified skill sets.
<b>G</b>	2	.	.	Government and Citizens	We will be a team of highly qualified professionals who have the commitment, accountability, and opportunity to excel.
<b>S</b>	.	2.1	.	.	Provide training to equip staff to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services.
<b>O</b>	.	.	2.1.1	.	Develop training based on needs assessment in accordance with the Unified State Plan.
<b>O</b>	.	.	2.1.2	.	Enhance job-specific training for specialized areas of agency operations.

<b>S</b>	.	2.2	.	.	Foster opportunities for professional growth and the enhancement of future leadership.
<b>O</b>	.	.	2.2.1	.	Provide a professional development and leadership program.
<b>O</b>	.	.	2.2.2	.	Maintain a working environment that fosters measurable increases in job satisfaction and rewards accomplishment.
<b>O</b>	.	.	2.2.3	.	Structure a work environment that promotes employee accountability for performance and ethical standards.
<b>G</b>	3	.	.	Government and Citizens	Accountability to taxpayers through efficient and effective use of resources entrusted to us.
<b>S</b>	.	3.1	.	.	Successful outcomes for clients and claimants using resources efficiently.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.1.1	.	High return on investment for clients through successful employment outcomes.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.1.2	.	Demonstrate cost-effectiveness that compares favorably with national/regional peers.
<b>S</b>	.	3.2	.	.	Continued evaluation and improvement of key processes.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.2.1	.	Conversion to electronic case management system encompassing time management and compliance aids with statewide access.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.2.2	.	Expansion and enhancement of quality assurance and program evaluation to support data-driven decision-making and evaluation methods.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.2.3	.	Evaluation and development of fiscal and programmatic joint processes.
<b>S</b>	.	3.3	.	.	Ensure safety and adequacy of infrastructure.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.3.1	.	I.T. and systems security.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.3.2	.	Promote a safe environment for staff and clients, resulting in minimal rates of injury.

<b>G</b>	4	.	.	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development	Maintain a dynamic network of partnerships to shape a better future for all stakeholders.
<b>S</b>	.	4.1	.	.	Increase collaboration with other state agencies and community organizations.
<b>O</b>	.	.	4.1.1	.	Inform stakeholders of services and get their feedback on VR performance in meeting needs.
<b>O</b>	.	.	4.1.2	.	Provide employment preparations and supports for people with disabilities referred by partner agencies and organizations.
<b>O</b>	.	.	4.1.3	.	Build relationships that encourage complementary interagency collaboration.
<b>S</b>	.	4.2	.	.	Mutually beneficial partnerships with business and industry that provide employment/training opportunities for clients.
<b>O</b>	.	.	4.2.1	.	Build and maintain VR Business Partnership Network and collaborate with business and industry associations.
<b>O</b>	.	.	4.2.2	.	Actively use business advisory councils for guidance on employment standards and training curricula.
<b>O</b>	.	.	4.2.3	.	Advanced solutions for job matching through Career Connect and Universal Business Database.
<b>O</b>	.	.	4.2.4	.	Provide outsource opportunities that meet clients' job readiness training needs and local labor market and industry needs.

The Performance Measurement Template outlines existing measures of performance. This section will be updated in the future as the performance accountability measures required under section 116 of WIOA are implemented.

Figure 28: Performance Measurement Template

Item	Performance Measure	Last Value	Current Target Value	Current Value	Future Target Value	Time Applicable	Associated
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							Objectives
1	Successful Employment Outcomes	6,548	7,000	7,005	7,050	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4
2	Rehabilitations per 100,000 population; national and regional ranking	136 4 <sup>th</sup> in US (FFY 14)	Top 5 in US	137 3 <sup>rd</sup> in US (FFY 15)	Top 5 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 3.1.1
3	Percentage of program participants who are employed during 2 <sup>nd</sup> qtr. after exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	Baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1- June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1
4	Percentage of program participants who are employed during 4 <sup>th</sup> qtr. after exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	Baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1
5	Median earnings of program participants who are employed during 2nd quarter after exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1
6	Percentage of program participants obtaining recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.4, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5

	during participation or within one year of exit						
<b>7</b>	Percentage of participants who are in education or training program achieving measurable skills gains	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 1.2.1., 1.3.1, 4.2.2
<b>8</b>	Effectiveness in serving employers	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4
<b>9</b>	Change in number of successful employment outcomes from previous federal fiscal year	Increase of 200	Increase of at least 1 (national standard)	Increase of 99	Increase of at least 1 (national standard)	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>10</b>	Percentage of clients with employment outcomes	60.29%	55.8% (national standard)	59.75%	55.80%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>11</b>	Percentage of clients with employment outcomes who were competitively employed	98.87%	72.6% (national standard)	99.84%	72.60%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>12</b>	Percentage of competitively employed clients having significant disabilities	94.95%	62.54% (national standard)	96.03%	62.54%	FFY 2016	1.1.4

<b>13</b>	Ratio of rehabilitated client wages compared to state average wage	0.56	0.52 (national standard)	0.58	0.52	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>14</b>	Difference in percentage of clients self-supporting after services compared with before	68.63%	53% (national standard)	65.90%	53%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>15</b>	Service rate for minority clients as ratio to non-minority	0.99	0.8 (national standard)	0.98	0.8	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>16</b>	Program Integrity Customer Service	92.45% (decrease of 3.84%)	Improvement	97.44% (increase of 4.99%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 4.1.1, 4.2.1
<b>17</b>	Program Integrity Compliance Assurance	92.84% (decrease of 4.39%)	Improvement	93.06% (increase of 0.22%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 3.2.2
<b>18</b>	Program Integrity Productivity	90.34%	100%	100.09% (increase of 9.75%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4
<b>19</b>	Average Total Cost Per Client Served (lower=better); national and regional ranking	\$2,651 updated national data unavailable	Top 10 in US	\$2,839 updated national data unavailable	Top 10 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	3.1.1, 3.1.2
<b>20</b>	Average Total Cost Per Rehabilitation (lower=better); national and regional ranking	\$14,091 updated national data unavailable	Top 5 in US	\$14,699 updated national data unavailable	Top 5 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	3.1.1, 3.1.2

21	Amount each successfully rehabilitated client will repay in taxes for each dollar spent on his/her rehabilitation	\$3.96 (decreased by \$0.58)	Increase	\$4.82 (increased by \$0.86)	Increase	July 1 - June 30	3.1.1
22	Number of years for each rehabilitated client to repay cost of rehabilitation	5.21 (increased by 0.7)	Decrease	4.06 (decreased by 1.15)	Decrease	July - June 30	3.1.1
23	Reimbursement from Social Security Administration for SCVRD Job Placements	\$522,227 (decrease of \$491,317)	10% increase	\$826,938 (increase of \$304,711)	Increase	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	1.1.3, 3.1.1
24	New Applicants Referred to SCVRD	15,282 (increase of 502)	Increase and representative of needs	16,190 (increase of 908)	Increase and representative of needs	July 1 - June 30	1.1.2, 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3
25	Successfully rehabilitated clients working 35+ hours per week exceeds national and regional VR averages	63.35% SCVRD 46.90% US 49.74% Southeast	Higher percentage than SE and US	65.7% (comparative data not available)	higher percentage than SE and US	FFY 2016	1.1.3
26	Successfully rehabilitated clients (transition-aged) working 35+ hours per week exceeds national and regional VR averages	56.36% SCVRD 40.64% US 43.09% Southeast	higher percentage than SE and US	57.8% (comparative data not available)	higher percentage than SE and US	FFY 2016	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4
27	Increase successful employment	SFY2016: 1,760	Increase	1,888	Increase	July 1 - June 30	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3,

	outcomes for transition-age clients (14-24)	SFY2015: 1,969					1.2.4, 1.2.5
28	Percentage of individuals served by agency who are in transition age range (14-24)	37.4% SFY 2016	'+/-' 5% of US avg. (35.12% in FFY 2014 last available data)	37.8%	'+/-' 5% of US avg. (35.12% in FFY 2014 last available data)	July 1 - June 30	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5
29	Student participation in Disability Mentoring Day activities	994 (decrease of 124)	Increase	1,168 (increase of 174)	Increase	Oct. 1 - Oct. 31	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5
30	Positive outcomes in employee well-being surveys	3.92 on scale of 5.0 (decrease of 0.02)	Improvement	4.08* on scale of 5.0 (increase of 0.16) * * Measure shown in "Last Value" was composite average of offices. "Current Value" survey was average of position types.	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	2.2.2, 2.2.1
31	Level of Goal Attainment Toward Equal Employment Opportunity	94.8% (10th highest among SC state agencies)	100%	95.8% (Tied for 9th highest among SC state agencies)	100%	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	2.2.2
32	Agency staff turnover rates compare favorably with average for SC state government and average for government	13.92% SCVRD; 17.42% SC state govt.; 18.7% nationally	Favorable comparative rate	13.08% SCVRD; 18.12% SC state govt.; 18.2% nationally	Favorable comparative rate	SCVRD July 1 - June 30; most recent available data for comparative	2.2.2



	entities nationally						
<b>33</b>	Training events for staff (face-to-face, webinars, videoconference, online)	613	According to need	547	According to need	July 1 - June 30	2.2.1, 2.2.2
<b>34</b>	Professional Development and Leadership Program completion	41 (prof. dev.) 31 (leadership)	35 (prof. dev.) 30 (leadership)	32 (prof. dev.) 32 (leadership)	Not applicable. PDLP discontinued and new Leadership Development Program in process	July 1 - June 30	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.3
<b>35</b>	Lower the Experience Modifier (EMOD) through excellence in safety precautions	1.09	Lower	1.05	Lower	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2
<b>36</b>	Lower Worker's Compensation premiums	\$768,776	Reduction	\$790,426	Reduction	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2
<b>37</b>	Work Training Center client injury rate lower than Goods Producing Industries rate (BLS)	1% SCVRD 3.6% BLS	lower comparative rate	.009% SCVRD 3.4% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 3.1.2
<b>38</b>	Employee injury rate lower than State Government Employees rate (BLS)	1.7% SCVRD 3.8% BLS	Lower comparative rate	1.6% SCVRD 3.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 2.2.2

39	Work Training Center client lost time to injury rate lower than Service Providing Industries rate (BLS)	.0008% SCVRD 1.1% BLS	Lower comparative rate	.001% SCVRD 1.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2
40	Employee lost time to injury rate lower than Service Providing Industries rate (BLS)	.003% SCVRD 1.1% BLS	Lower comparative rate	.005 SCVRD 1.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 2.2.2
41	Growth in Business Partnership Network	649 members (increase of 298)	Increase	786 members (increase of 137)	Increase	July 1 - June 30	4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.4
45	Number of client complaints to Client Relations office	49 (decrease of 37)	Lower	85	10% reduction	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 2.2.3, 3.2.2
46	Percentage of client complaints resolved without need for formal administrative review	100%	100%	99%	100%	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 2.2.3, 3.2.2
47	Single Audit results	1 finding	0 findings	0 findings	0 findings	July 1 - June 30, 2016	3.1.2, 3.2.3
48	Agreed Upon Procedures audit results	1 finding	0 findings	0 findings	0 findings	July 1 - June 30, 2016	3.1.2, 3.2.3
49	Administrative Costs as a percentage of total operating expenditures	5.66%	< 7%	7.54%	< 7%	July 1 - June 30	3.1.2

50	Increase in Cooperative Agreements associated with strategic goals	323	N/A	342	N/A	July 1 - June 30	4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3
51	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with their experience during application stage	New measure	New measure	82.21%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
52	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with their overall experience with the agency at stage of annual review of their Individual Plan for Employment	New measure	New measure	77.98%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
53	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with their overall experience with the agency at stage of having received job readiness training and job preparedness classes	New measure	New measure	76.07%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
54	Percentage of clients surveyed one year after successful employment outcome who say they were satisfied with services	98%	Improvement	97.7%	Improvement	Cases closed during SFY 2016	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3

	received from SCVRD						
55	Percentage of clients surveyed one year after successful employment outcome who say they would recommend VR to others	98.8%	Improvement	98%	Improvement	Cases closed during SFY 2016	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3

\*Performance Measures 42 - 44 pertain to the Disability Determination Services and are not included in this chart.

## 2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.

Strategic Planning Template - Figure 27

Type	Goal	Strategy	Objective	Associated Enterprise Objective	Description
G	1	.	.	Government and Citizens	Successful employment outcomes for South Carolinians with disabilities through specialized, individualized services.
S	.	1.1	.	.	Improve the quality of employment outcomes for eligible individuals with disabilities.
O	.	.	1.1.1	.	Support continuous improvement within Program Integrity: Productivity, Compliance Assurance and Customer Service
O	.	.	1.1.2	.	Increase services to underserved and emerging disability populations.
O	.	.	1.1.3	.	Strengthen the workforce pipeline through matching client strengths and abilities with community employment results.
O	.	.	1.1.4	.	Demonstrate effectiveness in national comparative data for performance measures.
S	.	1.2	.	.	Enhance school-to-work transition services.

<b>O</b>	.	.	1.2.1	.	Maximize relationships with education officials in all SC school districts to support development of education and career pathways.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.2.2	.	Improve services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders and intellectual/developmental disabilities.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.2.3	.	Enhance services for at-risk youth with disabilities.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.2.4	.	Expose students with disabilities to careers in science, technology, engineering and math through High School/High Tech programs.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.2.5	.	Provide pre-employment transition services to prepare students for postsecondary outcomes.
<b>S</b>	.	1.3	.	.	Enhance job-driven vocational training programs.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.3.1	.	Develop job-readiness skills through work training center activities, demand-driven skills training, and on-the-job supports.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.3.2	.	Equip clients for job search through resume development, interviewing skills, other “soft” skills and disability-related classes.
<b>O</b>	.	.	1.3.3	.	Develop customized training opportunities that align with employer-identified skill sets.
<b>G</b>	2	.	.	Government and Citizens	We will be a team of highly qualified professionals who have the commitment, accountability, and opportunity to excel.
<b>S</b>	.	2.1	.	.	Provide training to equip staff to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services.
<b>O</b>	.	.	2.1.1	.	Develop training based on needs assessment in accordance with the Unified State Plan.
<b>O</b>	.	.	2.1.2	.	Enhance job-specific training for specialized areas of agency operations.
<b>S</b>	.	2.2	.	.	Foster opportunities for professional growth and the enhancement of future leadership.
<b>O</b>	.	.	2.2.1	.	Provide a professional development and leadership program.

<b>O</b>	.	.	2.2.2	.	Maintain a working environment that fosters measurable increases in job satisfaction and rewards accomplishment.
<b>O</b>	.	.	2.2.3	.	Structure a work environment that promotes employee accountability for performance and ethical standards.
<b>G</b>	3	.	.	Government and Citizens	Accountability to taxpayers through efficient and effective use of resources entrusted to us.
<b>S</b>	.	3.1	.	.	Successful outcomes for clients and claimants using resources efficiently.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.1.1	.	High return on investment for clients through successful employment outcomes.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.1.2	.	Demonstrate cost-effectiveness that compares favorably with national/regional peers.
<b>S</b>	.	3.2	.	.	Continued evaluation and improvement of key processes.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.2.1	.	Conversion to electronic case management system encompassing time management and compliance aids with statewide access.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.2.2	.	Expansion and enhancement of quality assurance and program evaluation to support data-driven decision-making and evaluation methods.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.2.3	.	Evaluation and development of fiscal and programmatic joint processes.
<b>S</b>	.	3.3	.	.	Ensure safety and adequacy of infrastructure.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.3.1	.	I.T. and systems security.
<b>O</b>	.	.	3.3.2	.	Promote a safe environment for staff and clients, resulting in minimal rates of injury.
<b>G</b>	4	.	.	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development	Maintain a dynamic network of partnerships to shape a better future for all stakeholders.
<b>S</b>	.	4.1	.	.	Increase collaboration with other state agencies and community organizations.
<b>O</b>	.	.	4.1.1	.	Inform stakeholders of services and get their feedback on VR performance in meeting needs.

O	.	.	4.1.2	.	Provide employment preparations and supports for people with disabilities referred by partner agencies and organizations.
O	.	.	4.1.3	.	Build relationships that encourage complementary interagency collaboration.
S	.	4.2	.	.	Mutually beneficial partnerships with business and industry that provide employment/training opportunities for clients.
O	.	.	4.2.1	.	Build and maintain VR Business Partnership Network and collaborate with business and industry associations.
O	.	.	4.2.2	.	Actively use business advisory councils for guidance on employment standards and training curricula.
O	.	.	4.2.3	.	Advanced solutions for job matching through Career Connect and Universal Business Database.
O	.	.	4.2.4	.	Provide outsource opportunities that meet clients' job readiness training needs and local labor market and industry needs.

### 3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

SCVRD is an independent commission.

The SCVRD Strategic Planning Template outlines the goals, strategies and objectives developed for the agency. These goals were established based on the findings of the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment, and are updated annually in conjunction with the agency's strategic planning efforts as well as state-specific reporting requirements. Each goal is tied to a defined strategy and set of objectives, designed to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant/realistic and timely. These are long-term planning goals, strategies and objectives that include, at minimum, annual assessment of results as well as adjustment and revision based on needs of the state and further implementation of WIOA.

#### A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

The SCVRD Strategic Planning Template outlines the goals, strategies and objectives developed for the agency. These goals were established based on the findings of the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment, and are updated annually in conjunction with the agency's strategic planning efforts as well as state-specific reporting requirements. Each goal is tied to a defined strategy and set of objectives, designed to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant/realistic and timely. These are long-term planning goals, strategies and objectives that include, at minimum, annual assessment of results as well as adjustment and revision based on needs of the state and further implementation of WIOA.

In relation to the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state as described in section (J)(2), the state goals and priorities that are pertinent to the Oconee Pickens - Seneca office expansion include the following:

- Goal 1: Successful employment outcomes for South Carolinians with disabilities through specialized, individualized services.
- Strategy 1.3: Enhance job-driven vocational training programs.

This strategy and associated objectives 1.3.1 (Develop job-readiness skills through work training center activities, demand-driven skills training, and on-the-job supports), 1.3.2 (Equip consumers for job search through resume development, interviewing skills, other “soft” skills and disability-related classes), and 1.3.3 (Develop customized training opportunities that align with employer-identified skill sets) will continue.

#### B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

The SCVRD Strategic Planning Template outlines the goals, strategies and objectives developed for the agency. These goals were established based on the findings of the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment, and are updated annually in conjunction with the agency’s strategic planning efforts as well as state-specific reporting requirements. Each goal is tied to a defined strategy and set of objectives, designed to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant/realistic and timely. These are long-term planning goals, strategies and objectives that include, at minimum, annual assessment of results as well as adjustment and revision based on needs of the state and further implementation of WIOA.

The Performance Measurement Template outlines exiting measure of performance. This section will be updated in the future as the performance accountability measures required under section 116 of WIOA are implemented.

Item	Performance Measure	Last Value	Current Target Value	Current Value	Future Target Value	Time Applicable	Associated Objectives
1	Successful Employment Outcomes	6,548	7,000	7,005	7,050	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4
2	Rehabilitations per 100,000 population; national and regional ranking	136 4 <sup>th</sup> in US (FFY 14)	Top 5 in US	137 3 <sup>rd</sup> in US (FFY 15)	Top 5 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 3.1.1



<b>3</b>	Percentage of program participants who are employed during 2 <sup>nd</sup> qtr. after exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	Baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1- June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1
<b>4</b>	Percentage of program participants who are employed during 4 <sup>th</sup> qtr. after exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	Baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1
<b>5</b>	Median earnings of program participants who are employed during 2nd quarter after exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1
<b>6</b>	Percentage of program participants obtaining recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma during participation or within one year of exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.4, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5
<b>7</b>	Percentage of participants who are in education or training program achieving measurable skills gains	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 1.2.1., 1.3.1, 4.2.2

<b>8</b>	Effectiveness in serving employers	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4
<b>9</b>	Change in number of successful employment outcomes from previous federal fiscal year	Increase of 200	Increase of at least 1 (national standard)	Increase of 99	Increase of at least 1 (national standard)	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>10</b>	Percentage of clients with employment outcomes	60.29%	55.8% (national standard)	59.75%	55.80%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>11</b>	Percentage of clients with employment outcomes who were competitively employed	98.87%	72.6% (national standard)	99.84%	72.60%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>12</b>	Percentage of competitively employed clients having significant disabilities	94.95%	62.54% (national standard)	96.03%	62.54%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>13</b>	Ratio of rehabilitated client wages compared to state average wage	0.56	0.52 (national standard)	0.58	0.52	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>14</b>	Difference in percentage of clients self-supporting after services compared with before	68.63%	53% (national standard)	65.90%	53%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>15</b>	Service rate for minority clients	0.99	0.8 (national standard)	0.98	0.8	FFY 2016	1.1.4

	as ratio to non-minority						
<b>16</b>	Program Integrity Customer Service	92.45% (decrease of 3.84%)	Improvement	97.44% (increase of 4.99%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 4.1.1, 4.2.1
<b>17</b>	Program Integrity Compliance Assurance	92.84% (decrease of 4.39%)	Improvement	93.06% (increase of 0.22%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 3.2.2
<b>18</b>	Program Integrity Productivity	90.34%	100%	100.09% (increase of 9.75%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4
<b>19</b>	Average Total Cost Per Client Served (lower=better); national and regional ranking	\$2,651 updated national data unavailable	Top 10 in US	\$2,839 updated national data unavailable	Top 10 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	3.1.1, 3.1.2
<b>20</b>	Average Total Cost Per Rehabilitation (lower=better); national and regional ranking	\$14,091 updated national data unavailable	Top 5 in US	\$14,699 updated national data unavailable	Top 5 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	3.1.1, 3.1.2
<b>21</b>	Amount each successfully rehabilitated client will repay in taxes for each dollar spent on his/her rehabilitation	\$3.96 (decreased by \$0.58)	Increase	\$4.82 (increased by \$0.86)	Increase	July 1 - June 30	3.1.1
<b>22</b>	Number of years for each rehabilitated client to repay cost of rehabilitation	5.21 (increased by 0.7)	Decrease	4.06 (decreased by 1.15)	Decrease	July - June 30	3.1.1

23	Reimbursement from Social Security Administration for SCVRD Job Placements	\$522,227 (decrease of \$491,317)	10% increase	\$826,938 (increase of \$304,711)	Increase	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	1.1.3, 3.1.1
24	New Applicants Referred to SCVRD	15,282 (increase of 502)	Increase and representative of needs	16,190 (increase of 908)	Increase and representative of needs	July 1 - June 30	1.1.2, 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3
25	Successfully rehabilitated clients working 35+ hours per week exceeds national and regional VR averages	63.35% SCVRD 46.90% US 49.74% Southeast	Higher percentage than SE and US	65.7% (comparative data not available)	higher percentage than SE and US	FFY 2016	1.1.3
26	Successfully rehabilitated clients (transition-aged) working 35+ hours per week exceeds national and regional VR averages	56.36% SCVRD 40.64% US 43.09% Southeast	higher percentage than SE and US	57.8% (comparative data not available)	higher percentage than SE and US	FFY 2016	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4
27	Increase successful employment outcomes for transition-age clients (14-24)	SFY2016: 1,760 SFY2015: 1,969	Increase	1,888	Increase	July 1 - June 30	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5
28	Percentage of individuals served by agency who are in transition age range (14-24)	37.4% SFY 2016	'+/-' 5% of US avg. (35.12% in FFY 2014 last available data)	37.8%	'+/-' 5% of US avg. (35.12% in FFY 2014 last available data)	July 1 - June 30	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5
29	Student participation in Disability Mentoring Day activities	994 (decrease of 124)	Increase	1,168 (increase of 174)	Increase	Oct. 1 - Oct. 31	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5

<b>30</b>	Positive outcomes in employee well-being surveys	3.92 on scale of 5.0 (decrease of 0.02)	Improvement	4.08* on scale of 5.0 (increase of 0.16) * * Measure shown in "Last Value" was composite average of offices. "Current Value" survey was average of position types.	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	2.2.2, 2.2.1
<b>31</b>	Level of Goal Attainment Toward Equal Employment Opportunity	94.8% (10th highest among SC state agencies)	100%	95.8% (Tied for 9th highest among SC state agencies)	100%	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	2.2.2
<b>32</b>	Agency staff turnover rates compare favorably with average for SC state government and average for government entities nationally	13.92% SCVRD; 17.42% SC state govt.; 18.7% nationally	Favorable comparative rate	13.08% SCVRD; 18.12% SC state govt.; 18.2% nationally	Favorable comparative rate	SCVRD July 1 - June 30; most recent available data for comparative	2.2.2
<b>33</b>	Training events for staff (face-to-face, webinars, videoconference, online)	613	According to need	547	According to need	July 1 - June 30	2.2.1, 2.2.2
<b>34</b>	Professional Development and Leadership Program completion	41 (prof. dev.) 31 (leadership)	35 (prof. dev.) 30 (leadership)	32 (prof. dev.) 32 (leadership)	Not applicable. PDLP discontinued and new Leadership Development	July 1 - June 30	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.3

					Program in process		
35	Lower the Experience Modifier (EMOD) through excellence in safety precautions	1.09	Lower	1.05	Lower	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2
36	Lower Worker's Compensation premiums	\$768,776	Reduction	\$790,426	Reduction	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2
37	Work Training Center client injury rate lower than Goods Producing Industries rate (BLS)	1% SCVRD 3.6% BLS	lower comparative rate	.009% SCVRD 3.4% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 3.1.2
38	Employee injury rate lower than State Government Employees rate (BLS)	1.7% SCVRD 3.8% BLS	Lower comparative rate	1.6% SCVRD 3.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 2.2.2
39	Work Training Center client lost time to injury rate lower than Service Providing Industries rate (BLS)	.0008% SCVRD 1.1% BLS	Lower comparative rate	.001% SCVRD 1.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2
40	Employee lost time to injury rate lower than Service Providing Industries rate (BLS)	.003% SCVRD 1.1% BLS	Lower comparative rate	.005 SCVRD 1.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 2.2.2

41	Growth in Business Partnership Network	649 members (increase of 298)	Increase	786 members (increase of 137)	Increase	July 1 - June 30	4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.4
45	Number of client complaints to Client Relations office	49 (decrease of 37)	Lower	85	10% reduction	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 2.2.3, 3.2.2
46	Percentage of client complaints resolved without need for formal administrative review	100%	100%	99%	100%	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 2.2.3, 3.2.2
47	Single Audit results	1 finding	0 findings	0 findings	0 findings	July 1 - June 30, 2016	3.1.2, 3.2.3
48	Agreed Upon Procedures audit results	1 finding	0 findings	0 findings	0 findings	July 1 - June 30, 2016	3.1.2, 3.2.3
49	Administrative Costs as a percentage of total operating expenditures	5.66%	< 7%	7.54%	< 7%	July 1 - June 30	3.1.2
50	Increase in Cooperative Agreements associated with strategic goals	323	N/A	342	N/A	July 1 - June 30	4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3
51	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with their experience during application stage	New measure	New measure	82.21%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3

52	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with their overall experience with the agency at stage of annual review of their Individual Plan for Employment	New measure	New measure	77.98%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
53	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with their overall experience with the agency at stage of having received job readiness training and job preparedness classes	New measure	New measure	76.07%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
54	Percentage of clients surveyed one year after successful employment outcome who say they were satisfied with services received from SCVRD	98%	Improvement	97.7%	Improvement	Cases closed during SFY 2016	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
55	Percentage of clients surveyed one year after successful employment outcome who say they would recommend VR to others	98.8%	Improvement	98%	Improvement	Cases closed during SFY 2016	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3

**C. OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VR PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**



## AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

The Performance Measurement Template outlines exiting measure of performance. This section will be updated in the future as the performance accountability measures required under section 116 of WIOA are implemented. In addition, items related to the most recent monitoring activities conducted under section 107 were included in development of both the strategic planning template and the performance measurement template.

Item	Performance Measure	Last Value	Current Target Value	Current Value	Future Target Value	Time Applicable	Associated Objectives
1	Successful Employment Outcomes	6,548	7,000	7,005	7,050	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4
2	Rehabilitations per 100,000 population; national and regional ranking	136 4 <sup>th</sup> in US (FFY 14)	Top 5 in US	137 3 <sup>rd</sup> in US (FFY 15)	Top 5 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 3.1.1
3	Percentage of program participants who are employed during 2 <sup>nd</sup> qtr. after exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	Baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1- June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1
4	Percentage of program participants who are employed during 4 <sup>th</sup> qtr. after exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	Baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1
5	Median earnings of program participants who are employed during 2 <sup>nd</sup>	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1

	quarter after exit						
6	Percentage of program participants obtaining recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma during participation or within one year of exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.4, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5
7	Percentage of participants who are in education or training program achieving measurable skills gains	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 1.2.1., 1.3.1, 4.2.2
8	Effectiveness in serving employers	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4
9	Change in number of successful employment outcomes from previous federal fiscal year	Increase of 200	Increase of at least 1 (national standard)	Increase of 99	Increase of at least 1 (national standard)	FFY 2016	1.1.4
10	Percentage of clients with employment outcomes	60.29%	55.8% (national standard)	59.75%	55.80%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
11	Percentage of clients with employment outcomes who were	98.87%	72.6% (national standard)	99.84%	72.60%	FFY 2016	1.1.4

	competitively employed						
12	Percentage of competitively employed clients having significant disabilities	94.95%	62.54% (national standard)	96.03%	62.54%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
13	Ratio of rehabilitated client wages compared to state average wage	0.56	0.52 (national standard)	0.58	0.52	FFY 2016	1.1.4
14	Difference in percentage of clients self-supporting after services compared with before	68.63%	53% (national standard)	65.90%	53%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
15	Service rate for minority clients as ratio to non-minority	0.99	0.8 (national standard)	0.98	0.8	FFY 2016	1.1.4
16	Program Integrity Customer Service	92.45% (decrease of 3.84%)	Improvement	97.44% (increase of 4.99%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 4.1.1, 4.2.1
17	Program Integrity Compliance Assurance	92.84% (decrease of 4.39%)	Improvement	93.06% (increase of 0.22%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 3.2.2
18	Program Integrity Productivity	90.34%	100%	100.09% (increase of 9.75%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4
19	Average Total Cost Per Client Served (lower=better); national and regional ranking	\$2,651 updated national data unavailable	Top 10 in US	\$2,839 updated national data unavailable	Top 10 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	3.1.1, 3.1.2

20	Average Total Cost Per Rehabilitation (lower=better); national and regional ranking	\$14,091 updated national data unavailable	Top 5 in US	\$14,699 updated national data unavailable	Top 5 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	3.1.1, 3.1.2
21	Amount each successfully rehabilitated client will repay in taxes for each dollar spent on his/her rehabilitation	\$3.96 (decreased by \$0.58)	Increase	\$4.82 (increased by \$0.86)	Increase	July 1 - June 30	3.1.1
22	Number of years for each rehabilitated client to repay cost of rehabilitation	5.21 (increased by 0.7)	Decrease	4.06 (decreased by 1.15)	Decrease	July - June 30	3.1.1
23	Reimbursement from Social Security Administration for SCVRD Job Placements	\$522,227 (decrease of \$491,317)	10% increase	\$826,938 (increase of \$304,711)	Increase	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	1.1.3, 3.1.1
24	New Applicants Referred to SCVRD	15,282 (increase of 502)	Increase and representative of needs	16,190 (increase of 908)	Increase and representative of needs	July 1 - June 30	1.1.2, 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3
25	Successfully rehabilitated clients working 35+ hours per week exceeds national and regional VR averages	63.35% SCVRD 46.90% US 49.74% Southeast	Higher percentage than SE and US	65.7% (comparative data not available)	higher percentage than SE and US	FFY 2016	1.1.3
26	Successfully rehabilitated clients (transition-aged) working 35+ hours per week exceeds	56.36% SCVRD 40.64% US 43.09% Southeast	higher percentage than SE and US	57.8% (comparative data not available)	higher percentage than SE and US	FFY 2016	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4

	national and regional VR averages						
<b>27</b>	Increase successful employment outcomes for transition-age clients (14-24)	SFY2016: 1,760 SFY2015: 1,969	Increase	1,888	Increase	July 1 - June 30	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5
<b>28</b>	Percentage of individuals served by agency who are in transition age range (14-24)	37.4% SFY 2016	'+/-' 5% of US avg. (35.12% in FFY 2014 last available data)	37.8%	'+/-' 5% of US avg. (35.12% in FFY 2014 last available data)	July 1 - June 30	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5
<b>29</b>	Student participation in Disability Mentoring Day activities	994 (decrease of 124)	Increase	1,168 (increase of 174)	Increase	Oct. 1 - Oct. 31	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5
<b>30</b>	Positive outcomes in employee well-being surveys	3.92 on scale of 5.0 (decrease of 0.02)	Improvement	4.08* on scale of 5.0 (increase of 0.16) * * Measure shown in "Last Value" was composite average of offices. "Current Value" survey was average of position types.	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	2.2.2, 2.2.1
<b>31</b>	Level of Goal Attainment Toward Equal Employment Opportunity	94.8% (10th highest among SC state agencies)	100%	95.8% (Tied for 9th highest among SC state agencies)	100%	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	2.2.2

<b>32</b>	Agency staff turnover rates compare favorably with average for SC state government and average for government entities nationally	13.92% SCVRD; 17.42% SC state govt.; 18.7% nationally	Favorable comparative rate	13.08% SCVRD; 18.12% SC state govt.; 18.2% nationally	Favorable comparative rate	SCVRD July 1 - June 30; most recent available data for comparative	2.2.2
<b>33</b>	Training events for staff (face-to-face, webinars, videoconference, online)	613	According to need	547	According to need	July 1 - June 30	2.2.1, 2.2.2
<b>34</b>	Professional Development and Leadership Program completion	41 (prof. dev.) 31 (leadership)	35 (prof. dev.) 30 (leadership)	32 (prof. dev.) 32 (leadership)	Not applicable. PDLP discontinued and new Leadership Development Program in process	July 1 - June 30	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.3
<b>35</b>	Lower the Experience Modifier (EMOD) through excellence in safety precautions	1.09	Lower	1.05	Lower	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2
<b>36</b>	Lower Worker's Compensation premiums	\$768,776	Reduction	\$790,426	Reduction	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2
<b>37</b>	Work Training Center client injury rate lower than Goods Producing Industries rate (BLS)	1% SCVRD 3.6% BLS	lower comparative rate	.009% SCVRD 3.4% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 3.1.2

<b>38</b>	Employee injury rate lower than State Government Employees rate (BLS)	1.7% SCVRD 3.8% BLS	Lower comparative rate	1.6% SCVRD 3.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 2.2.2
<b>39</b>	Work Training Center client lost time to injury rate lower than Service Providing Industries rate (BLS)	.0008% SCVRD 1.1% BLS	Lower comparative rate	.001% SCVRD 1.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2
<b>40</b>	Employee lost time to injury rate lower than Service Providing Industries rate (BLS)	.003% SCVRD 1.1% BLS	Lower comparative rate	.005 SCVRD 1.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 2.2.2
<b>41</b>	Growth in Business Partnership Network	649 members (increase of 298)	Increase	786 members (increase of 137)	Increase	July 1 - June 30	4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.4
<b>45</b>	Number of client complaints to Client Relations office	49 (decrease of 37)	Lower	85	10% reduction	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 2.2.3, 3.2.2
<b>46</b>	Percentage of client complaints resolved without need for formal administrative review	100%	100%	99%	100%	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 2.2.3, 3.2.2
<b>47</b>	Single Audit results	1 finding	0 findings	0 findings	0 findings	July 1 - June 30, 2016	3.1.2, 3.2.3

48	Agreed Upon Procedures audit results	1 finding	0 findings	0 findings	0 findings	July 1 - June 30, 2016	3.1.2, 3.2.3
49	Administrative Costs as a percentage of total operating expenditures	5.66%	< 7%	7.54%	< 7%	July 1 - June 30	3.1.2
50	Increase in Cooperative Agreements associated with strategic goals	323	N/A	342	N/A	July 1 - June 30	4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3
51	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with their experience during application stage	New measure	New measure	82.21%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
52	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with their overall experience with the agency at stage of annual review of their Individual Plan for Employment	New measure	New measure	77.98%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
53	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with their overall experience with the agency at stage of having received job readiness training and job preparedness classes	New measure	New measure	76.07%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3



54	Percentage of clients surveyed one year after successful employment outcome who say they were satisfied with services received from SCVRD	98%	Improvement	97.7%	Improvement	Cases closed during SFY 2016	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
55	Percentage of clients surveyed one year after successful employment outcome who say they would recommend VR to others	98.8%	Improvement	98%	Improvement	Cases closed during SFY 2016	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3

#### 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.

SCVRD is not implementing an order of selection.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER.

SCVRD is not implementing an order of selection.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS.

SCVRD is not implementing an order of selection.

D. THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER.

SCVRD is not implementing an order of selection.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

SCVRD is not implementing an order of selection.

2. IF THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS, REGARDLESS OF ANY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF SELECTION, WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT.

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SCVRD is not implementing an order of selection.

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N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS.

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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.

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SCVRD's supported employment goals and plans regarding the Title VI program are based on an analysis of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment and the department's performance on the common performance measures as well as agency key performance indicators. The priorities are as follows:

- Strengthening service delivery afforded to individuals whose disabilities and vocational needs are so significant that SCVRD's 110 traditional program services would not be sufficient to meet their employment needs;
- Providing services to people with the most significant disabilities, especially SSI and/or SSDI recipients, in order to successfully achieve and maintain competitive employment in integrated work settings; and
- Providing supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities.

In SFY 2017, SCVRD used designated funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services for the following goals and priorities:

- Job coaches serving the Aiken, Orangeburg, Laurens, and Lexington areas.
- SCVRD continues its partnership with DDSN in an ongoing demonstration project designed as an intensive placement and support program in the Lexington area. DDSN makes referrals to a specified VR counselor and job coach who are designated to exclusively serve these clients. This demonstration project incorporates many of the IPS evidence-based practices in providing services to individuals with most significant disabilities including those with intellectual disabilities. The key practices focus on individualized, client-centered services to assist persons with cognitive impairments and emphasize rapid job placement as appropriate into competitive, integrated jobs. Follow up supports are provided in integrated work settings. In SFY 2016, the Lexington site achieved a 73 percent rehabilitation rate.

2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:

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A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

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Activities with funds reserved for services for youth with the most significant disabilities (section 603(d)) included the following:

- Transition job coaches serving youth with most significant disabilities in the Sumter, Greenville, Richland, and Rock Hill areas. Transition job coaches provide work-based learning experiences, job preparedness instruction, job development, and placement with follow along supports.

Transition coaches have been added in additional areas to assist in providing pre-employment transition services and supported employment services for youth with most significant disabilities.

- Project SEARCH is a national model based on intensive internship experience and job coaching. It pairs students in their final year of school with a host business/employer site that includes a series of internships to build job skills as well as to explore career opportunities. This program model is business-led, with partner support provided through the school district, VR, Development Disabilities agencies, and other community partners. It focuses on serving young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as other students that may not otherwise have access to the immersion-based approach of this program. Interns in Project SEARCH train in real work settings, which allow the program staff to teach competitive, marketable, and transferable skills. The outcome goal of the program is competitive, integrated employment. The first site in South Carolina was established in Spartanburg during SFY 2014. This has now expanded to seven sites. In this program, students participate in a series of internships at a host business site, receive intensive instruction and job coaching, and are placed into competitive employment, often at the host business site and often prior to completion of their final year of high school. For the Spartanburg location, following their first-year program participants achieved an 86 percent success rate (participants achieving competitive, integrated employment).
- SCVRD leverages other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services. Extended services providers are identified in each area to provide follow along and extended services following successful exit from the VR program. Partnerships at the state and local level with DDSN and the local DSN boards continue to grow and provide key linkages to extended services providers.

#### 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.

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- SCVRD leverages other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services. Extended services providers are identified in each area to provide follow along and extended services following successful exit from the VR program. Partnerships at the state and local level with DDSN and the local DSN boards continue to grow and provide key linkages to extended services providers.
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#### 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.

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In support of the goals, strategies and objectives listed in the Strategic Planning Template, current plans for improving community-based provision of services include the following:

- Oconee Pickens - Seneca office expansion of the existing area office and work training center

- Area Office Capital Projects 2020 - 2024 - parking lot repairs, assessment to replace/repair HVAC systems and cooling tower
- Pre-ETS expansion of service delivery models through contractual and pilot programs
- Replacement of Holmesview Substance Abuse Recovery Center
- Potential changes to Information Technology Training Center programs

## 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.

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Rehabilitation engineers provide evaluation and implementation of assistive technology devices throughout the rehabilitation process based on individualized client needs.

## 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.

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The goals outlined in the Strategic Planning Template were established based on the findings of the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment and are updated annually in conjunction with the agency's strategic planning efforts as well as state-specific reporting requirements. Each goal is tied to a defined strategy and set of objectives, designed to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant/realistic and, timely. These are long-term planning goals, strategies, and objectives that include, at minimum, annual assessment of results as well as adjustment and revision based on needs of the state and further implementation of WIOA.

Goals and strategies related to identifying and serving individuals with disabilities, who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved, include the following: Goal 1, strategy 1.1 and 1.2, objectives 1.1.2, 1.2.2, 1.2.3.

Goal 1: Successful employment outcomes for South Carolinians with disabilities through specialized, individualized services. Strategy 1.1: Improve the quality of employment outcomes for eligible individuals with disabilities. Strategy 1.2: Enhance school-to-work transition services. Objective 1.1.2: Increase services to underserved and emerging disability populations. Objective 1.2.2: Improve services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders and intellectual/developmental disabilities. Objective 1.2.3: Enhance services for at-risk youth with disabilities.

## 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).

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The goals outlined in the Strategic Planning Template were established based on the findings of the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment and are updated annually in conjunction with the agency's strategic planning efforts as well as state-specific reporting requirements. Each goal is tied to a defined strategy and set of objectives, designed to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant/realistic and, timely. These are long-term planning goals, strategies, and objectives that include, at minimum,

annual assessment of results as well as adjustment and revision based on needs of the state and further implementation of WIOA.

The following strategies relate directly to improvement and expansion of VR services for students with disabilities, including coordination of services to facilitate transition of students from school to postsecondary life.

Strategy 1.1 Improve the quality of employment outcomes for eligible individuals with disabilities.

- Objective 1.1.1 Support continuous improvement within Program Integrity: Productivity, Compliance Assurance, and Customer Service.
- Objective 1.1.2 Increase services to underserved and emerging disability populations.
- Objective 1.1.3 Strengthen the workforce pipeline through matching client strengths and abilities with community employment results.
- Objective 1.1.4 Demonstrate effectiveness in national comparative data for performance measures.

Strategy 1.2 Enhance school-to-work transition services.

- Objective 1.2.1 Maximize relationships with education officials in all South Carolina school districts to support development of education and career pathways.
- Objective 1.2.2 Improve services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders and intellectual/developmental disabilities.
- Objective 1.2.3 Enhance services for at-risk youth with disabilities.
- Objective 1.2.4 Expose students with disabilities to careers in science, technology, engineering and math through High School/High Tech programs.

Strategy 1.3 Enhance job driven vocational training programs.

- Objective 1.3.1 Develop job-readiness skills through work training center activities, demand-driven skills training, and on-the-job supports.
- Objective 1.3.2 Equip clients for job search through resume development, interviewing skills, other "soft" skills, and disability-related classes.

## 5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

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In support of the goals, strategies and objectives listed in the Strategic Planning Template, current plans for improving community-based provision of services include the following:

- Oconee Pickens - Seneca office expansion of the existing area office and work training center
- Area Office Capital Projects 2020 - 2024 - parking lot repairs, assessment to replace/repair HVAC systems and cooling tower
- Pre-ETS expansion of service delivery models through contractual and pilot programs
- Replacement of Holmesview Substance Abuse Recovery Center

- Potential changes to Information Technology Training Center programs

SCVRD has historically operated two substance abuse recovery facilities in the state, Holmesview Center in Greenville and Palmetto Center in Florence. Holmesview Center was destroyed in a fire in November of 2016. Plans for rebuilding that Center are currently going through state procedures. Due to aging infrastructure and safety concerns, the Palmetto Center was rebuilt. The need for these existing programs has long been established.

## 6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

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The goals, strategies, and objectives included in the SCVRD strategic planning template outline the strategies to improve performance of SCVRD with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA. Specifically, strategies and objectives under Goal 1 identify objectives related to participant outcomes, including training, education, and career pathway related objectives. Goal 4 outlines strategies and objectives related to partnerships with other agencies and organizations, as well as objectives specific to business and employer services.

## 7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

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Strategies and objectives under Goal 1 identify objectives related to participant outcomes, including training, education, and career pathway related objectives. Goal 4 outlines strategies and objectives related to partnerships with other agencies and organizations, as well as objectives specific to business and employer services.

## 8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

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### A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

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The goals in the Strategic Planning Template were established based on the findings of the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment and are updated annually in conjunction with the agency's strategic planning efforts as well as state-specific reporting requirements. Each goal is tied to a defined strategy and set of objectives, designed to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant/realistic, and timely. These are long-term planning goals, strategies, and objectives that include, at minimum, annual assessment of results as well as adjustment and revision based on needs of the state and further implementation of WIOA.

Goals 1 and 4, and their associated strategies and objectives, support activities related to identifying and removing barriers to equitable access to and participation in the SCVRD program, included supported employment services.

### B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

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The goals in the Strategic Planning Template were established based on the findings of the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment and are updated annually in conjunction with the agency's strategic planning efforts as well as state-specific reporting requirements. Each goal is tied to a defined strategy and set of objectives, designed to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant/realistic, and timely. These are long-term planning goals, strategies, and objectives that include, at minimum, annual

assessment of results as well as adjustment and revision based on needs of the state and further implementation of WIOA.

Goals 1 and 4, and their associated strategies and objectives, support activities related to identifying and removing barriers to equitable access to and participation in the SCVRD program, included supported employment services.

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.

The goals in the Strategic Planning Template were established based on the findings of the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment and are updated annually in conjunction with the agency's strategic planning efforts as well as state-specific reporting requirements. Each goal is tied to a defined strategy and set of objectives, designed to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant/realistic, and timely. These are long-term planning goals, strategies, and objectives that include, at minimum, annual assessment of results as well as adjustment and revision based on needs of the state and further implementation of WIOA.

Goals 1 and 4, and their associated strategies and objectives, support activities related to identifying and removing barriers to equitable access to and participation in the SCVRD program, included supported employment services.

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.

Performance measures are in place for evaluation of the extent to which the goals, strategies, and objectives identified in the Strategic Planning Template were achieved. These include both federally required Standards and Indicators (to be updated based on WIOA common performance measures) as well as internal measures of goal attainment. Associated objectives that are tied to specific results are indicated.

Performance Management Template

Item	Performance Measure	Last Value	Current Target Value	Current Value	Future Target Value	Time Applicable	Associated Objectives
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1	Successful Employment Outcomes	6,548	7,000	7,005	7,050	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4
2	Rehabilitations per 100,000 population; national and regional ranking	136 4 <sup>th</sup> in US (FFY 14)	Top 5 in US	137 3 <sup>rd</sup> in US (FFY 15)	Top 5 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 3.1.1
3	Percentage of program participants who are employed during 2 <sup>nd</sup> qtr. after exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	Baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1- June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1
4	Percentage of program participants who are employed during 4 <sup>th</sup> qtr. after exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	Baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1
5	Median earnings of program participants who are employed during 2nd quarter after exit	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 3.1.1
6	Percentage of program participants obtaining recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma during participation or	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.4, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5



	within one year of exit						
<b>7</b>	Percentage of participants who are in education or training program achieving measurable skills gains	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 1.2.1., 1.3.1, 4.2.2
<b>8</b>	Effectiveness in serving employers	New measure	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	baseline	New WIOA measure; baseline being established	July 1 - June 30	4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4
<b>9</b>	Change in number of successful employment outcomes from previous federal fiscal year	Increase of 200	Increase of at least 1 (national standard)	Increase of 99	Increase of at least 1 (national standard)	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>10</b>	Percentage of clients with employment outcomes	60.29%	55.8% (national standard)	59.75%	55.80%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>11</b>	Percentage of clients with employment outcomes who were competitively employed	98.87%	72.6% (national standard)	99.84%	72.60%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>12</b>	Percentage of competitively employed clients having significant disabilities	94.95%	62.54% (national standard)	96.03%	62.54%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
<b>13</b>	Ratio of rehabilitated client wages compared to	0.56	0.52 (national standard)	0.58	0.52	FFY 2016	1.1.4

	state average wage						
14	Difference in percentage of clients self-supporting after services compared with before	68.63%	53% (national standard)	65.90%	53%	FFY 2016	1.1.4
15	Service rate for minority clients as ratio to non-minority	0.99	0.8 (national standard)	0.98	0.8	FFY 2016	1.1.4
16	Program Integrity Customer Service	92.45% (decrease of 3.84%)	Improvement	97.44% (increase of 4.99%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 4.1.1, 4.2.1
17	Program Integrity Compliance Assurance	92.84% (decrease of 4.39%)	Improvement	93.06% (increase of 0.22%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 3.2.2
18	Program Integrity Productivity	90.34%	100%	100.09% (increase of 9.75%)	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4
19	Average Total Cost Per Client Served (lower=better); national and regional ranking	\$2,651 updated national data unavailable	Top 10 in US	\$2,839 updated national data unavailable	Top 10 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	3.1.1, 3.1.2
20	Average Total Cost Per Rehabilitation (lower=better); national and regional ranking	\$14,091 updated national data unavailable	Top 5 in US	\$14,699 updated national data unavailable	Top 5 in US	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	3.1.1, 3.1.2
21	Amount each successfully rehabilitated client will repay in taxes for each dollar spent on	\$3.96 (decreased by \$0.58)	Increase	\$4.82 (increased by \$0.86)	Increase	July 1 - June 30	3.1.1

	his/her rehabilitation						
<b>22</b>	Number of years for each rehabilitated client to repay cost of rehabilitation	5.21 (increased by 0.7)	Decrease	4.06 (decreased by 1.15)	Decrease	July - June 30	3.1.1
<b>23</b>	Reimbursement from Social Security Administration for SCVRD Job Placements	\$522,227 (decrease of \$491,317)	10% increase	\$826,938 (increase of \$304,711)	Increase	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	1.1.3, 3.1.1
<b>24</b>	New Applicants Referred to SCVRD	15,282 (increase of 502)	Increase and representative of needs	16,190 (increase of 908)	Increase and representative of needs	July 1 - June 30	1.1.2, 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3
<b>25</b>	Successfully rehabilitated clients working 35+ hours per week exceeds national and regional VR averages	63.35% SCVRD 46.90% US 49.74% Southeast	Higher percentage than SE and US	65.7% (comparative data not available)	higher percentage than SE and US	FFY 2016	1.1.3
<b>26</b>	Successfully rehabilitated clients (transition-aged) working 35+ hours per week exceeds national and regional VR averages	56.36% SCVRD 40.64% US 43.09% Southeast	higher percentage than SE and US	57.8% (comparative data not available)	higher percentage than SE and US	FFY 2016	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4
<b>27</b>	Increase successful employment outcomes for transition-age clients (14-24)	SFY2016: 1,760 SFY2015: 1,969	Increase	1,888	Increase	July 1 - June 30	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5
<b>28</b>	Percentage of individuals served by	37.4% SFY 2016	'+/-' 5% of US avg. (35.12% in FFY 2014)	37.8%	'+/-' 5% of US avg. (35.12% in FFY 2014)	July 1 - June 30	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3,

	agency who are in transition age range (14-24)		last available data		last available data)		1.2.4, 1.2.5
29	Student participation in Disability Mentoring Day activities	994 (decrease of 124)	Increase	1,168 (increase of 174)	Increase	Oct. 1 - Oct. 31	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5
30	Positive outcomes in employee well-being surveys	3.92 on scale of 5.0 (decrease of 0.02)	Improvement	4.08* on scale of 5.0 (increase of 0.16) * * Measure shown in "Last Value" was composite average of offices. "Current Value" survey was average of position types.	Improvement	July 1 - June 30	2.2.2, 2.2.1
31	Level of Goal Attainment Toward Equal Employment Opportunity	94.8% (10th highest among SC state agencies)	100%	95.8% (Tied for 9th highest among SC state agencies)	100%	Oct. 1 - Sept. 30	2.2.2
32	Agency staff turnover rates compare favorably with average for SC state government and average for government entities nationally	13.92% SCVRD; 17.42% SC state govt.; 18.7% nationally	Favorable comparative rate	13.08% SCVRD; 18.12% SC state govt.; 18.2% nationally	Favorable comparative rate	SCVRD July 1 - June 30; most recent available data for comparative	2.2.2
33	Training events for staff (face-to-face, webinars,	613	According to need	547	According to need	July 1 - June 30	2.2.1, 2.2.2

	videoconference, online)						
<b>34</b>	Professional Development and Leadership Program completion	41 (prof. dev.) 31 (leadership)	35 (prof. dev.) 30 (leadership)	32 (prof. dev.) 32 (leadership)	Not applicable. PDLP discontinued and new Leadership Development Program in process	July 1 - June 30	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.3
<b>35</b>	Lower the Experience Modifier (EMOD) through excellence in safety precautions	1.09	Lower	1.05	Lower	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2
<b>36</b>	Lower Worker's Compensation premiums	\$768,776	Reduction	\$790,426	Reduction	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2
<b>37</b>	Work Training Center client injury rate lower than Goods Producing Industries rate (BLS)	1% SCVRD 3.6% BLS	lower comparative rate	.009% SCVRD 3.4% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 3.1.2
<b>38</b>	Employee injury rate lower than State Government Employees rate (BLS)	1.7% SCVRD 3.8% BLS	Lower comparative rate	1.6% SCVRD 3.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 2.2.2
<b>39</b>	Work Training Center client lost time to injury rate lower than Service Providing Industries rate (BLS)	.0008% SCVRD 1.1% BLS	Lower comparative rate	.001% SCVRD 1.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2

40	Employee lost time to injury rate lower than Service Providing Industries rate (BLS)	.003% SCVRD 1.1% BLS	Lower comparative rate	.005 SCVRD 1.0% BLS	Lower comparative rate	July 1 - June 30	3.3.2, 2.2.2
41	Growth in Business Partnership Network	649 members (increase of 298)	Increase	786 members (increase of 137)	Increase	July 1 - June 30	4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.4
45*	Number of client complaints to Client Relations office	49 (decrease of 37)	Lower	85	10% reduction	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 2.2.3, 3.2.2
46	Percentage of client complaints resolved without need for formal administrative review	100%	100%	99%	100%	July 1 - June 30	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 2.2.3, 3.2.2
47	Single Audit results	1 finding	0 findings	0 findings	0 findings	July 1 - June 30, 2016	3.1.2, 3.2.3
48	Agreed Upon Procedures audit results	1 finding	0 findings	0 findings	0 findings	July 1 - June 30, 2016	3.1.2, 3.2.3
49	Administrative Costs as a percentage of total operating expenditures	5.66%	< 7%	7.54%	< 7%	July 1 - June 30	3.1.2
50	Increase in Cooperative Agreements associated with strategic goals	323	N/A	342	N/A	July 1 - June 30	4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3
51	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with	New measure	New measure	82.21%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3

	their experience during application stage						
52	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with their overall experience with the agency at stage of annual review of their Individual Plan for Employment	New measure	New measure	77.98%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
53	Percentage of surveyed clients who were "very satisfied" with their overall experience with the agency at stage of having received job readiness training and job preparedness classes	New measure	New measure	76.07%	Increase	Dec. - June	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
54	Percentage of clients surveyed one year after successful employment outcome who say they were satisfied with services received from SCVRD	98%	Improvement	97.7%	Improvement	Cases closed during SFY 2016	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3
55	Percentage of clients surveyed one year after successful employment outcome who say they would	98.8%	Improvement	98%	Improvement	Cases closed during SFY 2016	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3

	recommend VR to others						
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## B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

Factors that impeded the achievement of goals and priorities or resulted in a necessary shift in goals and priorities during the year, include unanticipated staffing vacancies, and adjustments and programmatic changes required for full implementation of requirements under WIOA.

## 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.

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of overall goals and specific objectives included:

- Review and measurement of key performance indicators on a quarterly basis.
- Monthly monitoring and specialized reporting on the results of outreach efforts to underserved and emerging disability populations.
- Monthly monitoring and specialized reporting on services to youth and pre-employment transition services.
- Dedicated staff for specific populations and specialized services: school-to-work transition; deaf and hard of hearing; supported employment.
- Demonstration programs to enhance supported employment services and services for youth with the most significant disabilities, individuals diagnosed with ASD, and demand-driven training based on community labor market information.

## B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

Factors that impeded the achievement of goals and priorities or resulted in a necessary shift in goals and priorities during the year, include unanticipated staffing vacancies, and adjustments and programmatic changes required for full implementation of requirements under WIOA.

## 3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

The results reflected in the Performance Measurement Template are based on current performance indicators. They will be updated in the future to incorporate performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

## 4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED.

Innovation and expansion activities have been identified within these strategies and include:

- Continued expansion of work-based learning activities for students
- Expansion of Project SEARCH sites



- Cooperative agreement with Project HOPE Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides a lifespan of services and activities for individuals with autism
- Expansion of transition job coaches focused on providing supported employment services to students and youth with the most significant disabilities
- Maintaining a full-time counselor to provide vocational rehabilitation services to incarcerated youth, which has expanded to include additional programs operated by DJJ (e.g., Camp Aspen)
- Maintaining a staff interpreter for clients who are deaf to provide video remote interpreting, on-site services to mutual clients of SCVRD and DHHS, extend consistent access to interpreter services in rural areas, and enhance the accessibility of VR productions and client and staff training materials
- Creation of apprenticeships tailored to increase the participation levels of clients who are deaf
- On-The-Job training services
- Maintaining statewide/regional employment specialists who provides support to local business development specialists across the state as well as providing support to local and regional business services teams that are interagency groups that coordinate business services under WIOA
- Upgrades and continued development of job readiness training services, including an electronic MAP (My Action Plan) document, which is an individualized plan for job readiness training, and development of demand-driven skills training opportunities
- Continued development of business database systems (Universal Business Database) to enhance client service delivery, career placement activities, and benchmarking services to employers

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#### 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.

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SCVRD employs 43 full-time job coaches having a high school diploma or a bachelor's degree in a related field. This includes the job coaches who provide IPS services to DMH consumers through an MOA. In addition, SCVRD employs 11 transition job coaches that provide supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities.

Job coaches work as part of a team along with other SCVRD staff and extended support representatives. Through the efforts of these job coaches, supported employment services are available statewide to individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Initial diagnostic evaluation services are conducted while in the traditional 110 programs. If needed, a supplemental evaluation may be performed with the use of a job coach. At the time of acceptance for supported employment services, an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is developed outlining the job coach services to be provided. Such services include job development, job placement, OJT, observation or supervision at or away from the job site, and support services with the employer, client, or family. SCVRD policy allows for any activity performed by a supported client at the employer's location to be a paid work experience.

SCVRD's ongoing support services are limited to 24 months unless extended by an amendment to the IPE. Transition to extended services starts after an individual is stabilized in his/her job setting and has met the individualized work goal. The client's employment stability is determined by the achievement of adequate job performance without a need for ongoing, intensive shadowing/mentoring from the job coach. The client, employer, job coach, and SCVRD counselor agree that this has occurred before transition to the extended service provider takes place. SCVRD continues to leverage resources for identifying extended service providers to meet long-term support needs.

Contingent upon the significance of the client's supported employment needs; there could be an initial training period of two to six weeks, which would be followed by ongoing job coach involvement of least 90 or more days prior to determining whether the client is ready for extended services. In addition, SCVRD may provide post-employment services following transition if needed to maintain the placement.

The overall objective for each individual receiving supported employment services is successful competitive employment in an integrated work setting. For this to occur, the supported employment team works to assure client and employer satisfaction in terms of both production and fulfillment of the individual's needs.

The individual placement model for competitive employment remains the primary supported employment model being used by SCVRD. Emphasis is placed upon providing services to people with most significant disabilities, especially SSI and/or SSDI recipients, whose employment needs are so significant that traditional 110 program services would not be sufficient to meet them. SCVRD coordinator of supported employment services also assists area office staff to identify and serve all eligible clients with the most significant disabilities.

## 2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

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SCVRD's ongoing support services are limited to 24 months unless extended by an amendment to the IPE. Transition to extended services starts after an individual is stabilized in his/her job setting and has met the individualized work goal. The client's employment stability is determined by the achievement of adequate job performance without a need for ongoing, intensive shadowing/mentoring from the job coach. The client, employer, job coach, and SCVRD counselor agree that this has occurred before transition to the extended service provider takes place. SCVRD continues to leverage resources for identifying extended service providers to meet long-term support needs.

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The overall objective for each individual receiving supported employment services is successful competitive employment in an integrated work setting. For this to occur, the supported employment team works to assure client and employer satisfaction in terms of both production and fulfillment of the individual's needs.

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### CERTIFICATIONS

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate      **South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department**

Name of designated State agency    **South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:    **Felicia W. Johnson**

Title of Authorized Representative:    **Commissioner, SCVRD**

**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**

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#### **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

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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     **South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:     **Felicia W. Johnson**

Title of Authorized Representative:     **Interim Commissioner, SCVRD**

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

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#### 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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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

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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     **South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:     **Felicia W. Johnson**

Title of Authorized Representative:     **Interim Commissioner, SCVRD**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>).

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#### 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:

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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:

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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 **(A) is an independent State commission**

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.

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#### 4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES:

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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?

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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,

1. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT,

- I. STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ASSESSMENTS; AND
- II. STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE STATE, TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON A STATEWIDE BASIS; AND
- II. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO PROVIDE PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES (SECTIONS 101(A)(15) AND 101(A)(25)).

5. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION FOR THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT TITLE VI SUPPLEMENT:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE 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.

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#### 7. PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES:

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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:

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- I. THE COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 102(B)(1) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AND FUNDED UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT INCLUDES CONSIDERATION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AS AN APPROPRIATE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 606(B)(7)(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT
  - II. AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT , WHICH IS DEVELOPED AND UPDATED WITH TITLE I FUNDS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 102(B)(3)(F) AND 606(B)(6)(C) AND (E) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.
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#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE ASSURANCES FROM THE STATE

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##### PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (BLIND)

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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

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##### 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 South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) is an independent consumer controlled commission with a Governor appointed State Board that provides governance and program guidance, and as such is not required to submit this section. The results of the 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs and this subsequent State Plan submission has been reviewed and approved by the SCCB Board of Commissioners. Further, the SCCB program specific portion of the South Carolina Unified State Plan has been informed and aligned with the South Carolina Workforce Development Board's to Build a Competitive Workforce strategic plan.

## 2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

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The South Carolina Commission for the Blind procured, participated in, and oversaw the development of the 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs and the development of the WIOA Unified State Plan. The SCCB Board assisted in the development of agency goals and strategies, and voted to approve the plan.

## 3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

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N/A

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### B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

When requesting a waiver of the statewide 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;

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SCCB ensures all services are available on a statewide basis and is not requesting a waiver of statewide requirement.

#### 2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

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N/A

#### 3. ALL STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS WILL APPLY

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requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

N/A

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### 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;

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SCCB has developed and signed Cooperative Agreements with the following agencies:

- South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to create administrative efficiencies and improve services to consumers statewide;
- South Carolina Worker's Compensation Commission (WCC) to facilitate the referral process of injured workers to SCCB to enhance return-to-work efforts;
- Social Security Administration (SSA) to collaborate on employment incentives and supports and maximize Social Security Administration/Vocational Rehabilitation (SSA/VR) reimbursement activity through the Ticket to Work Program;
- South Carolina Office of Veterans' Affairs (OVA) to help identify veterans who need additional supports in securing benefits, gaining employment, and accessing advocacy services;
- South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN) to eliminate potential duplication of services and increase coordination of employment services provided to the shared consumer populations;
- South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) to eliminate duplication of services and increase coordination of employment services provided to the shared consumer populations;
- South Carolina Department of Mental Health to collaborate, coordinate, eliminate potential duplication of services, and enhance the employment outcomes of shared consumer populations.

## 2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

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SCCB has a cooperative agreement with the South Carolina Assistive Technology Program at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine to access comparable benefits, eliminate duplication of services, and increase coordination of employment services provided to shared consumer populations.

## 3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

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SCCB has developed partnerships with the local office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to develop cooperative efforts to provide services to South Carolinians who are blind or visually impaired.

## 4. NONEDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

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Non-educational agencies serving out of school youth participate in South Carolina's statewide workforce development system and are partnered with through the provisions of the Unified State Plan and the Workforce Development System.

## 5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

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No such State Use Contracting Program is in place in South Carolina.

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## D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

Describe:

### 1. DSU'S PLANS

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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.

SCCB has a current (2017) Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Education, and has local area Memorandum of Understandings with Local Education Authorities (LEA's) to enhance, improve, and innovate programs and services provided to ensure a seamless and effective transition from school to post-secondary education, careers, and adult life for students with disabilities. Coordination with education officials is accomplished on three (3) distinct levels of the SCCB service delivery process.

These three levels include:

**SCCB Children's Services Program:** This program serves children between the ages of 3 and 14 years of age. The Children's Services Counselors coordinate care with educational entities such as the local school districts and the SC School for the Deaf and Blind (SCSDB). Service delivery includes evaluations for low vision aids and assistive technology, consultation and advocacy and information and referral services.

**SCCB Career BOOST (Building Occupational Opportunities for Students in Transition):** Is a contractual pilot program in partnership with South Carolina's Independent Living Centers, the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina, and LEA's. Pre-Employment Transition Services are provided to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities in the public schools and other settings. These services include Self-Advocacy Workshops, Work Readiness Soft Skills Workshops, Exploration of Higher Education through College Tours, and Work Based Learning Experiences.

**SCCB Vocational Rehabilitation Comprehensive Transition Services Program:** This program serves students from age 15 until exit from high school at which time they are served by the SCCB adult VR program. SCCB has four (4) dedicated Transition Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors statewide building program infrastructure and education relationships to improve services to Transition Students. The Transition Counselors primarily collaborate with education officials such as the South Carolina Department of Education (local school districts), the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind (SCSDB) and the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (SCDDSN). Transition Counselors develop the initial Individualized Plan of Employment (IPE) while the consumer is attending high school. The IPE includes services pertaining to the adjustment, prevention or stabilization of vision, and Pre-Employment Transition Services as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA). In an effort to avoid the duplication of services, low vision and assistive technology needs will be coordinated with local school districts in accordance with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and IPE. In such instances, the alternative service providers and funding sources will be identified on the IPE and coordinated accordingly. SCCB will conduct semiannual meetings with the statewide vision teachers in an effort to facilitate the coordination of services to the most significantly disabled students and their need for supported employment services. Discussions will include, but not be limited to, collaboration with SCDDSN, SCDOE and the SCSDB to coordinate transition services. The main source of referrals to the Transition Counselors is the school district. Procedures for outreach to, and identification of blind and visually impaired students include, but are not limited to, the utilization of SCCB program data, statistical data from the Data Analysis System of the US Department of Education (Office of Special Education) and the American Community Survey data. An annual analysis of the data from these sources identifies the location of transition aged unserved and underserved individuals. In an effort to address the assistive technology needs of college bound transition consumers, SCCB sponsors an annual Technology Day. The need for this initiative arose due to an increase in the number of blind and visually impaired students who were failing college courses due to an inability to take notes and complete assignments.

During technology day, consumers are assessed and trained on the latest assistive technology software and equipment. Assistive technology recommendations for each student are contingent upon the level of blindness, skill level and school requirements. Technology Day is conducted by the SCCB Training and Employment Department. SCCB is currently working to become an actively engaged partner in the Transition Alliance of South Carolina (TASC) a multi- agency partnership between the South Carolina Department of Education, South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department, South Carolina Department of Disability and Special Needs, and Local Education Agencies to facilitate the coordination of services to transition students leading to employment and independent adult living. SCCB is currently seeking proposals for a demonstration project called “CareerBOOST” (Building Occupational Opportunities for Students in Transition) through which Pre-Employment Transition Services will be provided to students in their communities. These services will include: 1. Self-Advocacy Training 2. Work Readiness Workshops 3. Work Based Learning Experiences 4. College and Higher Education Exploration 5. Career Exploration Experiences SCCB is currently negotiating a formal written Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Education that includes provisions for: (A) mutual consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies and SCCB in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services; (B) transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs; (C) roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and (D) Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

Additionally, SCCB is an active member of the **Transition Alliance of South Carolina (TASC)**. TASC supports local interagency transition teams by providing resources to increase collaboration, partnerships, coordination, and effectiveness in serving students with disabilities transitioning from high school to adult-life. SCCB also participates in the **SC Vision Education Partnership** where public educators for the blind and visually impaired collaborate and coordinate with SCCB Transition VR staff. SCCB is an active member of the **Employment First Initiative** steering committee, an interagency partnership focused on ensuring that competitive integrated employment is the first priority for transition aged students with disabilities. SCCB is also an active member of the **Advisory Council for Educating Students with Disabilities** an advisory council for the Office of Special Education at the South Carolina Department of Education. All of these committees and councils create avenues for coordination and collaboration with state and local education officials.

## 2. INFORMATION ON THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WITH RESPECT TO:

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### 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;

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SCCB finalized a formal written Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Education on August 15, 2017 that specifically includes provisions for: (A) mutual consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies and SCCB in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services. The agency has also entered into Memorandum of Understanding with Local Education Agencies (LEA's) that builds our partnerships with public schools. In addition, SCCB is engaged in the **Transition Alliance of South Carolina** where

educational partners coordinate, collaborate and provide technical expertise on regionally based transition teams. Finally, SCCB has been an active partner in the **South Carolina Vision Education Partnership** that brings Blind and Visual Impairment Educators and VR Transition Counselors together for collaborative training, team building, and technical assistance.

#### B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

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SCCB has a current Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Education and Local Education Agencies that includes provisions for transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs. SCCB provides technical expertise, assistive technology assessments, and Pre-Employment Transition Services to students in cooperation and collaboration with educational entities. The Career BOOST program provides the 5 required Pre-Employment Transition Services in classrooms through a partnership with local public schools and educators.

#### C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

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SCCB has a current formal written Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Education and LEA's that includes provisions for clarity of roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services.

#### D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

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SCCB has a current formal written Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Education and LEA's that includes provisions for procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services. SCCB is an active partner in the **Transition Alliance of South Carolina** (TASC) where VR Transition Counselors partner with local educators who assist in the identification and referral of potentially eligible students who need transition services. SCCB involvement in the South Carolina Vision Education Partnership also creates relationships with educators who refer potentially eligible students to SCCB. SCCB's **Career BOOST Program** in partnership with LEA's identifies and provides Pre-Employment Transition Services to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities and makes referrals to SCCB and SCVRD when comprehensive transition services may be needed. Finally, SCCB staff participate in parent outreach, information, and referral events.

#### E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

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(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.

SCCB has actively established Cooperative Agreements and community partnerships with private nonprofit organizations. SCCB is committed to being an active, cooperative and collaborative partner with community entities wherever such reciprocal relationships can benefit consumers and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the VR program. SCCB has developed and maintains Cooperative

Agreements with the following entities not carrying out activities under the Statewide Workforce Development System:

- The **National Federation of the Blind (NFB) of South Carolina** for the purposes of ensuring statewide availability of adjustment to blindness training, job readiness and computer skills training, independent living skills training.
- The **Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABVI)** for the purposes of ensuring statewide availability of adjustment to blindness training, job readiness and computer skills training, and independent living skills training.
- **South Carolina Association of the Deaf, Inc.**
- **Goodwill Industries** for the purposes of providing statewide access to job readiness and computer skills training.
- The **Helen Keller National Center (HKNC)** for the purpose of expanding training options for consumers who are Deaf/Blind and need training beyond the scope of programs provided at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for Employment and Independence (EBMRCEI).
- And informal partnerships with community based partners such as faith based organizations, charitable organizations, and non-governmental community based organizations.
- Community Rehabilitation Programs providing Orientation and Mobility, Home Management, and Braille Instruction on a fee-for-service basis.
- **Spirit Enterprise Services** to provide transportation for consumers in order to engage in vocational rehabilitation activities.

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#### 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.

SCCB has established an internal **Supported Employment** program that includes **Customized Employment** provided by three (3) regionally assigned JOBS Specialists. During program year 2018 SCCB partnered with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Technical Assistance Center and the Youth Technical Assistance Center to provide intensive Customized Employment training to the JOBS Specialists. SCCB has signed a **Partnership Plus Agreement** with ABLE SC under provisions in the Ticket-to-Work program to provide ongoing supports for ticket holders. SCCB is working to establish other Cooperative Agreements with entities providing ongoing supports to consumers in Supported Employment.

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#### 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

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SCCB actively engages with the South Carolina business community through services provided by the Training & Employment Division (T&E) Employment Consultants. SCCB T&E Employment Consultants build and maintain partnerships with businesses to:

- Assess and better understand the unique human resource needs of South Carolina businesses;
- To help align SCCB programs to better meet the unique and specific human resource needs of South Carolina businesses;
- To create, establish, and foster relationships with South Carolina businesses that help them meet their unique and specific human resource needs, including talent acquisition and talent retention;
- Develop opportunities for Work Based Experiences, Internships, Job Shadowing, and other work based learning experiences that provide South Carolina Businesses with opportunities to gain experience with a diverse and qualified workforce;
- Create mutually beneficial relationships and facilitate linkages of job openings to a highly skilled and diverse talent pool of candidates. Referrals of consumers who are seeking employment and who have been judged to be Job Ready are received from SCCB Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors. The Employment Consultant's role is job development and placement that meets the needs of the business and the consumer. The Consultant also provides businesses and consumers with access to services that can be provided by SCCB or other governmental agencies. Incentives that may be applicable are also presented. These include:
- The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). This program allows a maximum available credit of \$2,400 per eligible worker.
- Sensitivity and awareness training for employers and organizations. This training includes American Disability Act (ADA), sighted guide techniques and attitudes regarding blindness. The presentation is designed to remove myths and apprehensions about blindness.
- Technical assistance for the implementation and support of assistive technology.

SCCB T&E Division also employs Assistive Technology Consultants (AT Consultants) who work directly with businesses and consumers to:

- Provide assessment and technical assistance in the provision of work place modifications and/or assistive technology solutions considered reasonable accommodations that enable a consumer who is blind to become an asset to the business partner;
- Make recommendations for software and/or other equipment which would enable the consumer to successfully engage in employment;
- Creates customized software solutions which may be necessary to allow the consumer to access computer systems effectively;
- Recommends the purchase of required equipment and/or software to the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; and,
- Oversees the delivery and installation of this equipment on the work site and provides the consumer training on any specialized applications.

## 2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

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SCCB coordinates the **Summer Internship Program (SIP)** in collaboration with business to match a college aged Junior or Senior with a paid internship over the summer. This highly successful program was expanded in 2016 to include transition students in our new **Summer Internship Program Jr. (SIP Jr.)** where transition students in their Junior and Senior year of High School are matched with internships in local businesses where they gain work experience, conduct career exploration, and establish relationships with employers. SCCB supports the employers by funding the paid internship, providing assistive technology or other workplace accommodations, providing technical assistance and ADA compliance information, and helping workplaces become more diversified and accessible.

SCCB **Career BOOST (Building Occupational Opportunities for Students in Transition)**: Is a contractual pilot program in partnership with South Carolina's Independent Living Centers, the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina, and LEA's. Pre-Employment Transition Services are provided to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities. These services include Self-Advocacy Workshops, Work Readiness Soft Skills Workshops, Exploration of Higher Education through College Tours, and Work Based Learning Experiences in partnership with the business community.

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## 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;

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SCCB has a Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the state agency responsible for administering the state Medicaid plan under Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.). This Cooperative Agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of all parties regarding the delivery of VR services, including extended services, for individuals with the most significant disabilities who have been determined to be eligible for home and community-based services under a Medicaid waiver, Medicaid state plan amendment, or other authority related to a state Medicaid program as applicable to South Carolina. This Cooperative Agreement will be updated during FPY 2018 to reflect alignment with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act.

### 2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

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SCCB is developing an updated Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN) to avoid duplication of services, increase coordination of employment services provided to the shared consumer populations, and to enhance Supported Employment programs. SCCB is an active partner with DDSN and both agencies are represented on the Employment First Initiative Steering Committee and the South Carolina Disability Employment Coalition.

### 3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

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SCCB is developing a new Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Mental Health to collaborate, coordinate, avoid duplication of services, and enhance the employment outcomes of shared consumer populations.

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## 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

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### A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS.

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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;

Staffing patterns are set through a joint effort of the SCCB Commissioner, Director of Consumer Services, Senior Management staff as appropriate, and Regional Directors. In an effort to assess current staffing and hiring needs, SCCB analyzes the following data on an annual basis:

1. Rate of consumer referrals to the VR Program
2. Ratio of VR Counselors to consumers certified eligible for VR services
3. Ratio of VR Counselors to consumers served
4. State Demographic Trends (Incidence of Blindness, Population estimates)
5. Employment/Unemployment data trends
6. Current and projected monetary resources

The SCCB VR program received 714 new referrals during FFY 2017, and served a total of 1,043 eligible consumers. This represented a consumer to VR Counselor ratio of 69.5 to 1. Staffing patterns are continuously evaluated by SCCB administration in an effort to make projections for future capacity to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services.

- ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

SCCB currently has the following personnel:

VR Counselors: 12 total positions 2 current vacancies

Transition VR Counselors: 3 total positions 1 current vacancy

Rehabilitation Assistants: 10 total positions 1 current vacancy

Rehabilitation Instructors: 16 total positions 0 current vacancies

Assistive Technology Staff: 3 total positions 1 current vacancy

Nurse: 1 total position 0 current vacancy

Other Staff (Support, Drivers, BEP) 33 total positions 3 current vacancies

Business Relations Consultants: 3 total positions 2 current vacancies

JOBS Specialists: 3 total positions 0 vacancies

Quality Assurance: 1 total position 0 vacancies

TOTAL Positions: 85 TOTAL Vacancies 10

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.

SCCB projections indicate the need for the following personnel in the next five (5) years:

VR Counselors: Projected 5 Year Growth Need +3

VR Transition Counselors: Projected 5 Year Growth Need + 2

VR Assistants: Projected 5 Year Growth Need +3

Rehabilitation Instructors: Projected 5 Year Growth Need +6

Assistive Technology Staff: Projected 5 Year Growth Need +1

Nurse: Projected 5 Year Growth Need +1

Other Staff (Support, Drivers, BEP): Projected 5 Year Growth Need +6

Business Relations Consultants: Projected 5 Year Growth Need +1

JOBS Specialists: Projected 5 Year Growth Need +1

Quality Assurance: Projected 5 Year Growth Need 0

## B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

i. a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

SCCB maintains relationships with the University of South Carolina and South Carolina State University, both of which produce graduates who have Master of Rehabilitation Counseling degrees. In addition, SCCB has developed an agreement to provide internship opportunities to Alabama State University Master of Rehabilitation Counseling students.

SCCB has set a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) standard that requires potential VR Counselors to hold a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a related field. The following chart shows statistics for the in-state university vocational rehabilitation counseling degree programs.

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

South Carolina State University Rehabilitation Counseling Program has 49 students enrolled with 25 graduates from the previous year. The University of South Carolina Rehabilitation Counseling Program has 43 students enrolled and 7 graduates from the previous year.

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.

South Carolina State University Rehabilitation Counseling Program had 25 graduates from the previous year. The University of South Carolina Rehabilitation Counseling Program had 7 graduates during the previous year.

## 2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

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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.

SCCB has established a plan for the recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified VR Counselors. This plan consists of the following areas of focus:

**Recruitment:** SCCB maintains relationships with graduate training programs that are Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) accredited located at the University of South Carolina and South Carolina State University. SCCB's recruitment plan ensures recruitment activities are conducted at all South Carolina schools that have graduates in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling. In addition, SCCB has written agreements with Alabama State University to provide internships to Master's degree students as part of our recruitment efforts. SCCB also utilizes social media and other online job posting sites to advertise vacant positions. The University of South Carolina and South Carolina State University prepare individuals for graduate degrees in VR Counseling. SCCB conducts outreach efforts to these universities and other universities to include: publications and distribution of targeted recruiting material, attendance at career days and job fairs, and recruitment events. In addition, practicum placements and internships are offered to students who are in CSPD qualifying programs. These efforts are designed to recruit qualified personnel, including minority graduates and those with disabilities. SCCB has been especially successful in recruiting personnel from the SC institutions, particularly those from minority backgrounds. Students from these programs and out-of-state programs are encouraged to accept internships and practicum placements with the Commission.

**Preparation:** Staff preparation begins with SCCB's high standards for professional education and professional certification that occurs primarily prior to employment with the agency. All new staff are required to attend and complete SCCB's New Employee Orientation program that provides basic preparation and onboarding. Further professional training and development occurs with the direct supervisor, and SCCB actively engages staff in ongoing professional preparation and development. SCCB uses a system for staff evaluation that is available to all state employees. The system focuses on the individual employee's job duties compared to stated goals and objectives. These goals and objectives are identified and discussed with the employee at the beginning of the rating period. Ongoing communication between the employee and supervisor clarifies the employee's understanding of how to meet the performance standards and enhances service delivery to the consumer. At the conclusion of the rating period, an evaluation is performed to rate the employee on each duty in relation to performance objectives. The system provides for employee input into the development of the goals and objectives in order to support successful performance. Another feature of the system allows objectives to be amended

throughout the review period. This system provides a mechanism for helping a substandard performer improve and a means of removing an employee from a position should performance not improve to an acceptable level.

**Retention:** SCCB takes an active role in employee/employer relations. Through strong leadership and the assistance of all staff, the Commission provides a healthy and safe work environment. Employee behavior and performance problems are addressed appropriately and in a timely manner, with an emphasis on assisting the employee to improve. SCCB promotes internal and external customer service and has made teamwork an integral part of day-to-day operations. SCCB provides career advancement and growth opportunities through internal promotions and staff training.

### 3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

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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

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SCCB utilizes state standards to administer the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) as it relates to hiring practices. According to state law, VR Counselors must have a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, or a Master's degree in the field of counseling with a graduate course in Theories and Techniques of Counseling, or a Master's degree in any discipline and at least 18 credit hours of coursework at the Master's level or above within thirty months of the date of hire. The 18 credit hours of coursework must include the following: One graduate course with a primary focus on the Theories and Techniques of Counseling three graduate courses, each with a primary focus on one of the following areas: Occupational Information, Job Development and Placement, Medical Aspects of Disabilities, Foundations of Rehabilitation, Psychological Aspects of Disabilities, and Personal and Vocational Adjustment Two graduate courses, each with a primary focus on one of the following areas: Assessment, Research Methodology, Vocational and Career Development, Community Resources, Case Management, and Delivery of Rehabilitation Services; or a current Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification, regardless of degree.

SCCB currently has 3 vacant VR Counselor positions that are in various stages of the recruitment process. Of the counselors currently employed by SCCB all meet the state minimum standard.

#### 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.

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SCCB utilizes state standards to administer the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) as it relates to hiring practices. According to state law, VR Counselors must have a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, or a Master's degree in the field of counseling with a graduate course in Theories and Techniques of Counseling, or a Master's degree in any discipline and at least 18 credit hours of coursework at the Master's level or above within thirty months of the date of hire. The 18 credit hours

of coursework must include the following: One graduate course with a primary focus on the Theories and Techniques of Counseling three graduate courses, each with a primary focus on one of the following areas: Occupational Information, Job Development and Placement, Medical Aspects of Disabilities, Foundations of Rehabilitation, Psychological Aspects of Disabilities, and Personal and Vocational Adjustment Two graduate courses, each with a primary focus on one of the following areas: Assessment, Research Methodology, Vocational and Career Development, Community Resources, Case Management, and Delivery of Rehabilitation Services; or a current Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification, regardless of degree.

SCCB currently has 3 vacant VR Counselor positions that are in various stages of the recruitment process. Of the counselors currently employed by SCCB all meet the state minimum standard.

#### 4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

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Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

##### A. SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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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

SCCB has developed a comprehensive staff development training program designed to expand and strengthen the knowledge and skill level of service delivery staff. During FFY 2018 SCCB has added a new VR Counselor Trainer position with the intent to provide more in-depth focused VR Counselor skill development. The four objectives outlined in the training program are based on the need to increase staff competency so that the quality and quantity of competitive employment placements can be improved. SCCB has partnered with the University of South Carolina and private and public consultants specializing in the field of vocational rehabilitation and/or blindness in order to provide quality staff development training. The most critical training needs of SCCB staff were determined from the results of a Staff Development Training Needs Assessment, comments from Training Evaluations, and the VR Staff Survey results from Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. Staff development training needs have been identified in the areas of Leadership Skills, Administrative Skills and Technical Skills.

Four (4) training objectives were identified as follows:

- **Objective 1 (Leadership Training Objective)** Organization assessment, problem solving skills, basic supervisory skills and best personnel practices are the primary focus areas of Objective 1. To accomplish the leadership training objective, SCCB will utilize Certified Public Management (CPM) training, State sponsored supervisory training, National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute (NRLI) and other targeted trainings and conference to keep our business practices up to date with current paradigms. SCCB recognizes that staff development needs may change.
- **Objective 2 (Technical Skills Training)** The development of technical skills to achieve the SCCB mission and vision is the primary focus of Objective 2. Private contractors who specialize in the field of blindness and vocational rehabilitation will also be utilized to accomplish Objective 2. Continued professional development and retention CRC credentials is encouraged and supported by SCCB.

- **Objective 3 (Communication of Policies and Procedures)** Orienting staff to the SCCB organizational structure and service delivery policies and procedures is the primary focus of Objective 3. In order to accomplish this, new staff will participate in an agency wide two-day Employee Orientation provided by HR. They will also receive field specific training in AWARE, VR training modules on policy and procedures, and shadow adjustment and VR staff for a two-week period.
- **Objective 4 (Specialty Training)** For FY 2015, each region is scheduled for quarterly meetings in which case staffing and regional specific trainings will be included. Departmental training schedules are currently being developed with the intention of holding one annual in-service when feasible. Bi-annual surveys of staff are done to stay abreast of trends in staff training needs. In an effort to provide equal access to staff development training for all staff, accessible formats (i.e. Braille, large print, electronic format, etc.) will be provided to those who require alternative formats.

## B. ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE

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procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

SCCB conducts in-service trainings for professional staff throughout the fiscal year. These trainings are planned based on a yearly assessment of training needs that includes recent and emerging trends in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling, current research findings, best practices, and quality assurance activities. SCCB works to encourage and support professional staff in developing professional development plans that may include specific professional conferences, workshops, and on-line training. In FPY 2017 SCCB created and hired a VR Counseling Staff Trainer position dedicated to identifying gaps in counseling staff's knowledge, skills, and abilities and to create and implement a training plan to address these gaps, train to emerging trends and specialized populations, and identify and train to evidence based practices.

## 5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

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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.

SCCB strives to have qualified staff proficient in Braille production, in communication with the Deaf/Blind, and a bilingual counselor to communicate with the rapidly growing Hispanic population. SCCB engages in ongoing efforts to study demographic trends and changes to the population to identify areas of needed expertise. Braille services are provided to SCCB staff and upon request to other public and/or private entities statewide. SCCB has a Deaf/Blind Consultant who is proficient in the use of sign language for the deaf, hard of hearing and dual sensory impaired. SCCB contracts interpreter services as needed in order to serve all other individuals who have limited English speaking ability or limited modes of communication.

## 6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

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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.



SCCB is improving collaboration with the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDOE) to coordinate procedures and activities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The focus of the collaboration has been the development of strategies for improving service delivery systems for blind and visually impaired individuals who are receiving services from the SCCB Children's Services program and VR Transition Counselors. SCCB has become a fully engaged and active partner in the Transition Alliance of South Carolina (TASC) that includes regional coordinating councils where the partner agencies receive training, develop collaborative plans, and develop professional relationships. TASC is a partnership of the Department of Education, Department of Disability and Special Needs, Vocational Rehabilitation Department, and SCCB. SCCB is also represented on the Advisory Council for Educating Students with Disabilities, and advisory council to the South Carolina Department of Education's Office of Special Education.

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## 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:

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#### A. WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

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SCCB contracted with the National Center for Innovation, Training and Excellence (NCITE), a part of San Diego State University Research Foundation's Interwork Institute (SDSURF-II) during FFY 2016 to conduct a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment to determine the vocational rehabilitation needs of South Carolinians who are blind or visually impaired, identify the areas of VR program operations where service gaps exist, and identify areas of program innovation and improvement to become fully compliant with requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act. This assessment was designed to specifically assess the areas noted under section (j) above.

This assessment determined that the following gaps existed in this area:

1. SCCB did not offer supported employment or customized employment services to its consumers with most significant disabilities. This is reflected in the low numbers of employment outcomes for these individuals.
2. SCCB did not offer Work Incentive Benefits Counseling to individuals who were beneficiaries of SSI/SSDI, nor did SCCB collaborate with the South Carolina Work Incentives Program, therefore many beneficiaries expressed anxiety and fear over returning to employment due to a lack of understanding of work incentives.
3. Individuals with disabilities identified the following as barriers to achieving employment outcomes:
  - Attitudes of the public and employers toward individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
  - Lack of reliable and accessible transportation.
  - Independent living skills are a major need of SCCB consumers.
  - The Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center (EBMRC or the Center) meets this need for a small percentage of SCCB consumers who are available to attend training in Columbia, but

many individuals, staff and partners expressed a need for more comprehensive services to be available throughout South Carolina especially in rural areas.

During the period of the last Unified State Plan cycle, SCCB made significant progress in closing these gaps. SCCB hired, trained, and obtained certification for a Work Incentives Counselor, and established referral pathways to the WIPA grantee benefits counseling services. SCCB established JOBS Specialist positions trained to provide Supported Employment including Customized Employment. SCCB signed a Ticket to Work Partnership Plus agreement with an Employment Network to provide on-going supports for supported employment cases. And SCCB has signed a number of fee-for-service agreements throughout the state with qualified service providers in the areas of Orientation and Mobility, Braille Instruction, Independent Living Skills that Support Employment, and adjustment to blindness psychological counseling. SCCB continues to work to close these gaps, and this modified state plan reflects these goals and priorities.

#### B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

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Gaps included:

- i. Individuals with blindness and vision impairments who are Hispanic may be underserved by SCCB. South Carolina has experienced one of the largest increases of Hispanics in the country.
- ii. The needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments from minority ethnic groups are similar to the needs of other ethnic groups with the possible addition of language barriers.

#### C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

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Gaps included:

- Individuals who have multiple and most significant disabilities have been unserved or underserved due to a lack of Supported Employment program capacity and resources; Individuals who have co-existing psychological disorders may have been traditionally unserved or underserved as SCCB has focused primarily on adjustment to blindness issues. SCCB is actively working to close these gaps and better serve these populations.

#### D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

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Gaps included:

- America's Job Centers (AJCs) in South Carolina (SC Works) have not effectively served individuals with blindness and vision impairments. There have been no documented instances of SCCB cases that are jointly served by other workforce entities.
- Historically, the relationship between SCCB and the AJCs, although cordial, is primarily one of referral with no evidence of substantial services after referral;
- Although the AJCs are accessible, the technology is frequently out of date and the AJC staff lack the skills to effectively operate/demonstrate the technology; Under WIOA there are legal

requirements around the development of partnerships between SCCB and entities in the greater workforce development system.

While these gaps are the focus on continuing efforts both by the AJC's (SC Works) and SCCB, much has been accomplished since the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. SCCB has improved co-location of SCCB staff in the AJC's for specific periods of time each month where space allows. SCCB has signed MOU's and Infrastructure Cost Sharing Agreements with all SC Works service areas, and has been providing technical assistance to the AJC's in regards to programmatic and physical accessibility.

#### E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

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Gaps included:

- A high percentage of youth with disabilities have multiple disabilities requiring multiple services. Historically, SCCB's VR program has not effectively served individuals with multiple disabilities including youth with the most significant disabilities;
- Transition-age youth appear to have limited exposure to work prior to exiting the school system. School staff indicated that their focus is upon academics and they do not have the resources to provide employment related services;
- Soft skill development, typically delivered in job readiness/preparation programs, is a major need for this group;
- Individuals and education partners expressed a lack of involvement of SCCB staff in the planning and delivery of transition services to youth in school. There appears to be minimal involvement of SCCB in activities beyond IEP meetings and minimal provision of Pre-Employment Training Services;
- Transition-age youth have a great need for mentors who would foster high expectations and build self-advocacy skill;
- Parents and family members of youth with disabilities need more information on the services available through SCCB and how to access them;
- Parents and youth with disabilities need training on self-advocacy. Education partners stated that greater involvement of families leads to accessing more services potentially leading to better outcomes. Families who are poor and live in rural areas are less likely to advocate for services and are most in need of training and support;
- Teachers working with youth who are blind or visually impaired need training and support in working with students using assistive technology. Assistive technology is a strength of SCCB, and the capacity to provided quality assistive technology support could be increased using school resources;
- Education partners and consumers suggested that SCCB take a lead role in bringing stakeholder groups together to foster greater integration of services and increase consumer awareness of services available to them.

While these gaps are areas of continued focus for SCCB, much has been accomplished since the Statewide Needs Assessment. SCCB now provides Career BOOST services to students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. Career BOOST provides students with instruction in self-advocacy skills, work readiness skills training, work based learning experiences, and exploration of opportunities for career training in post-secondary schools and institutions of higher education. SCCB designed and operates the Student Internship Jr. Program that provides high school transition students with a paid work experience. SCCB Transition VR Counselors have increased their involvement in IEP meetings, and SCCB has formalized memorandum of understandings with LEA's.

## 2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

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The majority of intensive VR services are delivered at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for Employment located in Columbia. Services in outlying areas, especially rural areas, were found to be a significant need during the Statewide Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs. Those who cannot or choose not to attend EBMRC had limited available options. VR 'outreach' services to this population are limited in scope and duration. CRPs are considered one way of addressing the need for geographic access to services. The most common themes that emerged in this area were:

- Historically, SCCB has not relied on CRPs to provide rehabilitation services to applicants and eligible individuals in South Carolina. SCCB has focused its service delivery system on the EBMRC and 'Outreach' services to individuals who cannot or choose not to attend EBMRC. Outreach services are limited in scope and duration.
- SCCB has a limited contractual agreement with Goodwill Industries and the National Federation for the Blind to provide limited independent living skills training and job preparation services.
- Individuals expressed a need for community programs that provide more comprehensive services in the northern and southern parts of South Carolina
- The ABVI center near Charleston (a private non-profit CRP) appears to be under-utilized and reports it has the capacity to partner with SCCB to deliver more comprehensive services to that part of the state.

While these needs are a continued focus of SCCB, much progress has been made to close these identified gaps. SCCB has signed fee-for-service agreements with qualified Community Rehabilitation Programs across the state. These agreements have increased the ability of SCCB to meet the rehabilitation needs of rural 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 .

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Gaps included:

- A high percentage of youth with disabilities have multiple disabilities requiring multiple services. Historically, SCCB's VR program has not effectively served individuals with multiple disabilities including youth with the most significant disabilities;

- Transition-age youth appear to have limited exposure to work prior to exiting the school system. School staff indicated that their focus is upon academics and they do not have the resources to provide employment related services;
- Soft skill development, typically delivered in job readiness/preparation programs, is a major need for this group. This is available to a limited degree through Goodwill;
- Individuals and education partners expressed a lack of involvement of SCCB staff in the planning and delivery of transition services to youth in school. There appears to be minimal involvement of SCCB in activities beyond IEP meetings and minimal provision of Pre-Employment Training Services;
- Transition-age youth have a great need for mentors who would foster high expectations and build self-advocacy skill;
- Parents and family members of youth with disabilities need more information on the services available through SCCB and how to access them;
- Parents and youth with disabilities need training on self-advocacy. Education partners stated that greater involvement of families leads to accessing more services potentially leading to better outcomes. Families who are poor and live in rural areas are less likely to advocate for services and are most in need of training and support;
- Teachers working with youth who are blind or visually impaired need training and support in working with students using assistive technology. Assistive technology is a strength of SCCB, and the capacity to provide quality assistive technology support could be increased using school resources;
- Education partners and consumers suggested that SCCB take a lead role in bringing stakeholder groups together to foster greater integration of services and increase consumer awareness of services available to them.

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## K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

### 1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES;

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Based on data obtained from the American Community Survey (ACS) and Cornell University's Annual Disability Status Report for South Carolina, SCCB estimates that 2.7% of the South Carolinians experience a visual impairment or blindness. (ACS criteria for visual impairments is broader than VR program eligibility) The most recent American Community Survey data indicates that there are an estimated 6,800 South Carolinians who have some level of visual impairment who are working age (21 to 64) and who are not currently working but are actively seeking employment. In addition to the ACS estimates there are 2,900 youth (age 16-20) who have visual impairments in the state. This is a total estimate of 9,700 individuals who have visual impairments between the ages of 16 and 64.

The visual impairment categorization in the ACS is very broad, all-inclusive, and self-reported. In estimating the number of individuals who would meet the narrower VR program eligibility criteria, SCCB estimates that in any given federal fiscal year there are approximately 3,250 potentially eligible individuals within the state.

Of those SCCB is currently serving 1,043 eligible individuals. SCCB is working on outreach efforts and strategies that strive to increase accessibility and awareness of the VR program so that potentially eligible individuals are aware of, and can access VR services. In addition SCCB is working with WIOA core partners to ensure that blind and visually impaired individuals seeking employment can access services through the one-stop centers as part of the Statewide Workforce Development System.

## 2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

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### A. THE VR PROGRAM;

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SCCB estimates that the VR program will serve 1,150 eligible individuals during FPY 2018, 1,260 during FPY 2019, 1,270 during FFY 2020, and 1,300 during FFY 2021.

### B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

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SCCB built the capacity to provide Supported Employment services in FFY 17. SCCB has established goals to provide Supported Employment services to **6** eligible individual during FFY 2018, **8** individuals during FFY 2019, **10** individuals during FFY 2020, and **10** individuals during FFY 2021.

### C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION;

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SCCB is does not anticipate the need for an order of selection.

## 3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

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SCCB does not anticipate the need for an order of selection.

## 4. THE COST OF SERVICES FOR THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ESTIMATED TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES. IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION, IDENTIFY THE COST OF SERVICES FOR EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY.

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N/A

## L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

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The designated State unit must:

### 1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED

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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 findings of the FFY 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment were used to develop goals, priorities, and strategies reflected in the previous iteration of the South Carolina Unified State Plan. See section (p.) *Evaluation and Reports of Progress* for information related to progress on the previous state plan goals and priorities.

For the current Unified State Plan, SCCB identified gaps from two primary sources. The first being unmet gaps identified in the FFY 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The second source is the South Carolina Workforce Development Board's Economic Analysis and Strategic Plan in order to align SCCB initiatives with the goals of South Carolina's Workforce Development System. The following gaps have been identified:

**Gap 1:** South Carolina’s current labor force, including individuals who are blind or visually impaired, do not have industry recognized credentials, knowledge, skills, or abilities to meet current or emerging demands of the business community.

**Gap 2:** SCCB needs to improve alignment of policies, resources, and staff expertise to provide job driven, labor market informed, vocational counseling and guidance that aligns with South Carolina’s Talent Pipeline Project and Sector Strategies initiatives to assist eligible consumers in accessing career pathways that lead to high and middle skill/income jobs in growth sectors.

**Gap 3:** SCCB needs to improve partnerships with business in order to more accurately identify current and future workforce needs of business and industry to support career pathways in growth sectors and improve services to business.

**Gap 4:** SCCB needs to improve marketing, branding, and engagement with business, consumers, and other workforce partners to increase awareness, improve partnerships, and increase effectiveness and efficiency of services leading to competitive integrated employment.

Based on these identified gaps, and in alignment with the South Carolina Workforce Development Board’s Strategic Plan, SCCB establishes the following objectives. These objectives have been jointly developed and agreed to by the South Carolina Commission for the Blind Board, and are in alignment with the Workforce Development Board’s *Strategies to Build a Competitive Workforce Plan*.

**Objective 1: Identify, invest and support blind and visually impaired job seekers in the attainment of industry recognized credentials and vocational training required for current and emerging jobs.**

**Objective 2: Align resources, policy, and strategies to continuously improve competitive integrated employment outcomes for blind and visually impaired job seekers.**

**Objective 3: Identify current and future needs of business and industry to support career pathways in growth sectors.**

**Objective 4: Engage job seekers, business leaders, and other workforce partners through marketing and outreach to articulate a value proposition to each.**

See section (o) below for SCCB’s goals and strategies to meet these objectives.

## **2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.**

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In response to the gaps identified in the 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, the economic analysis included as part of this Unified State Plan, and in alignment with the South Carolina Workforce Development Board’s *Strategies to Build a Competitive Workforce* strategic plan, the SCCB has identified the following four (4) Objectives and eight (8) goals:

**Objective 1: Identify, invest and support job seekers who are blind and visually impaired in the attainment of industry recognized credentials and vocational training required for current and emerging jobs.**

**Goal 1.1:** Provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to youth and transition students resulting in the attainment of industry recognized in-demand credentials to obtain competitive integrated employment.

**Goal 1.2:** Provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to adult job seekers who are blind or visually impaired resulting in the attainment of industry recognized in-demand credentials required for competitive integrated employment.

**Objective 2: Align resources, policy, and strategies to continuously improve competitive integrated employment outcomes for blind and visually impaired job seekers.**

**Goal 2.1:** Develop and enhance job seeker work readiness and soft skills.

**Goal 2.2:** Enhance and improve job placement services and job support services for job seekers who are blind or visually impaired.

**Objective 3: Identify current and future needs of business and industry to support career pathways in growth sectors.**

**Goal 3.1:** Provide specialized training through a Pre-Apprenticeship Program to prepare adults not enrolled in college programs, as an alternative career pathway to current and future business and industry needs.

**Goal 3.2:** Increase and improve talent acquisition and talent retention services to business in support of employees who are blind or visually impaired.

**Objective 4: Engage job seekers, business leaders, and other workforce partners through marketing and outreach to articulate a value proposition to each.**

**Goal 4.1:** Improve **visibility and branding of SCCB** with job seekers who are blind or visually impaired, businesses seeking to diversify labor market talent pool, and other workforce partners to increase the awareness and effectiveness of SCCB services.

**Goal 4.2:** Improve visibility and awareness of SCCB within the Workforce Development System.

### 3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

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SCCB assures that agency Objectives, Goals, and Strategies are based on the findings of the 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and the findings of the Unified State Plan economic analysis. Further, SCCB's Objectives, Goals, and Strategies are in alignment with the South Carolina Workforce Investment Board's Strategic Plan. Finally, SCCB assures that period of public comment has been made available and public comment informed this plan.

#### A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

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SCCB contracted with the National Center for Innovation, Training and Excellence (NCITE), a part of San Diego State University Research Foundation's Interwork Institute (SDSURF-II) during FFY 2016 to conduct a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment to determine the vocational rehabilitation needs of South Carolinians who are blind or visually impaired, identify the areas of VR program operations where service gaps exist, and identify areas of program innovation and improvement to become fully compliant with requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act. The text of that report follows:

San Diego State University Interwork Institute The South Carolina Commission for the Blind and The State Board of Commissioners Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Submitted to: The South Carolina Commission for the Blind The South Carolina Board of Commissioners Prepared by: Chip Kenney, M.S. ,



Project Director Deborah Greene, M.A. Meera Adya, Ph.D., J.D. Chaz Compton, Ed.D., CRC Interwork Institute San Diego State University March 25, 2016 Acknowledgements The comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) conducted on behalf of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) and the State Board of Commissioners could not have been accomplished without the assistance of a number of individuals who contributed greatly to various phases of the project. The needs assessment team would like to thank these individuals for their contributions to the needs assessment effort. The following individuals were instrumental in helping to ensure that the research activities associated with this needs assessment were completed successfully: Elaine Robertson and Kyle Walker coordinated the CSNA process at SCCB, identifying the key staff persons and their roles and responsibilities. Elaine worked closely with the SCCB Board and staff to identify and recruit a broad spectrum of partners and individuals to provide feedback for the assessment. Shana Robinson compiled data on services to SCCB consumers that were essential in analyzing the agency's performance as it relates to several standards. Ms. Robinson transmitted this information to the project team in a very responsive and timely manner which assisted in the ability to triangulate data from an agency-specific source and allowed the report to include the most recent agency-specific data available. Elaine Robertson, Elizabeth Alexander (Greenville Office) and Marquita Miller (Charleston Office) coordinated the individual and staff interviews at SCCB and scheduled the focus group sessions. They provided assistance with a myriad of organizational processes and activities. Ed Bible identified community partners, businesses and individuals with disabilities to participate in the focus groups and complete the electronic surveys. Finally, the project team would like to express their appreciation to each individual who took the time to share their thoughts and concerns by completing a survey, taking part in an interview, or participating in the focus group research.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** The South Carolina Commission for the Blind, the State Board of Commissioners and the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University jointly conducted an assessment of the vocational rehabilitation (VR) needs of persons with blindness and vision impairments residing in the state of South Carolina. The purpose of the assessment was to provide planners with VR information pertinent to the allocation of resources, to provide a rationale for the development of SCCB's State Plan, and to comply with the needs assessment mandate in the Rehabilitation Act.

The process that was developed for conducting the needs assessment involved four primary data-gathering approaches: Electronic surveys conducted with four stakeholder groups and hard copy surveys of a random sample of former and current SCCB consumers, other individuals with blindness and vision impairments, and businesses in South Carolina; Focus groups conducted with three stakeholder groups (individuals with blindness and vision impairments, representatives of organizations that provide services to persons with blindness and vision impairments, and businesses); Key informant interviews conducted with SCCB staff; individuals identified as knowledgeable about the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina, businesses; and Analysis of a variety of existing demographic and case service data relevant to individuals with disabilities.

Through the data collection efforts, researchers solicited information from four primary stakeholder groups: (a) former, current or potential consumers of SCCB located throughout South Carolina; (b) community partners (e.g., the Commission, educational institutions, municipalities) and representatives of organizations that provide services to individuals who are potential or actual consumers of SCCB; (c) SCCB staff; and (d) representatives of businesses operating in South Carolina or surrounding areas. The approach was designed to capture input from a variety of perspectives in order to acquire a sense of the multi-faceted needs of persons with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina.

Efforts were made to gather information pertinent to the following eight main categories: 1. General agency performance; 2. Needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment; 3. Needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments from different ethnic groups, including needs of individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program; 4. Needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system; 5. Needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in transition; 6. Need for community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) that serve individuals with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina; 7. Business relations and services, including SCCB's ability to meet the needs of businesses in South Carolina regarding recruiting, hiring, accommodating and retaining employees with blindness or vision impairments; and 8. Alignment of other SCCB programs and services, including the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center and the Training and Employment Division (EBMRC), with the VR program in meeting the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina.

As part of this CSNA, at the agency's request, an interim report was issued in January to address specific issues related to SCCB's work under the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA). Some of the same findings are included in this final report. SCCB has already proposed actions to address gaps identified in both reports. The full Interim Report is included in Appendix A.

Over 300 key informants provided input for the CSNA research through surveys, interviews and focus groups. It is important to put the following in perspective when reading these reports and the supporting data: 1. In the context of this report "SCCB" refers exclusively to the VR program of the Commission and not to any of the other state or federal programs administered by the agency. 2. This CSNA covers a period of time when SCCB operated under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the authorizing legislation for VR programs across the country. WIOA, the new authorizing legislation, was passed into law in July of 2014. It places new requirements upon SCCB with varying dates of implementation. SCCB is working diligently to build the capacity of the agency to comply with the new requirements of WIOA. 3. SCCB has experienced significant staff turnover during the time period of this CSNA. This turnover undoubtedly affected the performance of SCCB. The turnover situation has stabilized and SCCB has filled many positions that provide critical direct services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired in South Carolina. 4. Though findings are reported from all groups, the limited participation rates from community partners and businesses decrease the generalizability of findings pertaining to them and suggest a need for increased partnerships in those sectors.

The following summary highlights the results of the most commonly cited needs and themes derived from the surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews in the eight main areas of investigation.

**Section One: General Agency Performance.** The most common themes that emerged in this area were:

- Although SCCB has consistently met most Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) standards and indicators over the past five years there has been a significant drop off in the past three years in the number of cases closed with an employment outcome. Possible explanations for the decline in performance include reductions in force, office closures, staff turnover, and ending the practice of taking "Homemaker" and "Unpaid Family Worker" closures.
- There was a high frequency of comments by key informants (individuals and agency partners) about the speed of services, lack of consistent communication and unclear rationales for many agency decisions including eligibility, discontinuation of services at EBMRC and case closure.

- There was a high frequency of comments from staff concerning low morale across the agency. Staff concerns were centered around high turnover, low pay, high workloads and lack of recognition. Staff did recognize that SCCB's VR program is turning in a positive direction and are generally hopeful their concerns will be appropriately addressed.
- There has been a marked decrease over a three-year period in the numbers of SSI/SSDI recipients served and the number achieving an employment outcome.
- SCCB serves a very low rate and has a low rehabilitation rate for individuals with multiple disabling conditions. This includes a low rehabilitation rate for those attending EBMRC. The number of individuals served who are coded as having most significant disabilities is very small.
- SCCB has minimal disputes with applicants or eligible individuals that result in mediations, impartial hearings or civil legal action. However, it should be noted that interviews with individuals a majority expressed lack of awareness of the Client Assistance Program
- SCCB ranks high nationally among agencies serving the blind in average case expenditures and time in service. Historically, the most prevalent services provided have been Assessment and Diagnostic/Treatment.
- SCCB ranks high nationally among agencies serving the blind in the number of hours worked at closure.
- SCCB ranks low nationally among agencies serving the blind for indicators of the quality of employment outcomes (wages and medical benefits).
- Average time in service for individuals is almost one year longer for individuals whose cases are closed without an employment outcome. This, coupled with expenditure data, indicate that significant agency resources are utilized in cases that do not lead to an employment outcome. On average \$250,000 per year is expended on cases closed unsuccessfully after acceptance.
- Nearly 20 percent of the cases closed without an employment outcome are the result of individuals 'no longer interested in services' or 'refused services' or 'unable to locate'.
- Of those individuals attending EBMRC over the past five years, 43 percent were closed unsuccessfully or as homemakers.
- SCCB does not have a supported employment program indicating that individuals with the most significant disability are underserved.
- According to the agency's data, the rehabilitation rate for individuals who are transition age is 0%. This is significant considering the federal requirements under WIOA around employment for youth with disabilities.
- The rehabilitation rate for individuals between the ages of 55- 64 served by SCCB over the past three fiscal years is 58 percent (below national averages). This is significant considering the trend of older workers, including those with disabilities wanting or needing to remain in the workforce.
- RSA data and comments from key informants (staff and individuals) indicate that few individuals served by SCCB are also served by other partners in the workforce development system. SCCB consumer awareness of workforce system services that may benefit them is minimal.

- The data reviewed indicates the following segments of the population of South Carolina who may be underserved are:
    - o Youth between the ages of 13-24
    - o Adults between the ages of 55-64
    - o Adults over the age of 65 who wish or need to continue working
    - o Individuals who are Hispanic, Native American or Asian
    - o Individuals with the most significant disabilities
    - o Individuals with multiple disabilities including cognitive, mental health, deaf/blindness, and physical disabilities
    - o Individuals with disabilities who live in rural areas of South Carolina and cannot or choose not to access services at EBMRC
    - o Individuals with disabilities who live at or below the poverty level
- Section Two: Needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including supported employment

The most common themes that emerged in this area were:

- SCCB does not offer supported employment or customized employment services to its consumers with significant and most significant disabilities. This is reflected in the low numbers of employment outcomes for these individuals.
  - Individuals with disabilities identified the following as barriers to achieving employment outcomes:
    - o Attitudes of the public and employers toward individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
    - o Lack of reliable and accessible transportation.
  - A significant number of SCCB consumers receive SSA benefits and fear the loss of benefits if they seek employment. Access to benefits counseling provided by either SCCB or outside agencies appears to be minimal.
  - Independent living skills are a major need of SCCB consumers. The Rehabilitation Center (EBMRC or the Center) meets this need for a small percentage of SCCB consumers, but many individuals, staff and partners expressed a need for more comprehensive services to be available throughout South Carolina especially in rural areas.
- Section Three: Needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments from different ethnic groups, including needs of individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

The most common themes that emerged in this area were:

- Individuals with blindness and vision impairments who are Hispanic may be underserved by SCCB. South Carolina has experienced one of the largest increases of Hispanics in the country.
  - The needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments from minority ethnic groups are similar to the needs of other ethnic group with the possible addition of language barriers.
- Section Four: Needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system. The most common themes that emerged in this area were:
- America's Job Centers (AJCs) in South Carolina (SC Works) have not effectively served individuals with blindness and vision impairments. There have been no documented instances of SCCB cases that are jointly served by other workforce entities.
  - Historically, the relationship between SCCB and the AJCs, although cordial, is primarily one of referral with no evidence of substantial services after referral;
  - Although the AJCs are accessible, the technology is frequently out of date and the AJC staff lack the skills to effectively operate/demonstrate the technology;

- Under WIOA there are legal requirements around the development of partnerships between SCCB and entities in the greater workforce development system. Section Five: Needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in transition.

The most common themes that emerged in this area were:

- A high percentage of youth with disabilities have multiple disabilities requiring multiple services. Historically, SCCB's VR program has not effectively served individuals with multiple disabilities including youth with the most significant disabilities;
- Transition-age youth appear to have limited exposure to work prior to exiting the school system. School staff indicated that their focus is upon academics and they do not have the resources to provide employment related services;
- Soft skill development, typically delivered in job readiness/preparation programs, is a major need for this group. This is available to a limited degree through Goodwill;
- Individuals and education partners expressed a lack of involvement of SCCB staff in the planning and delivery of transition services to youth in school. There appears to be minimal involvement of SCCB in activities beyond Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and minimal provision of Pre-Employment Training Services (Pre-ETS);
- Transition-age youth have a great need for mentors who would foster high expectations and build self-advocacy skill;
- Parents and family members of youth with disabilities need more information on the services available through SCCB and how to access them;
- Parents and youth with disabilities need training on self-advocacy. Education partners stated that greater involvement of families leads to accessing more services potentially leading to better outcomes. Families who are poor and live in rural areas are less likely to advocate for services and are most in need of training and support;
- Teachers working with youth who are blind or visually impaired need training and support in working with students using assistive technology. Assistive technology is a strength of SCCB, and the capacity to provided quality assistive technology support could be increased using school resources;
- Education partners and consumers suggested that SCCB take a lead role in bringing stakeholder groups together to foster greater integration of services and increase consumer awareness of services available to them. Section Six: Need for Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) in South Carolina The majority of intensive VR services are delivered at the EBMRC located in Columbia. Services in outlying areas, especially rural areas, are not considered adequate to meet the needs of consumers living in these areas who cannot or choose not to attend EBMRC. VR 'outreach' services to this population are limited in scope and duration. CRPs are considered one way of addressing the need for geographic access to services.

The most common themes that emerged in this area were:

- Historically, SCCB has not relied on CRPs to provide rehabilitation services to applicants and eligible individuals in South Carolina. SCCB has focused its service delivery system on the EBMRC and 'Outreach' services to individuals who cannot or choose not to attend EBMRC. Outreach services are limited in scope and duration.

- SCCB has a limited contractual agreement with Goodwill Industries and the National Federation for the Blind to provide limited independent living skills training and job preparation services.
- Individuals expressed a need for community programs that provide more comprehensive services in the northern and southern parts of South Carolina
- The Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABVI) center near Charleston (a private non-profit CRP) appears to be under-utilized and reports it has the capacity to partner with SCCB to deliver more comprehensive services to that part of the state. Section Seven: Business Relations and Services The information gathered from businesses in South Carolina was very limited as a result of a low return rate on the survey and the small size of the three small focus groups.

Common themes included:

- Low survey response rates and low representation for the focus groups could be an indication that VR's partnerships with the business community are limited in quantity and/or quality. Two of the businesses represented in the focus groups had hired individuals who had approached them directly for employment. SCCB was then brought in to provide necessary supports which secured the employment. The project team did not interview any employer in which SCCB initiated the placement.
- Businesses expressed a need for assistance with training on understanding disability and disability sensitivity in recruiting and hiring qualified employees with disabilities. Respondents encouraged SCCB to take a leadership role with businesses in South Carolina as a disability expert and to develop long-term and trusting relationships with businesses.
- ABVI in Charleston indicated that Boeing is building a large plant near Charleston. This presents an opportunity for SCCB to develop a partnership that could lead to significant employment opportunities especially in high-wage, high-demand jobs. ABVI also indicated that the Lighthouse of Seattle was opening a community rehabilitation program and working directly with Boeing.
- Over the past few years and under WIA, SCCB (and most VR agencies nationally) has not maintained an effective working relationship with other workforce entities. Therefore, SCCB has not been in a position to use these relationships to leverage opportunities to develop relationships with businesses. Also, other workforce agencies have not had full access to the expertise that SCCB would bring to the table around blindness, low vision and assistive technology that would provide a useful job retention resource to the workforce system.

**Concluding Remarks:** This CSNA identified gaps in performance, needs of individuals who are blind and visually impaired and the needs of community partners and educators in South Carolina. It also identifies population segments that appear to be underserved and provides recommendations for SCCB to consider in addressing their needs.

This CSNA is intended to serve as a starting point and resource for SCCB and the Board to develop goals, objectives and strategic plans to address these needs. It is important to look at needs as a gap between desired and achieved results.

SCCB is to be highly commended for already taking steps to address these needs as part of the requirements under WIOA. The South Carolina Commission for the Blind Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Impetus for Needs Assessment Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) contains the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended and requires all state vocational rehabilitation

(VR) agencies to assess the rehabilitation needs of individuals within the respective state and relate the planning of programs and services and the establishment of goals and priorities to those needs.

According to Section 101 of the Rehabilitation Act, each participating state shall submit a Unified State Plan every year for vocational rehabilitation services that includes the results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted by the designated State unit and the State Rehabilitation Council every three years describing the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the vocational rehabilitation service needs of (I) individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment; (II) individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program; (III) individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and (IV) youth with disabilities and students with disabilities including their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.

In addition, Section 101 of the Rehabilitation Act indicates that the comprehensive statewide needs assessment must include an assessment of the need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State. In response to this mandate and to ensure that adequate efforts are being made to serve the diverse needs of persons with disabilities in South Carolina, the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB), in partnership with the State Board of Commissioners, entered into a contract with the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University for the purpose of jointly developing and implementing a comprehensive statewide assessment of the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments residing in South Carolina.

#### **Purpose of Needs Assessment and Utilization of Results**

The purpose of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) is to identify and describe the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments residing within South Carolina. In particular, the CSNA seeks to provide information on: The overall performance of SCCB as it relates to meeting the rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina; The rehabilitation needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services; The rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments who are minorities, or who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program; The rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in transition; The rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; The need for community rehabilitation programs serving individuals with blindness and vision impairments within South Carolina; The effectiveness of SCCB's business relations and services and the needs of businesses as it relates to recruiting, hiring, accommodating and retaining individuals with blindness and vision impairments; and The alignment of other SCCB programs and services (including the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center and the Training and Employment Division) with the VR program in meeting the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina.

Data collection efforts solicited input from a broad spectrum of VR stakeholders, including persons with blindness and vision impairments, service providers, SCCB staff and businesses. It is expected that data from the needs assessment effort will provide SCCB and the Board of Directors with direction when creating the VR portion of the Unified State Plan and when planning for future program development, outreach and resource allocation.

#### **Description of Needs Assessment Process**



The needs assessment approach was designed to elicit quantitative and qualitative data about the needs of persons with blindness and vision impairments. Focus group and key informant interview activities yielded qualitative data that may be used to complement and lend depth to the findings of the survey efforts and the analysis of extant data. The use of multiple data collection strategies, both quantitative and qualitative, facilitates data collection that captures both the breadth and the depth of concerns relevant to individuals with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina. The process that was developed for conducting the needs assessment involved four primary data-gathering approaches: Electronic surveys conducted with four stakeholder groups (individuals with blindness and vision impairments, representatives of organizations that provide services to persons with blindness and vision impairments, SCCB staff, and businesses in South Carolina). Hard copy surveys were sent to a random sample of 400 individuals with blindness and vision impairments who are either former, current or potential consumers of SCCB, in addition to the electronic survey for this group; Focus groups conducted with staff and three stakeholder groups (individuals with blindness and vision impairments, community partners - representatives of organizations that provide services to persons with blindness and vision impairments, and businesses); Key informant interviews conducted with individuals with blindness and vision impairments, SCCB staff, organizations that provide services to individuals with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina, businesses; and Analysis of a variety of existing demographic and case service data and reports relevant to individuals with blindness and vision impairments.

Through the data collection efforts, researchers solicited information from four primary stakeholder groups: (a) former, current or potential consumers of SCCB located throughout South Carolina; (b) representatives of organizations that provide services to, advocate for, or represent the interests of individuals who are potential or actual consumers of SCCB; (c) SCCB staff; and (d) representatives of businesses operating in South Carolina. In addition, the approach was designed to capture input from a variety of perspectives in order to acquire a sense of the multi-faceted needs of persons with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina. Responses to the individual survey reflect the opinions of current, former and potential clients of SCCB.

Efforts were made to gather information pertinent to the investigated categories through inquiries with individuals who serve a broad range of persons with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina (whether they are affiliated with SCCB or not). Inherent in any type of research effort are limitations that may constrain the utility of the data that is generated. Therefore, it is important to highlight some of the most significant issues that may limit the ability to generalize the needs assessment findings to larger populations. One potential source of bias is the participant sample. The findings that are reported reflect only the responses of those who could be reached and who were willing to participate. Individuals who were disenfranchised, dissatisfied, or who did not wish to be involved with SCCB may have declined to participate. A second significant concern is that the information gathered from respondents may not accurately represent the broader concerns of all potential constituents and stakeholders. Data gathered from service providers, for example, may reflect only the needs of individuals who are already recipients of services, to the exclusion of those who are not presently served. Although efforts were made to gather information from a variety of stakeholders in the vocational rehabilitation process, it would be presumptuous to conclude with certainty that those who contributed to the focus groups, the key informant interviews, and the survey research efforts constitute a fully representative sample of all of the potential stakeholders in the vocational rehabilitation process in South Carolina.

The time period covered by this comprehensive statewide needs assessment includes the three fiscal years from October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2014 as well as any available information for FY 2015 that



was supplied by SCCB. The time frame was determined by the Federal Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) requirement that VR programs perform a CSNA every three years at a minimum.

The specific methods for gathering the quantitative and qualitative data used in this assessment are detailed below.

### **Analysis of Existing Data Sources**

The project team at San Diego State University (SDSU) reviewed a variety of existing data sources for the purposes of identifying and describing demographic data within South Carolina including the total possible target population and subpopulations potentially served by SCCB. Data relevant to the population of South Carolina, the population of persons with disabilities (and where possible data specific to blindness) in South Carolina, as well as the number of Veterans, income level, educational levels and other relevant population characteristics were utilized in this analysis. Sources analyzed include the following: Federal Rehabilitation Services Administration's RSA 911, RSA 2, RSA 113, RSA 107 monitoring data for SCCB, and Agency Report Cards (a national ranking of agencies across several performance measures). 2013 American Community Survey 2013 US Census Bureau Statistics 2014 Social Security Administration SSI/DI Data Cornell University's Disabilitystatistics.org (2013 Data) UNH Disability Compendium 2015 <http://www.disabilitycompendium.org/> (2014 Data) South Carolina's Census Bureau SCCB case service data compiled at the request of the project team 2010 RSA 107 Monitoring Report Key Informant Interviews Instrument.

The instrument used for the key informant interviews was developed by the researchers at SDSU and reviewed and revised by SCCB. Key informant population. The key informant population consisted of SCCB staff, community partners, individuals with blindness and vision impairments and business partners. A total of 210 individuals responded to surveys. This included 48 SCCB staff members, 4 partner agencies, 156 consumers and two business persons. Qualitative data collection.

Key informant interviews and focus groups were conducted from September 21, 2015 to October 23, 2015. Forty-seven face-to-face sessions were held. The general format was consistent among consumers, with introductory questions followed by open-ended questions about their experiences and their needs and services, as well as their perceptions of the needs of others, the services they receive and suggested changes in SCCB service delivery. Similarly, the format was consistent among SCCB staff and representatives of agencies/ organizations that provide services to, advocate for, or represent the interests of individuals with blindness and vision impairments. First, participants were asked questions to ascertain their personal and professional expertise and their experience with SCCB. Participants were then asked open-ended questions about their perceptions of the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina. Finally, participants were asked to share their perceptions of how SCCB could improve their ability to help meet those needs, especially as it relates to helping consumers obtain and retain employment. Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Names and other identifying characteristics were not recorded by the interviewers. Participants were informed that their responses would be treated as confidential information, would not be reported with information that could be used to identify them, and would be consolidated with information from other respondents before results were reported.

Data analysis: The interviewers took notes on the discussions as they occurred. The notes were transcribed and analyzed by the researchers at SDSU. Themes or concerns that surfaced with consistency across interviews were identified and are reported as common themes in the report narrative. Surveys Survey of Individuals with Disabilities Instrument. The instrument used for the electronic survey of

individuals with blindness and vision impairments was developed by the project team and reviewed and revised by SCCB.

**Survey population:** Participants in this portion of the survey effort can be described as individuals with blindness and vision impairments who are potential, former or current clients of SCCB. The agency broadly dispersed the electronic survey via USPS and e-mail invitations. Hard copy surveys were mailed to SCCB consumers using a random sample of 400 former or current consumers.

**Data collection:** Data was gathered from this population through the use of an accessible, Internet-based survey that was also made available in printed form. Once the survey was active, SCCB distributed it to 1,628 individuals via electronic links (mailed and emailed) and print copies (with self-addressed, postage-paid return envelopes). Approximately 100 were returned marked undeliverable, for a total distribution to 1,528 individuals. SCCB also posted the link on its website and Newslink. One week after the initial distribution, another electronic notice was sent as both a “thank you” to those who had completed the survey and a reminder to those who had not. A third and final reminder was sent 5 weeks after the second invitation. Surveys were then placed into “inactive” status and the data analyzed. Printed surveys returned by mail were collected and entered into the system by the project team at SDSU for further analysis.

**Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality:** Respondents to the individual survey were not asked to identify themselves when completing the survey. In addition, responses to the electronic and printed surveys were aggregated by the project team at SDSU prior to reporting results, which served to further obscure the identities of individual survey respondents.

**Accessibility:** The electronic survey was designed using an accessible, internet-based survey application. On the printed and electronic versions of the individual survey, respondents were provided with the name and contact information of the Research Director at SDSU in order to place requests for other alternative survey formats.

**Data analysis:** Data analysis consisted of computing frequencies and descriptive statistics for the survey items with fixed response options. Open-ended survey questions, which yielded narrative responses from individuals, were analyzed by the researchers for themes or concepts that were expressed consistently by respondents.

**Number of completed surveys:** A total of 132 electronic surveys were received from individuals with blindness and vision impairments. Only 104 of the surveys were completely filled out. While this suggests a return rate of approximately 9% of the 1,146 who received the electronic link, it is difficult to gauge the true return rate as some responses may have come as a result of forwarded invitations or from postings on SCCB’s website and Newslink. Of the four hundred surveys sent in hard copy by mail to a random sample of former or current consumers of SCCB, 18 were returned marked as undeliverable due to having the wrong address on file. Fifty-two completed surveys were received. When the undeliverable surveys are removed from the equation, the return rate for the hard copy surveys is 14%. Survey of Partners Instrument. The instrument used for the electronic survey of community partners was developed by the project team and reviewed and revised by SCCB.

**Survey population:** Individuals identified for participation in this survey effort can be described as representatives of organizations that provide services, coordinate services, or serve an advocacy role for persons with blindness and vision impairments in South Carolina. Invitations were issued to 33 partners.

**Data collection:** Data was gathered from this population through the use of an Internet-based survey. SCCB identified 33 partners for participation in the survey effort. Once the survey was active, SCCB sent an invitation and link to the survey by e-mail. Approximately one week after the distribution of the initial invitation, another electronic notice was sent as both a “thank you” to those who had completed the survey and a reminder to those who had not. A third and final invitation was sent 5 weeks after the second invitation. Surveys were then placed into “inactive” status and the data analyzed. Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Respondents to the partner survey were not asked to identify themselves or their organizations when completing the survey. In addition, responses to the electronic surveys were aggregated by the project team at SDSU prior to reporting results, which served to further obscure the identities of individual survey respondents.

**Accessibility:** The survey was designed using an accessible, internet-based survey application. Respondents were also provided with the name and contact information for the Research Director at SDSU in order to place requests for other alternative survey formats.

**Data analysis:** Data analysis consisted of computing frequencies and descriptive statistics for the survey items with fixed response options. Open-ended survey questions, which yielded narrative responses from individuals, were analyzed by the researchers for themes or concepts that were expressed consistently by respondents.

**Number of completed surveys:** A total of 8 electronic surveys were started with only 4 entirely completed by representatives of partner organizations, which yields a 1% return on the 33 invitations. It may be that the low response rate corresponds to SCCB’s limited track record of collaboration, partnering with business or contracting for services. Survey of SCCB Staff Instrument. The instrument used for the electronic survey of SCCB staff was developed by the project team at SDSU and reviewed and revised by SCCB.

**Survey population:** Individuals identified for participation in this survey effort can be described as all staff working for SCCB between September and December 2015. **Data collection.** Data was gathered from SCCB staff through the use of an Internet-based survey. All 125 staff were sent an electronic invitation and link to the survey. Approximately one week after the initial distribution, a subsequent notice was sent as both a “thank you” to those who had completed the survey and a reminder to those who had not. A third and final invitation was sent out 5 weeks after the second invitation. Surveys were then placed into “inactive” status and the data analyzed. Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Respondents to the staff survey were not asked to identify themselves by name when completing the survey. Responses to the electronic surveys were aggregated by the project team at SDSU prior to reporting results. This served to further protect the identities of individual survey respondents. **Accessibility.** The survey was designed using an accessible, internet-based survey application. Respondents were also provided with the name and contact information for the Research Director at SDSU in order to place requests for other alternative survey formats.

**Data analysis:** Data analysis consisted of computing frequencies and descriptive statistics for the survey items with fixed response options. Open-ended survey questions, which yielded narrative responses from individuals, were analyzed by the researchers for themes or concepts that were expressed consistently by respondents.

**Number of completed surveys:** Out of a total of 125 SCCB staff invited to participate, 77 electronic surveys were started, with only 48 being entirely completed, for a 38% response rate. Survey of Businesses

Instrument. The instrument used for the electronic survey of businesses in South Carolina was developed by the project team at SDSU and reviewed and revised by SCCB.

Survey population: Individuals identified for participation in this survey effort can be described as representatives of South Carolina businesses in operation between September and December 2015.

Data collection: Data was gathered from businesses through the use of an Internet-based survey. Twenty business representatives were sent an electronic invitation and link to the survey. Approximately one week after the initial distribution, a subsequent notice was sent as both a “thank you” to those who had completed the survey and a reminder to those who had not. A third and final invitation was sent out 5 weeks after the second invitation. Surveys were then placed into “inactive” status and the data analyzed. Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Respondents to the business survey were not asked to identify themselves by name when completing the survey. Responses were aggregated by the project team at SDSU prior to reporting results. This served to further protect the identities of individual survey respondents.

Accessibility: The survey was designed using an accessible, internet-based survey application. Respondents were also provided with the name and contact information for the Research Director at SDSU in order to place requests for other alternative survey formats.

Data analysis: Data analysis consisted of computing frequencies and descriptive statistics for the survey items with fixed response options. Open-ended survey questions, which yielded narrative responses from individuals, were analyzed by the researchers for themes or concepts that were expressed consistently by respondents.

Number of completed surveys: Of the 20 businesses invited to participate, only 2 surveys were returned for a response rate of 10%. Although the numbers are so small they cannot be generalized to all South Carolina businesses, they are presented here for illustrative purposes. The low response rate suggests that the agency should strengthen its relationships with employers. The project team has included recommendations to more effectively engage businesses in the Business Relations section of the report.

Focus Groups Instrument: The focus groups were conducted based on a protocol developed by the researchers at SDSU. The protocol was reviewed and revised by SCCB. The central question raised in each of the focus group meetings was, “What are the most important employment-related needs encountered by people with blindness and vision impairments?” When appropriate the moderator introduced additional questions prompting respondents to discuss needs associated with preparing for, obtaining and retaining employment, and increasing the employment of persons with blindness and vision impairments.

Participants in the staff and partner agency groups were also asked to discuss the needs of individuals with most significant disabilities; those from cultural, racial, or ethnic minority groups; and students with blindness and vision impairments transitioning from high school. They were also asked about the need to establish, develop or improve CRPs.

Population: Thirteen focus groups were conducted for the assessment, with a total of 64 participants. They consisted of three consumer groups, five partner groups (including the Board of Commissioners), three business groups and two staff groups.

Data collection: The 13 focus groups were held in Greenville, Columbia and Charleston from September 21 through October 23, 2015, involving 64 individuals, 22 of whom were consumers, with the remainder representing the agency, partner agencies and businesses. The format of the focus groups was consistent

for all groups. A few minutes were devoted to introductions, personal background, and rapport building in order to establish a productive focus group environment. The focus group moderator explained the purpose of the focus group and provided a brief description of the larger needs assessment effort. The moderator explained the role of San Diego State University in the needs assessment effort and assured participants of the confidentiality of their statements. A note-taker recorded the discussion as it occurred. Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Names and other identifying characteristics were not recorded by the note-taker. Focus group participants were informed that their responses would be treated as confidential information, would not be reported with information that could be used to identify them, and that information from multiple focus groups would be consolidated before results were reported. In addition, SCCB staff did not attend the focus groups consisting of individuals with disabilities and partner agencies in order to ensure an open dialogue amongst participants.

**Accessibility:** SCCB included a request for reasonable accommodation in their electronic invitations to all of the research groups. One individual requested an interpreter.

**Data analysis:** Notes were transcribed and analyzed by the researchers at SDSU. Results were organized according to the eight categories under investigation in the assessment. Themes or concerns that surfaced with consistency across groups were identified and reported as consensus themes in the report narrative.

**Analysis and Triangulation of Data:** The data gathered from the national and agency-specific data sets, key informant interviews, surveys and focus groups were analyzed by the researchers on the project team. The common themes that emerged regarding needs of persons with disabilities from each data source were identified and compared to each other to validate the existence of needs, especially as they pertained to the target populations of this assessment. These common themes are identified and discussed in the Findings section.

**Dissemination Plans:** The CSNA report is delivered to SCCB and the Board of Commissioners. The project team received several requests by consumers and partner agencies to share the results of the CSNA. We recommend that SCCB publish the report on their website for public access and that they notify the public of the availability of the report by e-mail.

#### **SOUTH CAROLINA'S DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE & SERVICE DELIVERY CONTEXT**

In 2014, there were 4,832,482 people with disabilities living in South Carolina, with approximately 77,406 of them (1.6%) being individuals with a visual disability, of working age, living in the community. 75.4% of working age civilians without disabilities living in the community were employed, as opposed to 34.4% of those with disabilities and 32% of those with visual disabilities. Economically, the pattern of lower employment continues with lower earnings and higher poverty rates. To wit, the median earnings for South Carolinians without disabilities 16 years or older in inflation adjusted dollars for 2014 was \$27,296 whereas for those with disabilities it was \$20,157. With respect to poverty, the rate for working age civilians without disabilities living in the community is half that (15%) for those with disabilities (30%).

SCCB VR programs consist of approximately 16 counselors located in 9 District offices throughout South Carolina. The administrative and service delivery hubs for SCCB are located in Columbia. The most intense independent living and job training services are provided at the residential EBMRC in Columbia. To access the services at EBMRC, individuals are transported from their residence to EBMRC on Monday and return on Friday. Individuals living locally in the Columbia area may also access EBMRC programs and services. SCCB also provides 'Outreach' services, delivered by staff in the 9 district offices. The Outreach services do

not provide the same intensity and duration as those provided by EBMRC. EBMRC also houses training programs in assistive technology (JAWS, Zoomtext etc.) as well as summer Transition programs for high school students. SCCB provides job development and placement services via a cadre of Employment counselors who serve the state. Transition services are provided by a cadre of Transition counselors who also serve the entire state. SCCB does limited outsourcing of services through community rehabilitation programs.

## CSNA FINDINGS

The CSNA findings are reported below in sections that correspond with the requested areas of inquiry. They are presented in narrative form. Each section starts with a summary across all data collection methods, followed by a breakdown according to data collection method. Data tables that were too large to be included in the body of the report are presented in the Appendices.

**SECTION 1 OVERALL AGENCY PERFORMANCE:** The data on agency performance included below comes from the case management system used by SCCB and is compared to the available data submitted by SCCB to the Federal Rehabilitation Services Administration. **Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods** The following recurring themes emerged in the area of Overall Agency Performance: Indicators as summarized above, demographic data for South Carolina indicates that 1.6% of people with disabilities of working age who are living in the community are individuals with a visual disability. Surveyed consumers, staff and partners agreed that the top barriers to achieving employment goals relate to geographic access to services and jobs, followed by lack of individuals' education and job skills, and employer perceptions about their ability to work. Agency performance SCCB estimates that the VR program will serve 1,173 eligible individuals during FY 2016, 1,257 during FY 2017, 1,350 during FY 2018, and 1,400 during FY 2019. SCCB serves males and females equally, and ethnic/racial minorities in equal or greater proportion to their representation in the general population. Recent data regarding SCCB's active cases indicates that 56% are Black or African American and 41% are White.

SCCB serves youth and individuals with most significant disabilities at very low rates. There was a consistent decrease in both the number and percentage of cases closed with an employment outcome over the 2009-2014 period. SCCB ranks high for per case expenditures and low for quality of employment outcomes nationally among agencies for the blind. SCCB staff have a strong knowledge of assistive technology relating to blindness and visual impairment. The agency makes this technology readily available to students and adults. SCCB provides strong transition programs at the EBMRC, but these programs are limited to a small number of youth who are blind or visually impaired.

Historically, SCCB VR has not viewed itself or been viewed by other agencies as an integral partner at the statewide workforce level due to (1) SCCB's paradigm under WIA of being a sole one-stop shop, attempting to meet all the needs of its consumers independently, and (2) external silos and territorialism that has existed among state agencies. However, the agency has expressed the intention of working more closely with partners going forward. Historically, the most prevalent services provided by SCCB are Assessment and Diagnosis and Treatment of Impairments.

The VR program's service delivery system is centered in Columbia, resting primarily with the EBMRC. The majority of consumers participating in the adjustment to blindness program were closed as "N/A" (41.3%), "homemaker" (22.3%), or "unsuccessful" (20.1%). The breakdown of "closure reason" indicates that 36.9% were "successful closures." SCCB's service delivery was rated by surveyed consumers to be strongest in relation to vision restoration, low vision aids and assistive technology.

The biggest barriers to SCCB services identified by all survey respondents were slow service delivery, inadequate information about SCCB services and lack of geographic access. Key informants in all categories had the perception that SCCB returns unmatched federal dollars every year, at the expense of delivering needed services. The research team determined that SCCB has not in fact returned federal dollars in the past several years.

Gaps Currently, SCCB's memoranda of agreement with other state agencies, including the general VR agency, the Mental Health agency, and the Developmental Disability agency, must be updated to meet the requirements of WIOA. The vast majority of substantive independent living (IL) training received by SCCB consumers is conducted at the Center in Columbia. This is a residential center, therefore to access the training, an individual must either be a resident at the center or live in close proximity where commuting to and from the center on a daily basis is feasible. Key informants suggest that this, coupled with significant transportation barriers statewide, presents a major challenge in accessing SCCB services. In 2014, only 3% of Center participants came from the 10 lowest median income counties in South Carolina indicating that individuals who live below the poverty line and in rural areas may be underserved.

SCCB has limited contracts or other arrangements with external service providers especially community rehabilitation programs. There are limited VR 'outreach' services throughout the state. Outreach services consist of independent living services (orientation/mobility and home/personal management) and are not as comprehensive as services offered at the EBMRC.

Lack of affordable, accessible transportation is an historic, significant and pervasive barrier to independent living, employment and services for individuals with disabilities everywhere, and despite its wide acceptance as a critical need, little progress is made in addressing it systematically. South Carolina is no exception, with key informants and survey participants representing all stakeholder groups identifying this as an issue.

All individuals surveyed for this study were in agreement that the highest priorities should be to improve geographic access (outreach, transportation, community-based services) and to address staffing issues (vacancies, skill levels, morale).

These were followed by somewhat divergent suggestions depending on the respondent group: Staff and partners focused on internal improvements (collaboration, assessment, individualized services), whereas consumers focused on stronger job training, placement and support.

Results by Data Collection Method Services Provided to Individuals by SCCB: Quantitative Data SCCB estimates that the VR program will serve 1,173 eligible individuals during FFY 2016, 1,257 during FFY 2017, 1,350 during FFY 2018, and 1,400 during FFY 2019. The following tables and discussions present statistical data on SCCB VR's performance in providing services to individuals with blindness and vision impairments from 2012 through 2014. 2014 SCCB Data on EBMRC Services 50% of EBMRC attendees were from Richland or the immediately adjacent counties. 3% of EBMRC attendees were from the state's ten poorest counties as measured by median income. 82% EBMRC closed cases did not have an employment outcome: 41% "N/A," 20% "homemaker," 20% "unsuccessful" and 0.6% "failure to cooperate."

Observations: Based on the SCCB Data Performance in key areas has declined from 2012 through 2014. Applications, eligibility decisions, individualized plan for employment (IPE) development and employment outcomes decreased significantly. The cost of serving individuals whose cases are closed successfully or unsuccessfully has risen dramatically. This data may suggest case management issues resulting in higher case service expenditures and lower employment outcomes.



The percentage of cases coded Most Significantly Disabled (MSD) is low and may reflect an unclear interpretation of agency policies and/or coding errors. It may also reflect eligibility decisions that screen out individuals with most significant disabilities.

Services to youth under 18 appear to be very low and will need to be addressed in light of WIOA requirements.

RSA Data Highlights: The following data highlights are drawn from various RSA reports, including Standards and Indicators, RSA-911, RSA-722, RSA State Report Card [See Appendix H for RSA reports relating to SCCB] Indicator 1.1, "Number of closures with employment outcome," has consistently decreased from 2006 (546) to 2015 (137). Source: Standards and Indicators. There has been a downward trend in Indicator 1.2, "Percentage of closed cases with an employment outcome," from 2006-2015.

Source: Standards and Indicators: SCCB consistently exceeds the other federal performance standards relating to closed cases.

Both males and females are equally served by SCCB. SCCB consistently significantly exceeds standard 2.1, "Ratio of minority services to non-minority services."

SCCB outcomes for Hispanics are somewhat low in comparison with the representation of Hispanics in the general population. The state's Hispanic population is rapidly increasing and South Carolina is among the states with the highest percentage increases in the country.

Other minorities such as Native Americans and Asians represent very small percentages of the population served, corresponding to very small percentages in South Carolina's general population.

SCCB has minimal (a total of 2 in FY 2014) disputes with applicants or eligible individuals resulting in mediation, impartial hearings or civil actions. Source: RSA-722. Average time to closure is 12 months longer for individuals closed with no employment compared with individuals closed with employment. Source: RSA-911.

Historically for SCCB, the percentage of competitive employment outcomes is highest for the age range 25-35. Source: RSA-911. Historically for SCCB, the percentage of employment outcomes is lowest for age range 14-24. Source: RSA-911.

SCCB ranks high (nationally among agencies for the blind) for expenditures, months of service and hours worked per week at closure. Source: RSA State Report Card.

SCCB ranks low (nationally among agencies for the blind) in quality of employment outcomes including wages and medical benefits. Source: RSA State Report Card.

SCCB appears to underserve individuals with multiple disabilities especially individuals with cognitive and mental disabilities. Source: RSA-911.

Historically, the most prevalent services provided by SCCB are Assessment and Diagnosis and Treatment of Impairments.

Almost 19% of unsuccessful closures for SCCB were for the following reasons: No longer interested in services; refused services; unable to locate. Source: Agency Data. Of those attending EBMRC, 43% of cases were closed either unsuccessfully or as homemakers. 38% were closed successfully.



2010 RSA Monitoring Report Findings and Recommendations: RSA conducted a 107 monitoring review in 2010 and issued findings and recommendations for SCCB to address. Those findings and recommendations that coincide with this report's findings on overall agency performance include: SCCB serves individuals not requiring extensive funding.

Stakeholders reported that SCCB focuses on serving those who are already employed at application.

SCCB does not integrate internal functions (including fiscal, programmatic and program evaluation).

It does not appear that the agency was successful in fulfilling the 2010 report's recommendations relating to: shifting resources from low- to high-impact services to address service gaps decentralizing service delivery adding staff with capacity and skill sets needed to offer programs, reduce waiting lists, etc. partnering with other agencies implementing a dual service system with South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD) including marketing and training.

Observations Based on RSA Data: In general, performance in key service delivery fell over a 3-year period, possibly due to staff turnover. Key issues documented in the RSA Monitoring report have not been resolved and may continue to impact agency performance.

Individuals with multiple disabilities that included blindness are significantly underserved.

Lack of partnerships with other agencies including SCVRD appear to be contributing factors.

Case management issues appear to contribute to higher cost, lower successful outcomes and less efficient service delivery. The root causes of the case management issues require further investigation.

Services Provided to Individuals by SCCB: Qualitative Data on Barriers and Improvements Focus Groups and Key Informant Interviews Some consumers reported positive experiences with SCCB. "Staff and fellow consumers who are visually impaired definitely inspired me." One individual new to South Carolina said the agency "opened doors to blindness resources" and "I look forward in the future to give back to SCCB to help other consumers not as fortunate as myself." Consumers' employment barriers (lack of education or job skills, employer perceptions, etc.) are compounded by challenges they encounter in accessing the services needed to overcome those barriers.

## B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

SCCB is using performance data required under section 116 of WIOA for program year 2016 and 2017 to establish baselines for performance measurement, continuous improvement and goal setting.

## 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.

SCCB has also analyzed previous Rehabilitation Services Administration Monitoring reports, recent State Audit Reports, and historical performance data to inform the Objectives, Goals, and Strategies of this program specific portion of the Unified State Plan.

## M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

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A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES.

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SCCB tracks resources on a continual ongoing basis and has determined that the agency currently has the staff and financial resources to provide required and effective VR services to all eligible individuals in the state and does not anticipate implementing an Order of Selection.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER.

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N/A

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS.

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N/A

D. THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER.

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N/A

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

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N/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.

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N/A

N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS.

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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.

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The South Carolina Commission for the Blind has established the capacities to provide Supported Employment to youth and adults with Most Significant Disabilities in response to the findings of the FFY 2016 CSNA. Funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for Supported Employment are utilized to fund the costs of individualized discovery assessment, job development, job placement, and on-the-job supports for Supported Employment and Customized Employment delivered internally by JOBS Specialists. SCCB provides extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years. SCCB has signed a Partnership Plus Agreement under the Ticket to Work program to provide long term on going supports through an Employment Network (Able SC). SCCB utilizes 50% of Supported Employment funds to provide Supported Employment and Customized Employment for eligible youth. SCCB has established goals to provide Supported Employment services to **6** eligible individuals during FFY 2018, **8** individuals during FFY 2019, **10** individuals during FFY 2020, and **10** individuals during FFY 2021.

## 2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:

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### A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

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SCCB has established the capacity and resources to provide Supported Employment to youth with most significant disabilities. SCCB hired and trained three in-house Supported Employment JOBS Specialists to provide job placement and on-the-job supported employment services to consumers who have most significant disabilities. Further, SCCB is engaging in the redevelopment of a cooperative agreement with the state Medicaid and Developmental Disability agencies to facilitate transition to on going supports where available. SCCB signed a Partnership Plus Agreement with Able SC and Employment Network under the Ticket to Work Program to provide on-going 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.

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As required by WIOA 50% of Supported Employment funds will be used to provide Supported Employment Services to youth with most significant disabilities. SCCB built in-house capacities and resources to meet this goal since FPY 2016. SCCB has signed a Partnership Plus Agreement under the Ticket to Work program to provide long term on going supports through an Employment Network (Able SC). SCCB will look for opportunities to engage with private and public partners to fund extended and ongoing supported employment services for this population.

### O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

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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.

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The findings of the FFY 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment were used to develop Objectives, Goals, and Strategies reflected in the previous iteration of the South Carolina Unified State Plan. See section (p.) *Evaluation and Reports of Progress* for information related to progress on the previous state plan goals and priorities.

For the current Unified State Plan, SCCB identified gaps from two primary sources. The first being unmet gaps identified in the FFY 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The second source is the South Carolina Workforce Development Board's Economic Analysis and Strategic Plan.

The following gaps have been identified:

**Gap 1:** South Carolina's current labor force, including individuals who are blind or visually impaired, do not have industry recognized credentials, knowledge, skills, or abilities to meet current or emerging demands of the business community.

**Gap 2:** SCCB needs to improve alignment of policies, resources, and staff expertise to provide job driven, labor market informed, vocational counseling and guidance that aligns with South Carolina's Talent

Pipeline Project and Sector Strategies initiatives to assist eligible consumers in accessing career pathways that lead to high and middle skill/income jobs in growth sectors.

**Gap 3:** SCCB needs to improve partnerships with business in order to more accurately identify current and future workforce needs of business and industry to support career pathways in growth sectors and improve services to business.

**Gap 4:** SCCB needs to improve marketing, branding, and engagement with business, consumers, and other workforce partners to increase awareness, improve partnerships, and increase effectiveness and efficiency of services leading to competitive integrated employment.

Based on these identified gaps, and in alignment with the South Carolina Workforce Development Board's Strategic Plan, SCCB establishes the following objectives. These objectives have been jointly developed and agreed to by the South Carolina Commission for the Blind Board, and are in alignment with the Workforce Development Board's *Strategies to Build a Competitive Workforce Plan*. Each strategy includes a "Key Indicator" that will be used to quantify SCCB's progress.

**Objective 1: Identify, invest and support job seekers who are blind and visually impaired in the attainment of industry recognized credentials and vocational training required for current and emerging jobs.**

**Goal 1.1:** Provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to youth and transition students resulting in the attainment of industry recognized in-demand credentials required for competitive integrated employment.

**Strategy 1.1.1:** Provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) through the Career BOOST and Summer Teens Programs. In cooperation and collaboration with public schools these services include career exploration and counseling, self-advocacy skills training, work readiness training, work-based learning experiences, and exploration of post-secondary education and training.

**Key Performance Indicator 1.1.1:** Number of Students Completed

**Strategy 1.1.2:** Support the attainment of a High School Diploma, GED and/or SC Employability Credential through vocational counseling and guidance, assistive technology, coordination and collaboration with public schools.

**Key Performance Indicator 1.1.2:** Number of Students Completed

**Strategy 1.1.3:** Invest in, facilitate and support completion of Post-Secondary college and/or university vocational training.

**Key Performance Indicator 1.1.3:** Number of Students Completed

**Goal 1.2:** Provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to adult job seekers who are blind or visually impaired resulting in the attainment of industry recognized in-demand credentials required for competitive integrated employment.

**Strategy 1.2.1:** Provide quality Adjustment to Blindness and Pre-Vocational Training at the *Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for Employment & Independence*. Adjustment to Blindness Training includes: Orientation & Mobility (Independent Travel), Independent Living Skills, Braille Literacy, Employability Soft Skills, Basic Financial Literacy, and Psychosocial Adjustment to Blindness Counseling. Pre-Vocational

Training includes: Basic Keyboarding, Basic Microsoft Office Suite Training, and Assistive Technology Training such as Computer Screen Readers, Text Magnifiers, Low Vision Aids, Etc.

**Key Performance Indicator 1.2.1:** Number of Consumers Completed

**Strategy 1.2.2:** Support the attainment of a High School Diploma, GED, and SC Employability Credential through vocational counseling and guidance, assistive technology, collaboration and technical assistance to adult education programs.

**Key Performance Indicator 1.2.2:** Number of Consumers Completed

**Strategy 1.2.3:** Invest in, and support the completion of Post-Secondary vocational training through career exploration, vocational counseling and guidance, assistive technology, tuition assistance, collaboration and technical assistance to colleges and universities.

**Key Performance Indicator 1.2.3:** Number of Consumers Completed

**Objective 2: Align resources, policy, and strategies to continuously improve competitive integrated employment outcomes for blind and visually impaired job seekers.**

**Goal 2.1:** Develop and enhance job seeker work readiness and soft skills.

**Strategy 2.1.1:** Provide Adjustment to Blindness and Pre-Vocational Training at the *Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for Employment & Independence*. Adjustment to Blindness Training includes: Orientation & Mobility (Independent Travel), Independent Living Skills, Braille Literacy, Employability Soft Skills, Basic Financial Literacy, and Psychosocial Adjustment to Blindness Counseling. Pre-Vocational Training includes: Basic Keyboarding, Basic Microsoft Suite Training, and Assistive Technology Training such as Computer Screen Readers, Text Magnifiers, Etc.

**Key Performance Indicator 2.1.1:** Number of Consumers Completed

**Strategy 2.1.2:** Facilitate The BRIDGE Program Job Club (Building Readiness for Individualized Development of Gainful Employment) provides consumers who have completed the Adjustment to Blindness and Pre-Vocational Training at the *Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for Employment and Independence* a paid work based learning experience (internship) and job club activities to enhance employability and jump start job placement in their local community.

**Key Performance Indicator 2.1.2:** Number of Consumers Completed

**Strategy 2.1.3:** Summer Internship Program (SIP) provides college and university students with a paid summer internship in their field of study during their Sophomore, Junior and Senior year.

**Key Performance Indicator 2.1.3:** Number of Consumers Completed

**Goal 2.2:** Enhance and improve job placement services and job support services for job seekers who are blind or visually impaired.

**Strategy 2.2.1:** Increase job placement by SCCB Employment Consultants through talent acquisition services to business partners matching qualified job seekers who are blind or visually impaired with current job openings.

**Key Performance Indicator 2.2.1:** Number of Consumers Employed

**Strategy 2.2.2:** Provide Supported Employment (SE) utilizing the initial placement and job coaching provided on a short term basis by an SCCB JOBS Specialist (Job Oriented Blind Service) with long term extended supports provided by another agency such as an employment network, state agency, or natural supports.

**Key Performance Indicator 2.2.2:** Number of Consumers Employed

**Strategy 2.2.3:** Provide Customized Employment that includes intensive discovery of individualized skills, abilities, potential; and intensive customization of an existing job opening, creation of a job that fills an unmet need, and other customized options. SCCB provides Customized Employment through a qualified and trained JOBS Specialist (Job Oriented Blind Service).

**Key Performance Indicator 2.2.3:** Number of Consumers Employed

**Objective 3: Identify current and future needs of business and industry to support career pathways in growth sectors.**

**Goal 3.1:** Provide specialized training through a Pre-Apprenticeship Program to prepare adults not enrolled in college programs, as an alternative career pathway to current and future business and industry needs.

**Strategy 3.1.1:** Utilize the principles STEM education to develop a Pre-Apprenticeship training program for job seekers who are blind and visually impaired that will satisfy the entry level skills needed for acceptance into registered apprenticeship programs. Incorporate the use of the most current Assistive Technology that will make graduates competitive when applying to fill open apprenticeship positions.

**Key Performance Indicator 3.1.1:** Number of Consumers Completed

**Strategy 3.1.2:** Collaborate with the South Carolina US Department of Labor Apprenticeship Office to discover the industry needs for apprentices in South Carolina. Meet with employers to promote program and consumers before, during, and after program participation to facilitate job development opportunities.

**Key Performance Indicator 3.1.2:** Number of Apprenticeships Entered by Consumers

**Strategy 3.1.3:** Engage and collaborate with WIOA core partner's business service coordination council to collaborate and coordinate business service efforts to include the blind and visually impaired in the labor market.

**Key Performance Indicator 3.1.3:** Number of Business Services Delivered

**Goal 3.2:** Increase and improve talent acquisition and talent retention services to business in support of employees who are blind or visually impaired.

**Strategy 3.2.1:** Provide Workplace Sensitivity Training Workshops and Accessibility Technical Assistance (TA) to business partners in order to facilitate the employment of people who are blind or visually impaired.

**Key Performance Indicator 3.2.1:** Number Workshops/TA Delivered

**Strategy 3.2.2:** Provide Talent Acquisition Services to business partners by matching current open positions with qualified applicants who are blind or visually impaired, providing technical assistance in regards to assistive technology and reasonable accommodations.

**Key Performance Indicator 3.2.2:** Number of Job Placements

**Strategy 3.2.3:** Provide Talent Retention Services to business partners by providing technical assistance, support, and training necessary for the business to retain an employee who is blind or visually impaired.

**Key Performance Indicator 3.2.3:** Number of Job Retentions

**Objective 4: Engage job seekers, business leaders, and other workforce partners through marketing and outreach to articulate a value proposition to each.**

**Goal 4.1:** Improve **visibility and branding of SCCB** with job seekers who are blind or visually impaired, businesses seeking to diversify their labor market talent pool, and other workforce partners to increase the awareness and effectiveness of SCCB services.

**Strategy 4.1.1:** Complete Rebranding & Promotional Materials.

**Key Performance Indicator 4.1.1:** Rebranding Completed and Implemented

**Strategy 4.1.2:** Attend and distribute branding materials at Community Health Fairs, Career and Job Fairs, and other Community Resource Education Events.

**Key Performance Indicator 4.1.2:** Number Attended

**Goal 4.2:** Improve visibility and awareness of SCCB within the Workforce Development System.

**Strategy 4.2.1:** Enhance programmatic presence in SC Works American Job Centers through assigned liaison relationships with field staff, standardized colocation hours, infrastructure cost sharing, accessibility assessment technical assistance and implementation, and availability of program educational information and rebranded materials.

**Key Performance Indicator 4.2.1:** N/A

**Strategy 4.2.2:** Enhance programmatic presence at South Carolina Workforce Development Board meetings to ensure that the needs of job seekers who are blind or visually impaired are represented.

**Key Performance Indicator 4.2.2:** Number of Board Meetings Attended by SCCB

## **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.**

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SCCB's Employment and Training Division provides SCCB consumers with assistive technology assessments when necessary at each stage of the vocational rehabilitation process to ensure that eligible individuals have the tools and AT resources necessary to succeed in their Individualized Plan for Employment activities and services. VR Counselors make referrals to the T & E Division staff for assessments when the need is identified.

In addition, SCCB has a cooperative agreement with the South Carolina Assistive Technology Program at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine to access comparable benefits, eliminate duplication of services, and increase coordination of employment services provided to the shared consumer populations. SCCB will work to enhance and improve this partnership.

### 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.

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In order to identify and make VR services available to minorities, individuals with most significant disabilities, and those traditionally unserved or underserved by the VR program, SCCB has conducted outreach and information to South Carolina's Native American tribes, to community service organizations that serve the Hispanic community, and has established and enhanced our services to Deaf-Blind consumers. In addition, SCCB has engaged in staff training on how to effectively serve individuals with multiple significant disabilities. SCCB is working to improve the program's visibility, branding, and presence in the SC Works American Job Centers. During FPY 2018 SCCB is engaging in an E3 Targeted Communities Technical Assistance Grant focused on improving the capacity to serve individuals in rural-high poverty areas.

### 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).

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**Career BOOST Pre-Employment Transition Services:** SCCB has piloted a demonstration project called Career BOOST (Building Occupational Opportunities for Students in Transition). This program augments SCCB's comprehensive transition services program by providing the five (5) required Pre Employment Transition Services (PETS) to eligible or potentially eligible students statewide in collaboration and coordination with public schools. These Pre-ETS services include: 1. Self-Advocacy Training 2. Work Readiness Workshops 3. Work-based Learning Experiences 4. Post-Secondary Education Enrollment and Careers Exploration 5. Information & Referral to SCCB's Transition VR Program

**Student Internship Program Jr.:** SCCB has expanded our highly successful Student Internship Program (SIP) that provides paid summer internships for college seniors and juniors, by developing the SIP Jr. Program that provides paid summer internship opportunities in a variety of career fields to transition students in their senior and junior year of High School.

**Career Exploration Lab:** SCCB used funds to establish the "Career Exploration Lab" where transition students are exposed to career exploration in functional 3-D fabrication, manufacturing using 3-D printer technology, product development, business development, microenterprise development, entrepreneurship, marketing and other science, technology, engineering, and math careers. During the Summer of 2017 and again in 2018 SCCB partnered with a team of scientists who use tactile 3-D prints of the universe to explore STEM careers with blind or visually impaired students.

**Summer Teens Program:** SCCB will continue the very successful Summer Teens Program that brings students from across the state to the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for Employment to engage in 5 weeks of career exploration, blindness skills that support employment training, self-advocacy training, paid work based learning experiences, and soft-skills work readiness training.

**Transition Alliance of South Carolina:** SCCB is an active partner on TASC where we collaborate and coordinate with other partner programs that serve transition aged students with disabilities.



**Advisory Council for Educating Students with Disabilities:** SCCB serves on the ACESD to partner with the South Carolina Office of Special Education, public schools, parents, students, and other organizations with the goal to improve post-school outcomes and employment.

#### 5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

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SCCB will continue to seek opportunities and partnerships to aid in the development and establishment of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) to provide community based adjustment to blindness services, supported employment (SE) services, customized employment (CE) services and life skills training.

#### 6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

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It is the position of SCCB that the Goals, Priorities, and Strategies listed in this state plan will lead to improvements on performance accountability measures after the initial "baseline" establishing year of FFY 2016.

#### 7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

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SCCB has been an active partner in the WIOA Unified State Plan Implementation Team. South Carolina's plans are to continue convening this group of core WIOA partners to continue to develop meaningful and effective partnerships, share expertise and knowledge, skills, and abilities, and to expand the ability of the system to serve all individuals including those with disabilities. In addition, SCCB is working to ensure that there is agency presence in the local one stop American Job Centers on a consistent basis to provide support and expertise to consumers who are blind or visually impaired. SCCB entered into MOU's and Infrastructure Cost Agreements with all SC Works service deliver areas. SCCB is currently working with SC Works to provide assessment and technical assistance to ensure programmatic and physical accessibility.

#### 8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

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##### A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

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The Goals, Priorities, and Strategies detailed in the SCCB VR program portion of the Unified State Plan were designed to directly address the gaps in service needs identified in the 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and align with the state Workforce Investment Board's Strategic Plan. These Goals, Priorities, and Strategies form the basis of our 4-year Strategic Plan for the VR program at SCCB. The Senior Management Team meets on a monthly basis to review progress toward Strategic Plan goals.

##### B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

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The following strategies are newly developed, expanding, and/or innovative initiatives included in this state plan:

**Soft Skills Training to Support Employment Curriculum:** In partnership with the core WIOA partners SCCB will participate in the review, selection, purchase and implementation of a state wide standardized curriculum on the "soft skills" that South Carolina Businesses have been requesting from the statewide Workforce Investment Board.

**CRP Establishment & Development:** SCCB will continue to seek opportunities and partnerships to aid in the development and establishment of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) to provide community based adjustment to blindness services, supported employment (SE) services, customized employment (CE) services, Braille training, vocational evaluation, and life skills training.

**Career BOOST Pre-Employment Transition Services:** SCCB has piloted a demonstration project called Career BOOST (Building Occupational Opportunities for Students in Transition). This program augments SCCB's transition services program by providing the five (5) required Pre Employment Transition Services (PETS) to eligible or potentially eligible students statewide. These PETS services will include: 1. Self-Advocacy Training 2. Work Readiness Workshops 3. Work-based Learning Experiences 4. Post-Secondary Education Enrollment and Careers Exploration 5. Information & Referral to SCCB's Transition VR Program

**Career Exploration Lab:** SCCB established the "Career Exploration Lab" where transition students are exposed to career exploration in functional 3-D fabrication, manufacturing using 3-D printer technology, product development, business development, microenterprise development, entrepreneurship, marketing and other science, technology, engineering, and math careers.

**SEED Program (Self-Employment for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities):** Self-employment through the development of a microenterprise is a viable option for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, particularly in rural areas where employment opportunities and public transportation is not readily available through leveraging e-Commerce as an alternative business model. During 2018 SCCB will establish the SEED Program that assists eligible individuals through the business exploration, business planning, business capitalization, and business operationalization process leading to self-employment. SCCB is currently developing the policy framework to assist VR Counselors and consumers. SCCB has developed a Self-Employment Toolkit intended to walk eligible consumers through the microenterprise development process. SCCB has partnered with the University of Wisconsin-Madison to provide Self-Employment and Social Security Work Incentive training to SCCB's VR Counselors on May 17, 2018 and August 8, 2018. SCCB is working to build community partnerships to leverage resources from entities engaged in business development such as Small Business Development Centers, Business Incubator Programs, and South Carolina's Technical College System. SCCB is also working to incorporate our Career Exploration Lab (3D Printer Lab) as a tool to assist in product development and prototyping.

#### 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.

SCCB is committed to ensuring that services are provided in an equitable manner and are fully accessible. SCCB reviews, assesses and monitors agency programs to conduct continuous improvement activities. The greatest gap identified in the 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment pertained to the lack of a Supported Employment program at SCCB. In response SCCB established the JOBS Specialists (Job Oriented Blind Services) positions trained to provide Supported Employment (SE), Customized Employment (CE), and Individual Placement and Support (IPS) models to consumers who have Most Significant Disabilities. These positions function in a one-on-one consumer centered approach as Job Placement Specialists, On-The-Job Coaches, and in other employment related supportive roles allowed under Title VI.

#### 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:

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A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.

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The following is an evaluation and report of progress on SCCB's goals from the most recently completed program year. The goals and priorities from the previous Unified State Plan were:

**Goal 1: Increase Program Capacity Leveraging Partnerships & Community Engagement**

**Priority 1.1:** Improve WIOA Partnerships & One-Stop System Engagement

**Priority 1.2:** Improve Partnerships & Strategic Alliances to Increase Program Capacity

**Priority 1.3:** Increase Public Awareness & Community Engagement

**Priority 1.4:** Align Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center (EBMRC) Programing

**Report of Progress Goal 1:** SCCB achieved substantial progress on goal 1. SCCB improved WIOA partnerships and One-Stop System Engagement through the strategies of formalizing American Job Center partnerships with Memorandum's of Understanding which include infrastructure cost agreements, specified co-located staff office times and space, center accessibility assessment and technical assistance, and staff cross training. SCCB has active MOU's with all SC Works Centers. SCCB worked with core WIOA partner programs to create agency cross training modules for partnership workforce staff, and explored data sharing and common intake opportunities. SCCB finalized a Cooperative Agreement with SC Department of Education and is currently negotiating an update to the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department Cooperative Agreement. SCCB negotiated and entered into a number of Cooperative Agreements with community based qualified fee-for-service vendors and other partners to expand capacity and available resources statewide. This has expanded program capacity to provide independent travel training (8 new vendors), home management training (2 new vendors), and Braille Literacy (2 new vendors) in community settings. SCCB also provides ZoomText, Jaws, and other assistive technology training through a fee-for-service contract with the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina. SCCB established contractual programs for Pre-Employment Transition Services with South Carolina's Independent Living Centers and the National Federation of the Blind. Since inception Career BOOST has provided 761 students with Self-Advocacy Workshops, 494 Work Readiness Workshops, and 160 Work Based Learning Experience such as paid internships and work site tours and job shadowing. Under Career Boost 62 eligible and potentially eligible high school students have participated in college and university tours, exploration of post-secondary educational options, and counseling on financial aid opportunities. SCCB conducted public awareness outreach and implemented a social media presence to enhance agency visibility. In 2017 SCCB rewrote the curriculum and courses offered at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for Employment and Independence. This new curriculum includes pre-test and post-test assessments to measure skill gains and provide for continuous improvement. Several new center programs have been implemented including a partnership with Adult Education that brings GED preparation instruction and testing to the center. SCCB added a Basic Financial Literacy course using curriculum designed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. SCCB has also added Soft-Skills training based on the "Skills to Pay the Bills" curriculum.

**Goal 2: Increase Quantity & Quality of Employment Outcomes**

**Priority 2.1:** Align VR Counseling with South Carolina’s Talent Pipeline Project, Emphasizing Career Pathways, Attainment of Industry Recognized Credentials, Job Driven/Sector Strategies & Labor Market Information

**Priority 2.2:** Increase Employment for those with **Most Significant Disabilities**

**Priority 2.3:** Increase Vocational Exploration & Opportunities for **Transition Students**

**Priority 2.4:** Increase Employment for **all eligible consumers**

**Report of Progress Goal 2:** Under the previous state plan, SCCB focused efforts on building program capacity, resources and expertise needed in order to meet goal 2. This required resource location, resource reallocation, and program building. As these programs have been built, SCCB has not experienced an increase in the number of successful employment outcomes. Under the provisions of the previous Unified State Plan, SCCB has aligned VR Counseling, career exploration, vocational goal selection, and Individualized Plan for Employment development with labor market information and sector strategies. SCCB has instituted the use of The Career Index Plus for analyzing labor market information and helping consumers make informed job driven decisions. SCCB implemented significant staff training in the area of using labor market information and understanding South Carolina’s regional economic conditions. SCCB leveraged partnerships with the Department of Employment and Workforce, and the Job Driven Technical Assistance Center to provide staff with training on sector strategies, the talent pipeline efforts, and the use of labor market information. SCCB has established program capacity and resources to better serve individuals who have Most Significant Disabilities. SCCB has established JOBS Specialists who are providing Supported Employment and Customized Employment, evidence based practices that have not been offered by SCCB in the past. In addition, SCCB has hired and trained a Certified Work Incentive Counselor to help beneficiaries understand the implications of gainful employment on their Social Security benefits. SCCB established Career BOOST, a contractual program in partnership, collaboration, and coordination with Independent Living Centers, the National Federation of the Blind, and South Carolina’s Local Education Authorities. This program provides the required Pre-Employment Transition Services to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities. SCCB hosted the first Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Career (STEM) Exploration Week for transition students during the summer of 2017. During the STEM Career Exploration week, 9 high school students who are blind or visually impaired were provided instruction by a team of scientists from San Jose State University, Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center, the Space Telescope Science Institute, and the International Astronomical Union. The students explored STEM careers using 3D printed tactile models of galaxies, planets, and other astronomical phenomena. Additionally, students were exposed to “sonification” techniques used by blind and visually impaired Astronomers to study the universe. SCCB is repeating the program in the summer of 2018.

**Goal 3: Increase & Improve Innovative Coordinated Services to Business.**

**Priority 3.1:** Engage with Business Community & Business Organizations

**Priority 3.3:** Increase Coordination with WIOA Partner’s Business Services

**Priority 3.4:** Seek Opportunities for Customized Training Partnerships

**Report of Progress:** SCCB has made less progress on goal 3. During the last program year SCCB has experienced turnover and long term vacancies in 2 of the 3 statewide Business Services Employment Consultant positions. These positions have primary responsibilities for the strategies under goal 3. In

addition, SCCB experienced the retirement and long term vacancy of the Director of the Division of Training & Employment, the position that supervises and directs the business services unit and coordinates with WIOA partner business services staff. SCCB is in the process of recruiting, selecting, and hiring the business services unit and will refocus efforts to meet goal 3.

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## B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

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While SCCB met a considerable number of the goals from the 2016 Unified State Plan, the following goals were not met:

**Strategy 2.3.2 Student Business Enterprise Program Career Exploration:** This goal was not achieved. SCCB has experienced significant staff change in the BEP leadership and has not had the human resources to pursue this strategy.

**Strategy 3.1.1 Business Services Engagement:** SCCB experienced significant turnover and long term vacancies within our Business Engagement Services Unit during 2016 and 2017. Efforts are currently underway to rebuild this unit.

**Strategy 3.1.2 Establish Business Advisory Council:** SCCB explored the creation of an SCCB Business Advisory Council, but learned that existing WIOA Business Advisory Councils may better serve our needs, avoid duplication of effort, and align SCCB with other WIOA partners. SCCB experience significant turnover and long term vacancies within our Business Engagement Services Unit during 2016 and 2017 that prevented SCCB from fully engaging in existing business advisory council meetings.

## 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:

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### A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.

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SCCB expended Supported Employment revenue during FFY 2017 for the first time as JOBS Specialists were on boarded and began providing Supported Employment services. Consumers being served by SE funds are currently in the placement and support phase, therefore no consumers served by Supported Employment funds have been transitioned to extended services at this time. SCCB signed a Partnership Plus Agreement with Able SC to provide on-going supports at the time when a consumer transitions from VR support. Building a quality Supported Employment program is a continued goal of SCCB for FFY 2018. Currently SCCB is undergoing extensive Customized Employment training and technical assistance to build capacity and program effectiveness. SCCB also added the capacity to provide benefit and work incentive counseling.

### B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

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SCCB made substantial progress on creating a Supported Employment program through the establishment of the JOBS Specialists, providing both Supported Employment and Customized Employment training to these staff, and building the capacity to provide benefits and work incentive counseling services. The greatest impediment was that these resources had to be created where they did not exist prior.

### 3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

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During the first program year under WIOA, SCCB has been working to build the information technology infrastructure to track and report the following performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA:

(I) the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program; (II) the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program; (III) the median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program; (IV) 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; (V) 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 (VI) the indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause (iv).

Because the agency has not been required to track or report this data prior to WIOA, SCCB has nothing to report for these data elements for FFY 2015. SCCB has elected to use the FFY 2016 program year to baseline these measures.

### 4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED.

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**SCCB used the authority under innovation and expansion (I&E) for the establishment of the following programs:**

**Career BOOST Pre-Employment Transition Services:** SCCB piloted a demonstration project called Career BOOST (Building Occupational Opportunities for Students in Transition). This program augments SCCB's transition services program by providing the five (5) required Pre Employment Transition Services (PETS) to eligible or potentially eligible students statewide. These PETS services will include: 1. Self-Advocacy Training 2. Work Readiness Workshops 3. Work-based Learning Experiences 4. Post-Secondary Education Enrollment and Careers Exploration 5. Information & Referral to SCCB's Transition VR Program

**Career Exploration Lab:** SCCB established the "Career Exploration Lab" where transition students are exposed to career exploration in functional 3-D fabrication, manufacturing using 3-D printer technology, product development, business development, microenterprise development, entrepreneurship, marketing and other science, technology, engineering, and math careers.

**SEED Program (Self-Employment for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities):** Self-employment through the development of a microenterprise is a viable option for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, particularly in rural areas where employment opportunities and public transportation is not readily available through leveraging e-Commerce as an alternative business model. During PY 2018 and PY 2019 SCCB will establish the SEED Program that assists eligible individuals through the business exploration, business planning, business capitalization, and business operationalization process leading to self-employment. SCCB is currently developing the policy framework to assist VR Counselors and consumers. SCCB has developed a Self-Employment Toolkit intended to walk eligible consumers through the

microenterprise development process. SCCB has partnered with the University of Wisconsin-Madison to provide Self-Employment and Social Security Work Incentive training to SCCB's VR Counselors on May 17, 2018 and August 8, 2018. SCCB is working to build community partnerships to leverage resources from entities engaged in business development such as Small Business Development Centers, Business Incubator Programs, and South Carolina's Technical College System. SCCB is also working to incorporate our Career Exploration Lab (3D Printer Lab) as a tool to assist in product development and prototyping.

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#### 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.

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**Report of Progress:** SCCB expended Supported Employment revenue during FFY 2017 for the first time as JOBS Specialists were on boarded and began providing Supported Employment services. Consumers being served by SE funds are currently in the placement and support phase, therefore no consumers served by Supported Employment funds have been transitioned to extended services at this time. SCCB signed a Partnership Plus Agreement with Able SC to provide on-going supports at the time when a consumer transitions from VR support. Building a quality Supported Employment program is a continued goal of SCCB for FFY 2018. Currently SCCB is undergoing extensive Customized Employment training and technical assistance to build capacity and program effectiveness.

##### 2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

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In compliance with 34 CFR 363.6 SCCB policy requires that an individual must transition to extended services within 24 months of starting to receive supported employment services unless a longer time period is agreed to in the individualized plan for employment. SCCB policy requires supported employment outcomes to be in competitive integrated employment.

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#### CERTIFICATIONS

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate     **South Carolina Commission for the Blind**

Name of designated State agency     **South Carolina Commission for the Blind**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:     **James Kirby**

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

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### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE CERTIFICATIONS FROM THE STATE**

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#### **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.

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#### **STATEMENT FOR LOAN GUARANTEES AND LOAN INSURANCE**

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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     **South Carolina Commission for the Blind**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:     **James Kirby**

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

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#### **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.

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#### **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     **South Carolina Commission for the Blind**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:     **James Kirby**

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>).

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## 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:

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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:

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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:

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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     **(A) is an independent State commission**

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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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#### 4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES:

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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,

1. 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

2. 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:

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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.

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6. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM:

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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.

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7. PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES:

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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:

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1. 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
2. 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.
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#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE ASSURANCES FROM THE STATE

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### 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](http://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.

### 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 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
<b>Adults</b>	75.30	76.80	76.10	76.80
<b>Dislocated Workers</b>	79.30	80.10	80.10	80.10
<b>Youth</b>	76.60	76.60	76.60	76.60
<b>Adult Education</b>	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
<b>Wagner-Peyser</b>	64.00	67.50	64.00	67.50
<b>Vocational Rehabilitation</b>	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
<b>Adults</b>	70.80	73.00	70.80	73.00

<b>Dislocated Workers</b>	75.00	76.00	75.00	76.00
<b>Youth</b>	67.60	69.00	67.60	69.00
<b>Adult Education</b>	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
<b>Wagner-Peyser</b>	64.20	67.00	64.20	67.00
<b>Vocational Rehabilitation</b>	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
<b>Adults</b>	4,859.00	4,908.00	4,908.00	4,908.00
<b>Dislocated Workers</b>	6,405.00	6,405.00	6,469.00	6,405.00
<b>Youth</b>	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
<b>Adult Education</b>	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
<b>Wagner-Peyser</b>	4,338.00	4,300.00	4,381.00	4,300.00

<b>Vocational Rehabilitation</b>	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
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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
<b>Adults</b>	51.00	51.90	51.00	51.90
<b>Dislocated Workers</b>	54.40	48.60	54.40	48.60
<b>Youth</b>	68.10	68.10	68.10	68.10
<b>Adult Education</b>	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
<b>Wagner-Peyser</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Vocational Rehabilitation</b>	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
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<b>Adults</b>	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
<b>Dislocated Workers</b>	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
<b>Youth</b>	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
<b>Adult Education</b>	44.00	44.00	45.00	45.00
<b>Wagner-Peyser</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Vocational Rehabilitation</b>	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
<b>Line 1 (enter the measure information in the comments below)</b>	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
<b>Line 2</b>	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
<b>Line 3</b>	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

APPENDIX 2. OTHER STATE ATTACHMENTS (OPTIONAL)